

Wellingtonia Park, St Leonards.

Welcome to the Wellingtonia Park site. Watch this space for information about the Park, for events, developments and notices.



There are over a hundred houses on the Wellingtonia Park estate that lies between Wonford Road, Barrack Road and the Gras Lawn estate. We are lucky to have beautiful old trees, good open spaces and a well-used children's playground, owned by Exeter City Council. Also on the estate are houses owned by Spectrum Housing Association.



A History of Wellingtonia Park

Wellingtonia Park was named after the large Wellingtonia tree to the south of the development.



James Veitch
1752-1839



The site has an interesting history. In 1830 the site was part of a parcel of land purchased by the Veitch family for the establishment of a plant nursery. The Veitch family were well known plant hunters and nurserymen and many exotic plants from around the world including species of Rhododendrons, Camellias and Magnolia were brought back to England. They also planted specimen trees in Devon and beyond, many of which have been preserved and are subject to Tree Preservation Orders including trees in Wellingtonia Park.

At the centre of Wellingtonia Park is 'The Grange' a group of dwellings built around a Grade 2 listed building James Veitch had built. It was completed in 1837 and was originally called Gras Lawn.



The Grange

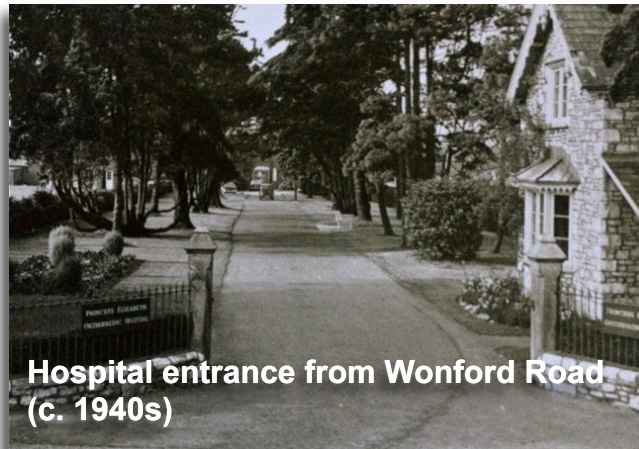
It is now split into flats and is part of Wellingtonia Grange within the Wellingtonia Park development. The name Gras Lawn is now given to the separate development to the south. The Veitch business became famous and Sir Harry Veitch (son of James) was instrumental in establishing the Chelsea Flower Show. The Veitch nurseries subsequently moved to Aliphington and were later taken over by St Bridget's Nurseries. The original site became the site of the Princess Elizabeth Orthopaedic Hospital

Princess Elizabeth Orthopaedic Hospital

This was opened in 1927 by the then Duke and Duchess of York (who later became King George VI and Queen) and named after their daughter Elizabeth. Princess Elizabeth herself visited the hospital in 1946.



Aerial view of the hospital (c.1970s)



Hospital entrance from Wonford Road (c. 1940s)

The hospital was run initially by the Devon Orthopaedic Association until taken over by the NHS in 1948. It became well known internationally in particular for the Exeter Hip Replacement developed by Professor Robin Ling (orthopaedic surgeon) and Dr Clive Lee (engineer)

Barbara Hepworth

Another interesting link with the hospital is that of drawings made by the artist and sculptor Barbara Hepworth. She became friends with the surgeon Norman Capener, also a painter and sculptor, after he successfully treated her daughter in 1944. He invited Hepworth to the hospital where she made a series of drawings of operations. Two of these drawings 'Trio' and 'Preparation' are in the collection of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery in Exeter. <http://www.exeter.gov.uk/ramm>



Further Information

General

Veitch Memorial Gardens and information boards, Southernhay Gardens, Exeter.
Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Queen Street, Exeter. (Portrait of Sir Harry Veitch, artefacts and other information) plus host to Veitch Memorial Lectures.

Books

"Seeds Of Fortune" by Sue Shepherd 2003 (a history of the Veitch family)
"The House of Veitch" Shirley Heriz-Smith 2002
Also "The House of Veitch" booklet obtainable from St Bridget's Nursery
"A Better Provision" by Hazel Harvey. 1998 (The first fifty years of the NHS in Exeter)

Websites

Caradoc Doy (with interesting links) <http://www.caradocdoy.co.uk>
Exeter City Council <http://exeter.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1633>
St Bridgets Nursery <http://www.stbridgetnurseries.co.uk/index.cfm/about/veitch>
<http://www.exeter.gov.uk/ramm> for details re Barbara Hepworth's drawings.