

## Winterbourne seeks your stories about a historic Birmingham house and garden

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The University of Birmingham's Winterbourne Botanic Garden is holding its first Local History Day exploring the history of the House and Garden. The project is supported by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The twelve month Oral History Project will delve into the rich heritage of the beautiful Edwardian Arts and Crafts House and Garden built for John Sutton Nettlefold and his wife Margaret (nee) Chamberlain in 1903.

Working with a team of volunteers, the project hopes to unravel stories that will highlight the importance of Winterbourne within the University and local community. It will explore the stories of those who have lived and worked at Winterbourne over the years.

The project will also record experiences of Guest Keen and Nettlefold employees (GKN) and memories of those who lived in The Moorpool Estate which was built by John Sutton Nettlefold.

The Nettlefold family firm GKN was the largest screw, nut and bolt manufacturer in the world. With an industrial heritage stretching back to the start of the industrial revolution, the firm was known for its high wages, relatively short hours and good working conditions. John Sutton Nettlefold was the chair of the first housing committee in Birmingham and became both instrumental in the slum clearances at the dawn of the new century as well as pioneering social reform and enlightened housing policies.

Anna Keast who is running the project comments: "On the Local History Day we're calling for people to tell their own stories about the garden, bring along photographs (which will be scanned and returned on the day) and share their knowledge about Winterbourne's history. If you know anyone who has worked for GKN, someone who lived or worked at Winterbourne, or someone who may have memories of Back to Back housing or The Moorpool Estate, we want to hear from you.

Talks and displays will be held by National Trust, Smethwick Heritage Centre and Moorpool Residents Association, with garden tours and storytellers around the garden and as an added bonus there will be tea and cakes to enjoy!"

As well as seeking stories from participants we are also calling for volunteers to help with the project."

Visitors volunteering or participating in the project in any way will be given free entry into the garden on the day.

For more information about the Local History Day contact Anna on 0121 414 9115 or Garden Reception on 0121 414 3832

For further information contact Ben Hill, Head of Communications, University of Birmingham, Tel 0121 4145134, Mob 07789 921 163.

**ENDS**

### Winterbourne Botanic Garden

Built in 1903 the Garden started life as a private family garden and became the University of Birmingham Botanic Garden in 1944. In its 100 years it has developed and now houses the National Council for Conservation of Plants and Gardens European Rose collection, a Japanese Bridge and Tea House. It is a significant Edwardian Arts and Crafts Garden just three miles from the city centre.

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