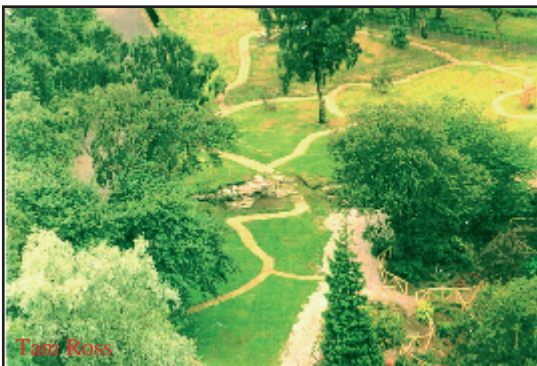




John Muir Award Explorer Level And Springburn Park Glasgow



Tim Ross



© Jim Stewart

Acknowledgments

This information put together as part of my John Muir Trust Award. My thanks to, Tam Ross and Sheila Russell Glasgow City Council Land service for information and photographs and Nell McGowen Plant operator Glasgow City Council Land Service, Toby Clark Regional Manager John Muir Award West Of Scotland for information and photographs. Sam and Kristy Hemphill British Trust for Ornithology .

The narrative in these pages are my own interpretation of the information I have gathered from a wide range of sources during my time with the John Muir Award project and is offered purely as such.

About The John Muir Award

The John Muir Award aims to encourage people of all ages and backgrounds to discover, enjoy and conserve the planet's wild places, through a structured yet adaptable scheme. It was launched in 1997 by the John Muir Trust, which was formed in 1983 to safeguard and conserve wild places in the United Kingdom, and to increase awareness and understanding of the value of such places. The John Muir Award is the main educational initiative of the Trust.

Aims of the John Muir Award

- ◆ Increase & enhance awareness of wild places
- ◆ Encourage people to take responsibility for wild places
- ◆ Encourage individuals & society to value wild places
- ◆ Promote educational, social and personal development of young people and the wider community
- ◆ Encourage an environmental agenda within youth organisations, and a youth work agenda within environmental organisations
- ◆ Ensure that social circumstances do not exclude people from opportunities to experience wild places
- ◆ Raise awareness of John Muir and the John Muir Trust

Four Challenges

The John Muir Award has four challenges:

- ✓ Discover a wild place
- ✓ Explore its wildness
- ✓ Help to conserve It
- ✓ Share your experiences with others

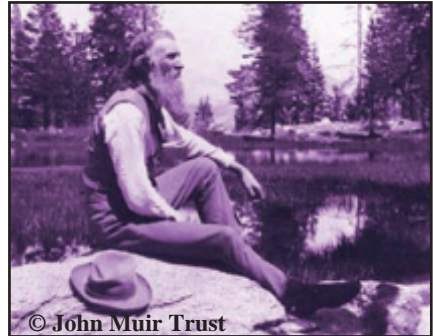
The four Award Challenges relate to the approach that John Muir took during his travels and adventures. He was always keen to explore new areas, or to see familiar places in a different light. He promoted the idea of conserving areas of wilderness and beauty, and shared his experiences and his vision.

About John Muir

John Muir (1838-1914) is the founder of the modern world conservation movement. Two hundred sites in the USA are named after him, including Muir Woods, Muir Beach, Muir Glacier and the John Muir Trail through the High Sierra.

Born in the fishing port of Dunbar, in East Lothian, Scotland, he developed an early awareness of the value of wild nature. At the age of 11 he

emigrated with his family to the wilds of Wisconsin in the American mid-west, where he spent his teenage years. Arriving in California at the age of 30, he achieved fame as a botanist, geologist and glaciologist, and pioneered what is now known as ecology. During his explorations of the High Sierra and Alaska (1870 - 1890), Muir became aware of the threats to such wild places, and was the first to clearly call for their conservation. He led the campaign for the protection of Yosemite, and deeply influenced Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson in designating over 50 areas and 200 national monuments. In order to campaign for wild places, Muir helped set up the Sierra Club which today is one of the leading environmental campaigning



Springburn Park

Let me introduce my self, my name is Jimmy Stewart I have been a member of the John Muir Trust since 1983. I work for Glasgow City Council as a Park Ranger in Springburn Park.

For several years Springburn Park had a disused boating pond.

It is in the process of being transformed into a wildlife pond by Tam Ross and Sheila Russell and Nell McGowen plant operator GCC Land Service.

The creation of this wildlife pond meets the criteria of the four challenges for the John Muir Explorer Award and I have taken up the challenge.

Ver. 5.2

Springburn Park

Springburn Park is situated in the North of the City, just off the A803. The park offers one of the most beautiful rockeries in Scotland, a garden of peace and three wildlife ponds. There is extensive spring and summer bedding planted throughout the park and a formidable collection of bulbs, wallflower and polyanthus. The park is filled with evergreen and flowering trees, shrubs, rhododendrons, heaths, rock and alpine plants.

