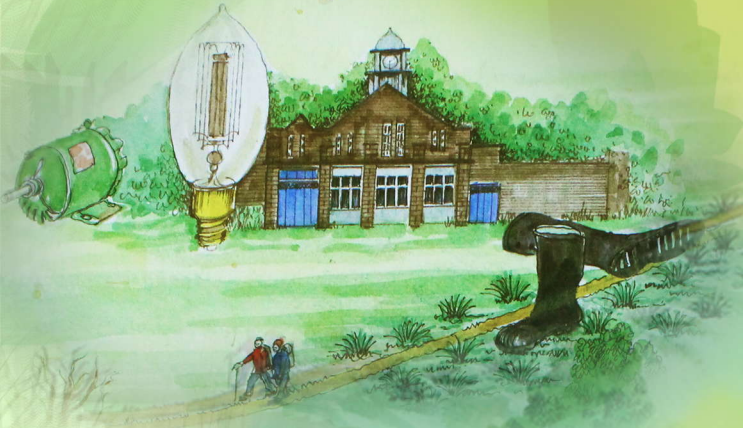




Friends of Parkinson's Park

Parkinson's PARK



The STORY Trail



LOTTERY FUNDED

The GREAT British STORY.

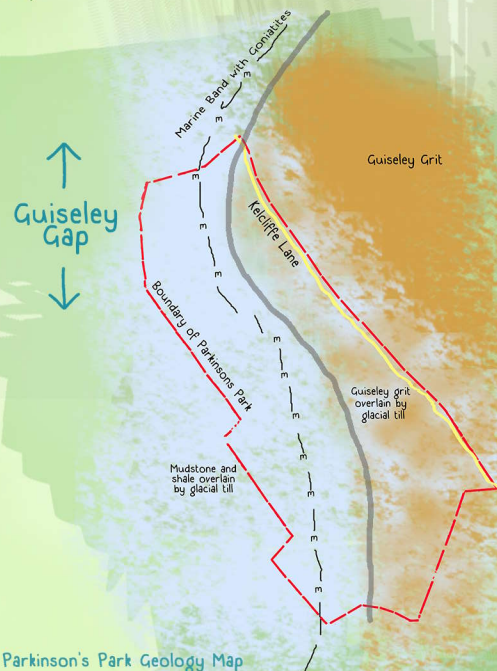
A heritage project for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, telling the story of Parkinson's Park.

Long ago, south of the Equator, huge rivers flowed through a swampy delta into a warm sea, depositing layers of sand and mud from inland mountains. Over millions of years these deposits compacted into bands of sandstone and mudstone called millstone grit, whilst the Earth's movements pushed them north. The Park lies over an area where a layer of sandstone called Guiseley Grit, meets a layer of mudstone containing a band of fossilised goniatites. This is why the land falls steeply and water springs from between the layers.



Goniatite

Then, thousands of years ago, a great ice sheet came from the North and spilled across the watershed between Wharfedale and Airedale carving out the millstone grit to form a glacial 'hanging valley' now called the Guiseley Gap. As the ice retreated it left a layer of muddy sediment called 'till' which we still experience today when it rains.



Parkinson's Park Geology Map

The Guiseley Gap landscape was rich in resources for early settlers, but let's move the story to AD 500. The Romans have left Britain, and we are in the age of 'King Arthur.' The Park is on the northern border of the British Kingdom of Elmet, a forest covers the area, and Anglo Saxons are conquering lands to the north of the



Wharfe. In the following centuries, Angle and Viking settlers cultivate the Park for their open field system— their languages leaving its mark in names such as Kelcliffe and Lands. The lynchets of Crooked Lands were made by their Oxen drawn ploughs. 1

After 'The Conquest' and the Norman's brutal destruction of Northern England, the Manor of Guiseley laid out a new settlement with the Park on the edge of its great West Field. When the Black Death struck in 1348 decimating the population, it is possible that with less available labour a rabbit warren was cultivated on Clapper Brow for food and fur 2. Clapper is Middle English for a burrow for tame rabbits.

In Elizabethan days the land was near the Hay Ground where someone lost a 1559 sixpence, later the Manor Court fined copyholder George Smith 3s 4d (17p) for driving his cart down Crooked Lands to the West Field 3. However, times were changing: King Henry VIII's 1530's Reformation had kick-started a new economy and the landscape was reshaping. Guiseley's Manor tenants needed to make their land more productive and agreed to enclose the Common Fields in smaller units with stone walls: meanwhile, alternative employment in textiles, quarrying and leather grew. The Hamlet of Kelcliffe became a tannery 4 using local cow hides and oak bark to make everything from buckets to weaving loom belts, and in 1709 Kelcliffe Lane was upgraded from a riding way to a gated cart track 5.



