



Historical background to Lister Park

The Lister family:

The Lister family pedigree can be traced back to one **John Lister** of Derby (1312 AD). The earliest record of Manningham appears in a survey taken the previous year in 1311, in which it was described as a Berewick or Village attached to the township of Bradford.

It was during the reign of Henry VIII (1509 to 1547), that Thomas Lister- grandson of Sir William Lister of Thornton in Craven, married a daughter and co-heiress of Richard King, a cloth merchant in Bradford, and it was by this alliance that the Listers acquired their Manningham possessions. The earliest recorded map of the area is one dated 1613; this shows a small core of some dozen houses grouped together with only isolated farms elsewhere, although the road network by that time already defined the boundary of the future park. Among the early members of the family was the celebrated Physician Dr. Martin Lister, who died in 1657.

The Cunliffe name was introduced later through the marriage of Nicholas Cunliffe of Wycoller near Colne, to Elizabeth, daughter of the Rev Thomas Lister who was Vicar of Ilkley from 1726 to 1745.

Manningham Hall became the home of the Listers when Mr Ellis Cunliffe Lister relocated his family from Calverley House, Leeds, in 1819. He later became one of the first members of Parliament for Bradford, which he represented for about ten years. Mr Ellis Cunliffe Lister died in 1853 and his son Samuel Cunliffe Lister inherited the estate.

He later sold the house and ground in 1870 to the Bradford Corporation to be used as a public park and relocated to Farfield Hall near Addingham, the ancient residence of the Cunliffe Family.

Between 1613 and 1834 there is little record of the area in terms of maps and plans, although since 1834, Manningham has been regularly surveyed by Ordinance Survey.

1613 ~ 1871

The 1834 map extract shows how Manningham village was increasing in size and Manningham Hall and ground, later to become Lister Park, had been developed.

At that stage the grounds were split by a walled road leading to Bingley called Jumbles Lane.

Following the development of the first Listers Mill in 1838, and the workers houses which went with it, Manningham gradually started to transform from being a rural community into a suburb of industrial Bradford.

On a 1850 plan, Manningham Hall and grounds are shown in greater detail and it is evident that the northern section of the park (separated by the road to Bingley) had become a deer park.

At that time the Southern section of the grounds, within which Manningham Hall was located, was called Low-Park and it was linked to the deer park by a bridge, located to the east of the Hall.

A road led from the Oak Lane entrance to the Hall which continues over the bridge into the deer park and exits at the current Norman Arch entrance.

At the time both the deer park and Low Park consisted of open grassland with trees planted around the boundary and within the grounds.

Many of trees were planted by Mr Ellis Cunliffe Lister, father of Samuel Cunliffe Lister who sold Manningham Hall and its grounds to the Council.

Two lodges were erected in Low Park, one at the main entrance off Manningham Lane which was provided for the Park Ranger, and a further building became the home of the Head Gardner.

Conservatory:

The original conservatory was built during the Lister's occupation of Manningham Hall and was demolished in 1978 due to it's deterioration, in the main as a result of age. It was replaced with a modern structure which it's self was subsequently removed.

1870 ~ 1908:

Samuel Cunliffe Lister, who later became Lord Masham decided to move from Manningham, and so sold his home (Manningham Hall) and it's grounds to the Bradford Corporation for £40,000 on the 28th October 1870.

The land was sold at £20,000 under its valuation on the proviso that it be used as a public park. Agreement was reached to demolish the walls separating the Dear Park and Low Park on the basis that the public footpath be provided along the route of this lane which now links North Park Road with Keighley Road via the rear of Cartwright Hall.

In 1903 a guide was published of all the trees in the Park, compiled by members of the Bradford Scientific Association and the Bradford Natural History and Microscopic Society. There was eighteen different species of tree surveyed-

Cartwright Hall and the Formal Flower Gardens designed with it, remain an outstanding example of Victorian exuberance and the building is renowned for housing exhibition and displays of national acclaim, the building was officially opened by the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1904 with a grand industrial exhibition, which ran in the Park from May until October and attracted over two million visitors.

The 1904 exhibition set the future agenda for Lister Park, and it has remained as Bradford's premier and best known park.

The predominate species was the Sycamore (*Acer Pseudoplatanus*) which remains the most prolific in the park.