Size 31 h/a

Address

Balgrayhill Road,
Springburn.
Glasgow G21
Grid Ref. NS 610 685

Location



The park is bounded by; Broomfield Rd., Balornock Rd., Stobhill Hospital, Belmont Rd., Balgrayhill Rd., Mosesfield St.& Bagnell Rd. There are pedestrian entrances along Balgrayhill Road, Belmont Road, Broomfield Road and Balornock Road. Vehicle entrances are at Belmont Road and Broomfield Road.



The History

Glasgow Corporation acquired the land for Springburn Park in 1892. At this time the land was indifferent agricultural land with the remains of a ironstone pit at one corner and an old quarry at the other. Two coal mine shafts have subsequently, been located near the Bowling pavilion. Sir James Reid of the Hyde Park Locomotive Works (born 1823 died 1894) lived nearby at Belmont House and contributed to the park's development. A monument to Sir James was erected by public subscription in 1903. His sons contributed to the purchase of the lands of Cockmuir farm when the park was extended in 1900.

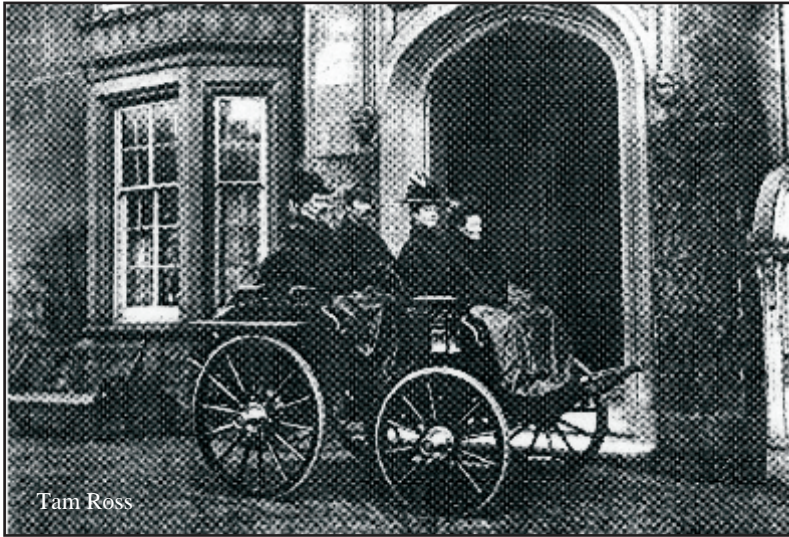
The Winter Gardens

Were built by Glasgow Corporation as a condition for accepting a £12,000 gift from Hugh Reid of the North British Locomotive Company to finance the construction of the nearby Springburn Public Halls.



The Winter Gardens were much loved by generations of Springburn residents for their displays of exotic plants and for the concerts and exhibitions held there. Classified as an A-Listed building, the Winter Gardens have remained derelict for the last 20 years due to major structural problems. At present the City Council is attempting to raise funds to restore this site to its former grandeur.

Mosesfield House



The existing Mosesfield House stands near the site of the old Mosesfield House, occupied from 1790 by William Moses a merchant who made his fortune from selling sedan chairs. The new Mosesfield House is a two story ashlar house of modest size, built in 1838 by the renowned architect David Hamilton for a bookseller called James Duncan. It later became the Manse of one of Springburn's churches. As a member of the 'Mo-car' syndicate (effectively an early menage) George Johnston, the minister's son, built the first motor car ever produced in Scotland at Mosesfield yard in October 1895. With finance from Sir William Arroll, Arrol-Johnston motor cars were produced for the next 30 years.

Mosesfield House was presented to the Corporation in 1904 by Hugh Reid of Belmont and the lower part of the house served as a museum until just before the Second World War, after which it was converted for use as an old men's club, which is still functioning today.

Weather recordings have been taken at Springburn Park continuously since 1896 and are sent electronically to the Meteorological Office in Edinburgh

Facilities

The park offers the following;

A recently laid synthetic football pitch, with floodlights and changing accommodation. Two blaes juvenile pitches with goals. Three bowling greens A cricket pitch.

Outstanding Features

One of the most charming features of this rustic park is the Peace Garden dedicated to the late Lord Provost, Bob Innes which features beautifully laid out gardens and heather beds, with memorial seats, pergolas and a 'Peace Pole', donated by Japanese atomic bomb survivors. There are several significant statues in the park, not least the Balgray Fountain by Doulton. The fountain had a unicorn on its top it, was damaged by frost and has been removed for repair, and the statue of Sir James Reid. As already indicated the derelict Winter Garden is a grade A listed building, Mosesfield House is also a listed building.

For many visitors the rockery near the Balgray entrance is one of Springburn park's most appealing features. There are green and flowering trees, shrubs, heaths, annuals and biennials all set amongst a charming glen with a pond and a rustic bridge. Few would guess that this pastoral scene once flourished as a stone quarry.

Springburn Park is situated on the crown of Balgrayhill, one highest area in the North of Glasgow. At it's peak you will be standing 351 feet above sea level and be provided with impressive views of Ben Lomond, the Trossachs, the Kilpatrick, Campsie and Kilsyth Hills, and finally the hills of Argyleshire. If the weather is kind the peak of Goat Fell on the Isle of Arran can be seen.



