



OCTOBER 2010

Park News

Tree Focus

Two new tree-focused schemes are underway in the park, and two other schemes are being planned. The first two are coppicing and orchard projects. All four projects are being run under a grant from Be Birmingham and managed through the Moseley CDT under the title *Highbury Community Partnerships*. HPF Chair, David Papadopoulos, is the project worker. The projects are set to run until February, and there will soon be notices and other information about how you can get involved. If you are curious, feel free to ring Moseley CDT and leave your contact details.

The coppicing scheme has been happening on Wednesdays in October under the tutelage of the Parks Ranger Service. A core group of volunteers has received training in the creation and management of hazel coppice and dead-hedging, which makes use of the brush after poles are removed. This group will carry on coppicing further sections of hazel, and will take on new volunteers as conditions permit. If you would like to learn more about the project, contact the Ranger service before 27 October on 675 0937, or David via Moseley CDT thereafter (on 449 8585).

The orchard scheme is developing from a combination of HPF and Kings Heath GROFUN and Transition groups. The Community Orchard group have had enthusiastic support from the Parks Department, and have run work sessions which continue fortnightly on Saturday or Sundays. For further information, contact the Kings Heath Transition Initiative, Moseley CDT, or Highbury Park Friends.

A third project focuses on renovating the Henbury Wall garden. Now that the wall has been repaired (though subsequently damaged again by unknown means), attention has turned to the

condition of plantings along the south side. Again, the Parks Department have expressed support, as has a local councillor, for renovating this border in a style similar to what would have been popular when the wall was built. The plan is to have volunteers attend a short master-class in period garden design, identify and source appropriate annuals, perennials and shrubs, including food plants, then install and maintain the border as a demonstration garden relating 18th century techniques to 21st Century needs. Details of this project will be announced shortly via the website, notice-boards, and other media. Participation will be limited, so make sure you indicate an early interest! As above, contact David via HPF or Moseley CDT.

The fourth project aims to take thicker wood from the coppicing sessions and create chords of small logs to lay across muddy tracks in the northern section of the park.

Recent Events

Tree Recognition Event

In this July event botanist Martin Collins introduced straight away the comparative method he recommends for recognising tree species. He



led us to two acers, the Norway Maple, *Acer platinoides*, and the Sycamore, *Acer pseudo platanus*. His advice for each tree was to look at the overall shape, the trunk and bark, and several fruits, flowers, and leaves. In this way, in spite of the similar appearance of these two we learnt to tell one from the other. Here are the differences we found in their leaves: the leaves of the Norway Maple are wavy and edged with long pointed teeth, while on the leaves of the Sycamore the points are less sharp. The Norway Maple's leaves are bright green below and above, while those of the Sycamore are dark green above and paler below. Later we also examined the London Plane, *Platanus hispanicus*, which has a leaf similar to that of the Maple, but here leaves are alternatively arranged while those on Maples are opposite. Continuing in this way we turned our attention to Copper Beech,

Fern Leaf Beech, Ash, Rubiria, Lime, Birch, and Horse Chestnut. We used magnifying glasses to see the tufts of hair in the Lime seeds, and binoculars to look into the canopy of trees.

Martin also gave advice on pressing dry leaves to avoid mould and suggested pressing them rapidly to their colour. His press was made from corrugated padding, to enfold and flat pieces of wood, all bound together with bungee clips. *Collins Tree Guide* was recommended as an excellent guide to identifying trees, so we can build on the knowledge we gained that afternoon.



conserve His press from cardboard, newspaper the leaves, narrow wood, all

The Big Lunch

In the current economic climate there's no such thing as a free lunch anymore, but Highbury Park was the venue for a very Big Lunch recently. The Big Lunch, promoted by the Eden Project and funded by the Big Lottery Fund (BIG), aims to promote neighbourliness and community cohesion by encouraging people from all over the UK to sit down and have lunch with their neighbours for a few hours on a Sunday 18 July. This year over a million people took part.

Big Lottery Fund employees in the Birmingham office voted Highbury Park to be Birmingham's most historic open space and the ideal venue for their Big Lunch celebration. The park was thought to be the perfect venue, being made up of land bequeathed to the City by Birmingham's most community minded politician, Joseph Chamberlain, and the City's most famous industrial philanthropist Richard Cadbury.

The old tennis court area and Henbury grounds were the focal point for a picnic, silly games, and historical tours of the park and grounds, for members of staff, their families, kids, dogs and local people who popped by to join in the fun.

Future Events

Highbury Park Friends A.G.M
Thursday 4 November, 7pm for 7.30 p.m.,
CDT Building, 149-153 Alcester Road,
Moseley Village.

A look at the past year and the year ahead: events, projects, plans. Do join us, to give us your views on the park this year and on events you would like to see there next year. Refreshments will be provided.

Pond Clearance
Saturday 13 November, from 10.a.m.
Lower Pond, Highbury Park.

Dr Stefan Bodnar, a city council ecologist, and Nicola Clarke, of Quadron's Biodiversity Champions, plan to start clearing the lower (Henbury) pond and would welcome volunteers. A chance to find out more about the pond. See you there?

Tree Dressing with Caroline Jariwala and Barry Patterson.
Sunday 5 December, 11 a. m. to 3 p.m.,
beginning in the Avenue of Limes near the the Henbury wall.

From 11 - 2p.m. Caroline will provide samples, materials and instruction, for simple, colourful decorations to hang, plus materials and instruction for a set of decorations to be made elsewhere in the park, as part of a woodland folklore journey to be led by Barry of Song and Story.

Annual Subscriptions/Renewals

Our financial year began on 1st. September so subs. are now due for 2010-2011. Membership is by households, £5 or £3 unwaged. Cheques should be made payable to Highbury Park Friends and either left at York Supplies, 55-57 Waterloo Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7SD, or posted to HPF at the address below. Please include your postal address and your e-mail address. Alternatively why not pay your subs at our A.G.M on Thursday 4 November? Margaret Tyler, Membership Secretary.

Useful Contacts

HPF Committee
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