

## A special day for Birkenhead Park

The celebrations to mark the 170<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of Birkenhead Park have begun in style with the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the man who shaped the destiny of the park, landscape gardener Edward Kemp.

A civic reception was held at the park's Visitor Centre where guests, including Frank Field MP, the friends of Birkenhead Park and representatives of Conservation Areas Wirral, heard about Edward Kemp's legacy as Wirral Mayor, Cllr Pat Hackett, unveiled the plaque and declared it a "special day" for the park.

2017 is the bicentenary of the birth of Edward Kemp who, as well as supervising the layout of Birkenhead Park and becoming a renowned author on the subject of landscape design, also advised the commissioners in New York on the design of what was to become Central Park.

Robert Lee, Chairman of the Friends of Birkenhead Park said: "This is indeed a special moment for the park as we remember and pay tribute to Edward Kemp's unique legacy.

"Unveiling the plaque marks the start of several exciting events to be held in the park this year including the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Eisteddfod of Wales being held here. The park will also host the World Urban Parks Europe Region Congress in October."

Edward Kemp's name also lives on in the park's Edward Kemp Community Gardens and Growing Areas where volunteers from the Friends of Birkenhead Park, together with community groups and local schools, grow plants and produce.

The Friends are hoping to attract sponsorship to help fund replacement tools and uniforms for the many volunteers who enjoy the opportunities created by the community gardens.

Robert Lee added: "The gardens are a very valuable community asset and provide fantastic opportunities to learn new skills, make new friends and enjoy the park.

"We are hoping that sponsors will support us and help us to continue the great work that goes on here."

If you or your company or organisation can help by supporting the Friends of Birkenhead Park volunteers please contact [admin@fbp.org.uk](mailto:admin@fbp.org.uk)