

NO.71 AUTUMN 2013

THE FRIENDS OF



PROTECTING & ENHANCING



WWW.BLAKERSPARK.ORG.UK

BLAKERS PARK

OUR COMMUNITY GREEN SPACE



NEWSLETTER

The first ever Friends of Blakers Park

Quiz Night

7.30pm on Monday 14th October 2013
in The Cleveland

£1 per person. Maximum of 4 people per team

Prizes to be won!

Five rounds of questions about the park, our neighbourhood and our community, including one round out in the park - in the dark - so bring a torch!

PLUS

The Friends of Blakers Park AGM

The Committee of the Friends of Blakers Park includes Caroline Bottrell, Marion Clark, Marjorie Cozens, Sally Cranfield, Tara Rogers (Secretary), Gerry Faulks (Treasurer), Max Glaskin (Chair), Sam Hart, Ian Lawes, Graham Preston (Vice Chair & Membership Secretary), and Marsali Stuart. Philip Smith is our Honorary Life President. Write to us at 77 Chester Terrace, speak to us by phoning 07981 490516, send us an email at friends@blakerspark.org.uk and wave cheerily to us in Blakers Park. Max Glaskin claims to be the newsletter editor but we are beginning to doubt that because, to be frank, he's a bit, well, how shall we put it, how about 'soft in the head'? Yes, that's about right. We've seen him actually wearing Lycra and wearing a helmet and riding his bicycle with a simple smile on his face. It's just as well he's standing down as chair, "to spend more time with my bike" he says, otherwise we may have had to arrange an accident. Nevertheless we wish him well and thank him for not getting in the way very often. On the other hand, we will miss Caroline and Tara a lot when they leave the committee at the AGM because they have been brilliant. We wish them all the very best in the new volunteering roles that they are taking up elsewhere in the fair city. So that means there are huge gaps on our committee which you, dear reader, can fill by putting your name forward to be nominated at the AGM. Go on, you know you want to.

The Friends of Blakers Park Annual General Meeting

Every year the members get a report from the chair of the Friends, have their say about what's happened, what should happen, and nominate each other to join the committee and fill the roles of the officers. It's democratic, open and part of our constitution. This year the AGM will be held on Monday 14th October in The Cleveland. The precise timing will depend on the progress of the quiz because the aim is for it to happen while the papers are being marked. The chair and secretary are both standing down so it's your chance to take up one of these posts and become immensely powerful on the global stage – or to have a lovely time with the full support of a wonderfully enthusiastic and talented committee.

Left: A brilliant Blakers Easter bonnet



NEWS

Gardeners Needed – The five flower beds in Blakers Park don't tend themselves. They are planted and cared for by the Friends. If you like them please lend a hand. Contact Marion Clark on 01273 551727. If you would like to know more about the plants that Marion and her volunteers have planted, there are plans to hold a guided walk in late Spring. Watch this space and our website for details.

Royal Approval – The process of making Blakers Park a Queen Elizabeth II Field in Trust, which gives it an added level of legal protection, has been completed. The Council and Fields in Trust have done the paperwork and there will be a special community event in the near future during which a plaque will be put in the park so all can see. Sign up for the e-bulletins via www.blakerspark.org.uk to stay informed.

Thanks to: all of our newsletter deliverers, Caroline Bottrell for running the Spring Clean, Simon Bottrell at 7Creative for the masthead and poster, Fiona & Dominic for organising the Easter Sunday activities, Fiveways Co-Op and Fiveways Fruits for donating Easter prizes, David Stephens for his article about Stanford Avenue in this newsletter, Mike Unwin for conducting the birds, Wettons for cleaning the toilets and repairing the notice boards, Frosts for maintaining the clock, Fiveways Directory for publishing our news, Sam Hart for organising the Community Picnic and all the wonderful volunteers who helped make it such a success, Nick Straiton & Ian Lawes for arranging the music. It couldn't have happened without a grant from Brighton & Hove Council. Local organisations that generously donated raffle prizes included, in no particular order, Quaff, Fiveways Fruits, Sole Sister, Wig Wam, David & Co, Living at Fiveways, Barfields the Butchers, Hove Art House, Beaumonts, Sara's Sweets, The Cleveland, Eleventh Flower, Savery Books, Lark on Lowther, Blakers Tennis Club and Preston Insurance Brokers. Morgan Carn and Hummingbird helped out. Thank you all for your wonderful support.

They done us proud – It's a brave bunch that carries the name of Blakers Park into the world beyond but the 40-odd members of Blakers Park Tennis Club have done so again this past season and returned with some honour. They have sliced, smashed and lobbed their way through the city's unique Parks League to emerge with three teams standing firm in the fourth, third and second divisions. The top team will also be in the second division next year.

Special Delivery – Get 30 mins of exercise every 3 months and a sense of wellbeing by helping to deliver this newsletter. Contact geraldine.faulks@gmail.com

