Bulletin

April 2016

Stakeholder Event. The Chamberlain Highbury Trust.

HPF, along with approximately 20 other local organizations, was invited to the first stakeholder meeting of the new Chamberlain Highbury Trust on February 24th. Ellen, Paul, Gail and Anne represented HPF.

The purpose of the evening was to introduce the new Trust and Trustees. We were also asked to say how we are involved with the Highbury estate and what we would like to see happen there in the future.

We were introduced to the Trustees (designate) and their specific responsibilities. Les Sparks, (Chair) *Proposals for the House*, Paul Richards, (Vice Chair) *Business Plan*, Phillada Ballard, *Proposals for the Park and Gardens*, Sarah Siena Edwards, *Communications*, Ian Grosvener, *Partnerships*, Alison Millward, *Stakeholder and Community Relations*, Jo Smith, *Fundraising and Governance* and Mike Williams, *Financial Planning*. There will also be two representatives from Birmingham City Council .

The new Trust will be granted the assets of the former Highbury Trust on a lease of twenty-five years or more. The Trust is intending to become a "company limited by guarantee" and then will register to become a charity. Draft objectives include:

- The responsible stewardship of the Highbury Estate for the general benefit of the citizens of Birmingham
- The conservation and promotion of the heritage values of the Highbury Estate including the Grade II listed house and the Grade II registered historic park
- The promotion and delivery of activities that increase the sustainability of the heritage including the encouragement of biodiversity
- The promotion of the history of the Chamberlain family and its local and national importance
- The provision of opportunities to support the arts and culture within Birmingham and the region
- The promotion and delivery of activities that support mental and physical health and social well-being

Stop press: Highbury Hall will open on September 11th for Heritage Day.

Details to follow.

Stephen Roberts Talk 15.3.2016

"Joseph Chamberlain at Highbury"

Stephen Robert's talk to us in March was both entertaining and informative and we were treated to a rare insight into the life of Joseph Chamberlain at Highbury.
Below is a selection of what we learned

- Highbury was a well-known place in the Victorian period. The Chamberlain family moved there in 1880, having acquired the land two years earlier
- The plans for the building may still be viewed in the Birmingham Central Library. The house contained 22 rooms and a lift and was constructed in the red brick gothic style
- Inside it was sombre, with a fern in the middle of the hall and heavy ebony furniture. It was cluttered with stuffed flamingos, spears, shields and other assorted donated gifts
- Jo Chamberlain's four daughters grew up there and they hated the cook's tapioca puddings with a vengeance
- They also complained at the scant number of currants in her bread and butter pudding. Not withstanding pressing affairs of state, Jo saw to it that the cook produced no more tapioca pudding and upped the currant count
- Jo encouraged his daughters to take an interest in the other sort of current affairs. They engaged in lively political debate, which was unusual for young women at that time. However, they did not support votes for women
- Owing to a fear of gossip by local residents, Jo hired his servants from other parts of the country. He employed 34 people
- How did Jo spend the day? He would inspect his beloved orchid houses but was a sedentary man who would then retire to his study. He would work all day, smoking cigars incessantly
- During the week Jo lived in London and would have a fresh orchid sent up from Highbury every day. When he visited South Africa after the Boer War 300 frozen orchids accompanied him
- The orchid houses are now demolished but the gardens would have been very impressive at the time
- There would be huge garden parties for up to 1000 or 1500 people who would listen to a speech by Jo and then be free to wander around
- When Jo died in 1914 the house was left to Austen Chamberlain but it was very much Jo's house and no family member wanted to live there. It subsequently became a hospital for wounded soldiers
- If you missed the talk you can order the pamphlet, "Joseph Chamberlain's Highbury; A very public private house" by Stephen Roberts from Amazon.
  We really recommend it!

AMG

Nature Notes

Purple Oak

Highbury Park has more than 500 Notable and Veteran trees. We will introduce you to a few special ones in our forthcoming newsletters. Near the lodge and quite close to the path is a purple oak *Quercus robur* 'Atropurpurea' Apparently uncommon and rather difficult to propagate, this tree is best seen in the spring when the sunlight glows red through the young leaves. Later on the leaves turn a reddish - brown

Cuckooflower.

Also known as Lady's-smock (*Cardamine pratensis*) the four-petalled lilac (or sometimes pink or even white) flowers can be seen in areas of long grass throughout Highbury Park. They are much favoured by Orange-tip butterflies as a larval foodplant.. EMP.

A new lease of life

You might have noticed how sad and out of date our website was looking. Enter Charles Barnwell, who has taken over editing the site and is quickly transforming it. You will now find our latest events programmes on line as well as our archive of useful documents and leaflets. Check it out
www.highburyparkfriends.org.uk

A big thank you to Charles for all his hard work

HPF Events Programme 2016

May 7th . 10.30am – 12.30pm

Wildlife Walk with Paul Antony.

May 10th. 7pm – 9.00pm

HPF AGM. Moseley CDT.

May 28th 10.30am –12.30pm

Wildflower Walk with Tony Sames

June 11th. 2pm

Meet the beekeepers.

July 9th 10.30am – 12.30pm.

Wildlife Walk with Paul Anthony. Butterflies.

August. Bat walk led by Brumbats. Details to follow.

September 27th 7.30 - 9.00pm

Austen Chamberlain's Model Farm. A talk by Maureen Perrie. Moseley CDT.

For all events, apart from the AGM and evening talks, meet in Highbury Park Car Park.

Events are free of charge and open to everyone

For events in the park please wear suitable footwear for walking over uneven ground

Events organised by the Park Rangers

Woodland Wednesdays.

Meet Highbury Park Car Park

10.30am every Wednesday to learn more about the local woodlands, with Alf Dimmock, Senior Park Ranger. Everyone Welcome. Free of charge

HPF AGM

Our AGM this year is on May 10th from 7.00pm - 9.00pm at Moseley CDT.

The programme will include a report about this year's activities, a chance for you to air your views about the park and the new Chamberlain Highbury Trust and Alf Dimmock, Senior Park Ranger, will talk to us about trees in Highbury Park. We hope to see you there and hear your views!

Highbury Park Friends

c/o York Supplies

55-57 Balaclava Road

Kings Heath

Birmingham B14 7SD

hppfadmin@highburyparkfriends.org.uk