New Wildlife pond

For many years disused boating pond in Springburn Park was just a stagnant pool of water shunned by wildlife and collected litter. Using 800 tonnes of crushed rock, Subsoil and rolls of Geotextile add natural water plants and Glasgow City Council Land Service transformed a stagnant pool into a wildlife haven with an island.



Benefits To Conservation

The resident swans has moved their family of cygnets into this wildlife haven as have coots and tufted ducks the water plants have started to grow this will provide cover and encourage other birds and wildlife. There are two other established conservation ponds where one near the Belmont road entrance to the park, the second pond nearby Stobhill pond where you may see herons, coots, moorhens, mallards, little grebe and tufted ducks nesting on the islands. There are also less common visitors such as American Wigeon. There is a wildflower meadow along the North and West edges of Stobhill Pond, this features Ox-Eye daisy, Yarrow, Meadow Crane's Bill, Cuckoo Flower and Black Knapweed. There are literally dozens of aquatic plants, in particular Yellow Flag, Bottle Sedge and Bulrush. A fourth pond can be found at the rockery that is a disused quarry although not visited by water fowl, it is a nice quite place to sit and listen to bird song, watch squirrels, hedgehogs and rabbits that are abundant if you are lucky you may see foxes, if you are very lucky roe deer have been sighted in the park.

Water supply

In the centre of the park is the Cockmuir Reservoirs managed by Scottish Water. These are built on Cockmuir farmlands, once

occupied by a family of Stewart's in the mid 19th century. Although concealed from view with the landmark water towers now demolished, these reservoirs retain a capacity of some 1,000,000 gallons and supply much of North Glasgow. Cockmuir farm buildings survived well into the nth century and were sited near the present football pavilion.

Springburn Swans

Since 2001 there has been a resident pair of swans, the male sawn was ringed on 26 September 1999 and the female was ringed on 18 March 1998 both lived in Hogganfield Loch for two years before settling in Springburn Park and have successfully raised a brood of cygnets every year since then. They now spend most of the time in the old boating pond feeding on the planted water plants and bread from the public. With great vigour defended their ponds from other swans who were trespassing.

My Thoughts and Feelings

I found the whole project very interesting and through this I have become more aware of the wildlife all around us not only in the park but also everywhere by the road in the garden and in particular swans and the ringing of swans to track there movements.

Other activities I have had with John Muir Trust.

2002 I was on the The Great Glen Coast to Coast trip this was by open canoe on the Caledonian Canal starting at the top of Neptune's Step Ladder outside Fort William with the intention to paddle across Scotland to Inverness in five days with **Leave No Trace** Wild Camping at night. Most of the trip was on the canal with one day of white water river paddling and one day with two canoes tied together with a sail with the wind doing the work. However the wind got to strong and we had to abandon the trip half way. At night we had a grand time with chanter (lucky no Bagpipes) and singing and good food supplied by John Muir Trust that we had to prepare. A very Enjoyable Experience.



Ver. 5.2

May 2003 I was on the Summer Isles trip this was by kayak on the sea a totally different experience from the Great Glen Trip. The kayak lets you get close to the wildlife, we saw bull seals fighting for control of a harem much better seen from a wobbly kayak than sitting in comfort in front of the telly, sea otters and countless sea birds. We even paddled into caves you can see more at:
www.jmt.org/award/news/summerprogramme.html

July 2003 I was on the Isle of Eigg trip with the luxury of staying at Glebe Barn with log fire, bunk beds and a kitchen. We bivied out one night on the singing sands seen a eagle feeding its eaglet, many sea birds. See Elaine Humphries article and details of other trips at:

www.jmt.org/award/news/summerprogramme.html

October 2003 I completed a weekend residential leadership coarse for the John Muir Award this was the incentive for me to go for the Self – Guided Scheme and this booklet.



GENERAL INFORMATION - SPRINGBURN PARK

Opening Times

The Park is open all year from dawn until dusk

Local Facilities

From May to September there are toilets open at the Bowling pavilion. For the rest of the year the nearest public toilets and telephone are at Stobhill Hospital or at Springburn Leisure Centre.

There is a public telephone kiosk at 178 Balgrayhill Road.

Who to Contact

Park Ranger Service	Tel. 0141 552 1142
Land Services General Enquiries	Tel. 0141 287 5108
Glasgow City Council Cycling Line	Tel. 0141 287 9171
Parks Development Office	Tel. 0141 649 0331
Travel Line Scotland	Tel. 0870 608 2608
Conservation Officer	Tel. 0141 287 5067

Security

There is an operational parks depot in the centre of the park, the park is manned Monday to Friday during working hours. Park Rangers are on duty most of the time on a regular patrol, however areas of this park are quite isolated and care must be taken.

Useful Links

John Muir Trust
41 Commercial Street
Leith
Edinburgh
EH6 6JD
0131 554 0114
<http://www.jmt.org>
Glasgow Bio diversity Plan
<http://wildlife.glasgow.gov.uk/>
Glasgow City Council
WWW.glasgow.gov.uk
My Site
www.jim-stewart.co.uk