In 1719 the Manor of Guiseley and Esholt was sold to its tenants— now local farmers like Quaker, John Blessard, Stephen and Martha Overend 6 and socially mobile widow Susannah Walker 7 could harness new technology such as iron-plate ploughs and try new crops such as potatoes. As the 18th century rolled on the fields were bought and sold, some were used for new clothier-cum-farm houses, others were accumulated into 'estates' by 'Gentlemen' like John Burton from Wakefield. Mr Burton rented out the land to reliable tenants who would look after its fertility, people such as Churchwarden James Leadbetter, who farmed Little kelcliffe 8.

In the 19th century the land became meadow again with some stone walls being taken down, and in 1837 Kelcliffe Tannery was purchased by Dairy Farmer Marshall Grimshaw 9. He renamed Potterton Brow 10, so called after the surname of 17th century enclosure tenants, to Great Brow and used it as pasture. Many of the other landholders now had other employment e.g. malsters and shoemakers.

Edwardian civic philanthropy came to the park with textile mill owner Jonathon Peate in 1909: he brought Clapper Brow from malster Benjamin Popplewell and probably planted the line of oaks 11, perhaps for George V's coronation. An Edward VII Coronation Medal given to schoolchildren in 1902 has also been found in the Park.



Coronation Medal for Edward VII and Queen Alexandra

Philanthropy continued with Frank and Albert Parkinson Ltd who purchased the fields in 1937 to create a community park to replace a recreation ground lost to housing on Kelcliffe Lane. The Park became a childhood haven for sledging 12 and an annual Children's Gala 13 whilst 'old men' contemplated the state of the world at sunset 14.

In 2011, a forlorn Park was resurrected by locals who set up Friends of Parkinson's Park: the 1950's Celebration copses 15 and benches 16 were restored and new features such as the community orchard 17 and bog garden 18 added...

... now HISTORY rolls ON!

The PARKINSONS

Frank Parkinson



Albert and son Michael Parkinson

In 1908 'local lad' Frank Parkinson set up an electrical engineering agency in a stable at Eldon Mount, Guiseley, using £21 in savings. Brother Albert joined him in 1913 and F&A Parkinson Ltd began manufacturing motors. Soon, larger premises were needed; so local philanthropist Jonathan Peate backed a new motor works on land he owned at Greenshaw, Guiseley ¹⁹. The Company philosophy was Practical Idealism – high wages, staff goodwill and low costs. Success continued; F&A Parkinson Ltd amalgamated with Crompton and Co, a lamp manufacturer, in 1927 to form Crompton Parkinson Ltd. In 1932 the iconic Lamp Works was built and a one shilling lamp launched during the Great Depression (1929–33). The Company went on to sell products worldwide and became a major employer, one of the largest in Great Britain.

Workers' facilities were key to commercial success: by 1937 the brothers had laid out a Park on land to the east and south of the factory complex. The Park had tennis courts, putting and bowling greens, a rose garden, paths and seats to admire the view during breaks in work – a covenant was made giving the Park to the people of Guiseley, with the Company retaining ownership to ensure it stayed that way.

Frank Parkinson died suddenly, aged 58, of a heart attack in 1946. He had amassed significant wealth which was used for philanthropic causes, including Leeds University's Parkinson Building (1936) and Guiseley's Frank Parkinson Homes (1953). His Will bequeathed £1,000 a year for the benefit of factory staff which helped fund a number of annual events including the Children's Day (from 1949) and later in the 1950's a Flower and Produce Show, and an Autumn Bonfire Party.

A series of Company takeovers started in 1968 followed by Albert's death in 1971 – a chain of events that led to the closure of the Lamp Works in 2002 and the Motor Works in 2004. The factory itself was demolished in 2006 to make way for a housing estate, but the legacy of the Park and the Parkinson philosophy lives on.

Parkinson's PARK



Kelcliffe Lane

With thanks to...

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Friends of PARKINSON'S PARK...

(FOPP) was formed in October 2011 by a group of local residents who wanted to campaign to regenerate the Park.

In March 2016 FOPP became a Community Interest Company, incorporated under the Companies Act 2006 (Registration Number 10044868) and regulated by the CIC Regulator. A list of Directors can be found on the website.

The central aim of the Friends is to raise money and organize improvements to the Park in conjunction with the owners, and to fund and run the Park's community events calendar.

Thereby honouring the Park's social, cultural and environmental heritage and continuing the legacy of Frank and Albert Parkinson

The Friends work in conjunction with other Friends Groups and community organizations in Aireborough.

If you are interested in becoming a Friend to help on work parties or with events, contact Membership Secretary,
Martyn Hornsby Smith , 01943 876950,
For General enquiries contact Christine Parapia, 01943 877282,
Email parkinsonspark@gmail.com.



www.parkinsonspark.co.uk



Parkinson's Park



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