Pics from the Picnic



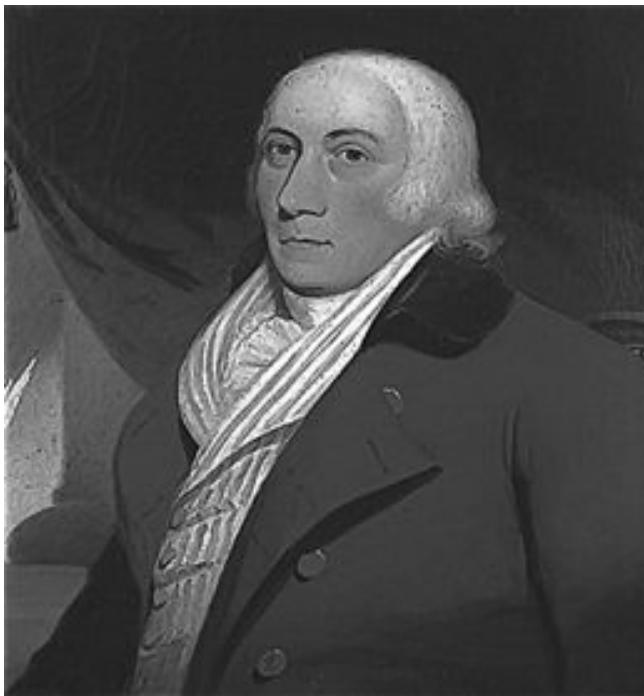


The Street where I Live

Stanford Avenue

What do the following thoroughfares have in common: Stanford Avenue, Western Road and Preston Park Avenue? And what does one of them have to do with a royal cup of tea?

The answer to the first question of course is the tenant farmer pictured, one Mister William Stanford who purchased Preston Manor from the Western family in 1794 for the princely sum of £17,600. The sale included the manor house, farm and surrounding lands in Brighton and Hove. In 1789 he had married Elizabeth Avery, and they had two children both of whom died in 1790 followed by their mother the following year. But undeterred he became High Sheriff of Sussex in 1808 and had married again and had seven children by his second wife, Mary.



As Lord of the Manor of Preston, William strengthened his position within the landed gentry taking advantage of the development of Brighton by selling his farm produce to the town; and astutely acquiring another princely sum of £200 per year from the Prince Regent by leasing a plot of land near what is now Preston Circus for the purposes of a royal dairy.

The Stanford's are probably Brighton's first property speculators making a fortune by choosing when to sell their land and stipulating how it would be developed. The rapid expansion of Brighton in the 19th century also meant the family did very well from rents, and with the coming of the railway the family received £30,000 from the London, Brighton and South Coast

Railway for the sale of land which would enable to railway to cross family property.

There can't be many families who can claim an Act of Parliament named after them. In 1871 the Stanford Estate Act, allowed Ellen Stanford (wife of Vere who she had married in 1867, who incidentally also has a road named after him) permission to grant building agreements on her land transforming the Stanford estate from agricultural lands to building sites. Interestingly at this time the family acquired land in Bavant, Wiltshire (hence Bavant Road).

The Stanford family not only controlled the release of the land, but the design of each villa, the minimum building costs and the construction timescales. Most of the building work in Preston of detached and semi-detached villas was carried out by speculative builders between 1876 and 1900, with some infilling from 1921-1925. The most expensive houses were the detached villas, most of which were in close proximity to London Road or along Stanford Avenue, the main route through the centre of the estate, connecting London Road and Ditching Road. The cost of the land and the minimum building costs that the Stanford's laid down very much depended on the location and size of the plot. If you have ever wondered why houses around Blakers and Preston parks vary in size and expense it has much to do with the Stanford Estate's control of building. A terraced houses in Chester Terrace, for example had to cost at least £350 to build; in 1880 a villa in Preston Park Avenue had to cost at least £600; and in 1883, a group of houses along the west side of Preston Park had to cost at least £1,500 each to construct. The Stanford Estate had a clear vision of what they wanted and that was to construct lower-middle and middle class residential housing, open spaces and generous road layouts.

On the 7th March 1932 Sir Charles Thomas-Stanford, baronet, died at Preston Manor and bequeathed the house to Brighton Corporation. It was the end of the Stanford's reign as the leading landowners of Brighton.

And the royal cup of tea? Sadly it has nothing to do with Stanford Avenue but Preston Manor, host to a young Royal princess Elizabeth in November 1945 who was invited to take tea at the Manor house by the Mayor of Brighton. It was her first public engagement. Sir William Stanford would have been proud.

David Stephens

Acknowledgements: David Beevers, *The Royal Pavilion Review*, 1990 Number 1. The Stanford Estate in Brighton and Hove, *Royal Pavilion Museums and Libraries webpage*

Blakers – worth protecting?

Blakers Park is a blot on the landscape, a site ripe for redevelopment, with amusement arcades and a waste incinerator squeezed between high-rise offices and a flyover.

Fortunately that will never happen. One reason is that the Friends keep an eye on it. We began 20 years ago when there were unwelcome plans for change. We stopped those and continue to monitor threats. We also help improve the park and organise many free events for the community. So please continue to help us. Join or renew your membership now. If you don't, we'll turn Blakers Park into a nuclear waste disposal site. The choice is your's. There are **two different** ways to show you care about Blakers. The **first** is the simple form you can fill in and give to us with cash or a cheque made out to "Friends of Blakers Park".

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone _____

Please write your email address below to receive news and events by email:

_____ @ _____

I enclose payment for the following (please circle):

One year's individual membership	£3.00
One year's membership students and unwaged	£1.50
Three year's membership	£9.00
Five year's membership	£15.00
One year's household membership	£5.00
One year's group membership	£30.00

The **second** way to join us is to complete this standing order mandate.

Standing Order Mandate

My bank: _____

Bank address: _____ Postcode: _____

My account no: _____

Sort code: _____

My name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Bank instruction: Please pay £_____ beginning with immediate effect and on the same date each year to Friends of Blakers Park

Account no: 21262734; Sort Code 40-05-27; *HSBC 69 Pall Mall, London SW1 5EY*

This Standing Order Mandate supersedes all previous standing orders to Friends of Blakers Park

When you've filled in your name, address, phone & email details and completed **either** the membership payment panel (with payment) **or** the standing order mandate, please drop this in at 77 Chester Terrace, BN1 6GD or 61 Havelock Road BN1 6GL