Other species surveyed in 1903 included:-

- Acacia (*Robinia Pseudacia*)
- Alder (*Alnus Glutinosa*)
- Ash (*Fraxinus Excelsior*)
- Beech (*Fagus Sylvatica*)
- Birch (*Betula Alba*)
- Elm (*Ulmus*)
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus Oxyacantha*)
- Holly (*Ilex Aquifolium*)
- Hornbeam (*Carpinus Betulus*)
- Horse-Chestnut (*Aesculus Hippocastanum*)
- Laburnum (*Cytisus Laburnum*)
- Lime (*Tilia Parvifolia*)
- Oak (*Quercus Robur*).
- Occidental Plane (*Platanus Occidentalis*)
- Poplar (*Populus*)
- Purple Beech (*Fagus Sanguinea*)
- Tuekey Oak (*Quercus Cerris*)

A more recent tree survey was undertaken during May and June 1996, this included all trees growing in mown grass areas or those growing in shrubberies which are likely to mature into specimens greater than two metres in height.

Each tree has been individually identified using a numbered metal tag, in total 1323 trees were surveyed of the following major Genera:-

Acer	499 (of which 439 are sycamore)
Fagus	106
Ilex	90
Tilia	83
Aesculus	72
Fraxinus	71
Prunus	66
Other	336

The majority of the tree planting dates from the Victorian period when the park was originally laid out, this has resulted in a comparatively even age structure typical of most Victorian parks.

A concerted effort to introduce new trees around the end of the 1960's, and early 70's, using a wide variety of species, this was followed with further planting in the late 1980's and early 90's to replace the Elms lost to Dutch Elm disease.

New planting using the original species type to establish an uneven age structure to the park, thus ensuring continuous tree cover for future generations.

With the exception of the Floral Gardens designed with Cartwright Hall, the early park landscape consisted of tree lined avenues with broad sweeping areas of open parkland.

As the park developed the new facilities were added, a more diverse variety of shrubs and trees began to appear to complement the new structures that had been built. This structural planting is predominantly around the lake and consists of traditional Victorian plant species.

In 1952 a garden for the blind was developed in the park between Cartwright Hall and the lake, this facility was most likely provided in response to the return of soldiers from the Second World War who lost their sight in battle. The selected site for the Gardens was not ideally situated for its intended purpose, as it sloped down to the lake in two directions. It was removed because of declined use.

In April 1902 it was suggested during a Council meeting that a Trade and Art exhibition be held to celebrate the opening of Cartwright Hall. Learning from the experiences of similar displays in Glasgow and Wolverhampton the Exhibition Committee placed emphasis on side shows to cater for popular tastes to try and avoid the significant losses incurred by the earlier shows. In April 1903 a Mr Knight of London was appointed as manager of the exhibition and by September it was decided that the inaugural exhibition would-

“Illustrate historically and commercially the past and present of the staple Industries of the City and District” at the time, (The Bradford Telegraph). This idea was to be presented in three sections: Art, Industry and a Woman's section

Lister Park is located in the densely populated area of Manningham, approximately two miles from Bradford City Centre on the A650 (Keighley Road) which is one of the main roads connecting the City of Bradford with Bingley, Keighley and the Yorkshire Dales.

The park is 22.25 hectares of which 1.2 hectares is made up of an ornamental lake now used for Boating., Cartwright Hall Art Gallery which Benefited from a £250,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund attracts visitors from throughout the region, containing traditional European art as well as art from the Indian Sub-continent, for which a Arts Lottery Fund of £81,000 was obtained.

The Park was provided for 'general Public Pleasure by the generous sale at £20,000 under its valuation by Samuel Cunliffe Lister on the 28th of October 1870, this generosity continued with a donation of £47,500.00 toward the cost of building Cartwright Hall Art Gallery and Museum and was repaid Bradford people who erected a Statue in honour of him, paid for by public subscription.

In line with the Council's Parks Strategy 'Our Parks – Their Future', Lister Park has become a place of fun and Celebration of Light and Life, of Nurture and Nature, of Rest and Relaxation and of Culture and Creativity.

Like many Victorian parks throughout the country, the heritage value is at risk due to diminishing capital and revenue budgets, however Lister Park remains an outstanding example of the foresight which Bradford's Victorian forefathers bestowed on the City and it is still acknowledged as the premier park in Bradford with fine examples of landscape design and architecture.

