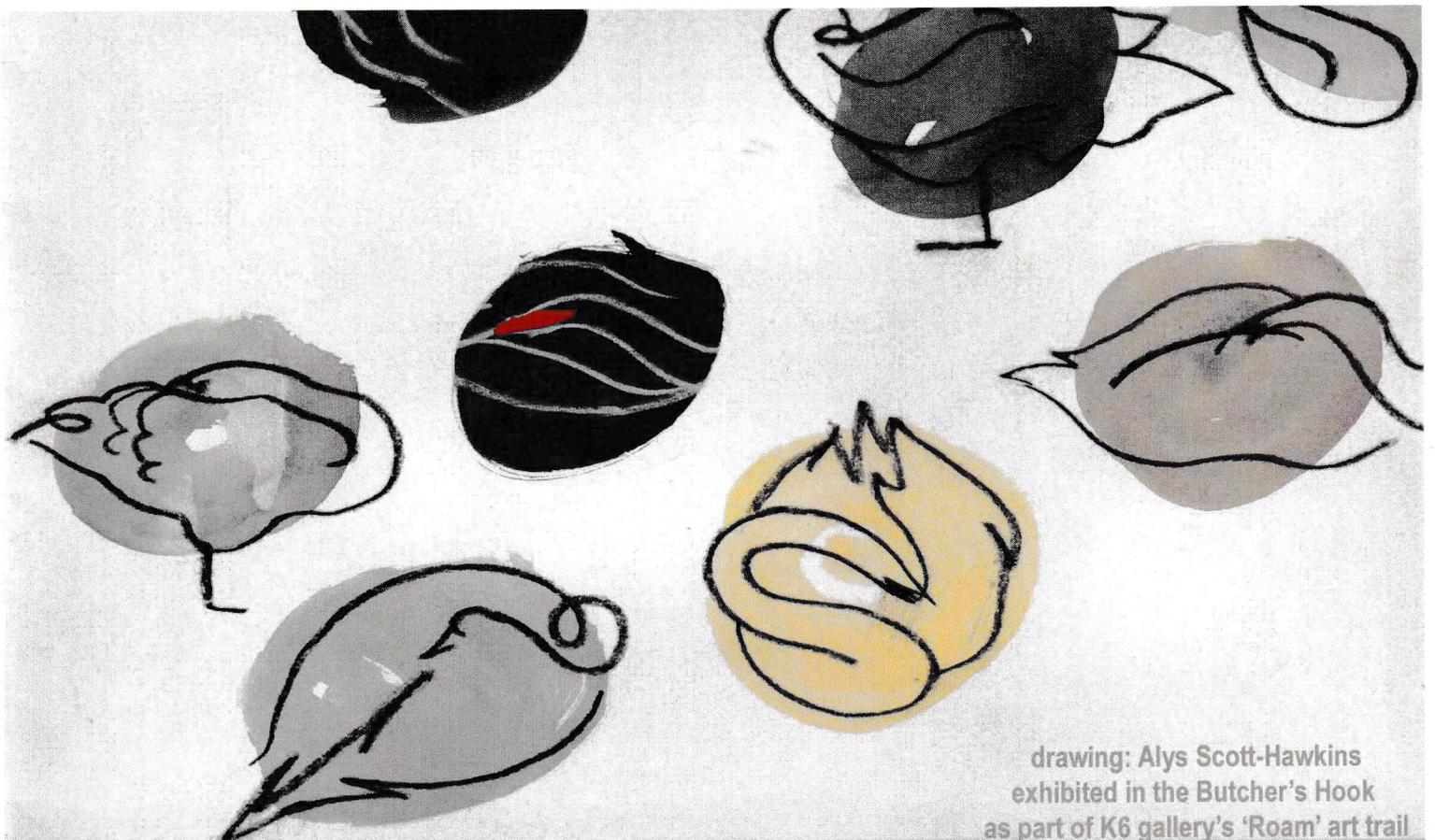


friends
of
riverside
park

newsletter july 2016

image: Jo Cunio



drawing: Alys Scott-Hawkins
exhibited in the Butcher's Hook
as part of K6 gallery's 'Roam' art trail

we installed the geese in riverside park in southampton early in january 2016. they were so warmly received, with walkers regularly spotted standing staring dreamily up at the geese as they twinkle in the sun, alongside a huge social media response. the timing, however, was not perfect - the geese were challenged by storms henry, imogen and jake in the few weeks after they arrived. as the artist behind the geese, i was painfully aware of the damage they sustained, and realised that without significant repairs, they would have to come down.

the geese were created as part of a commission for the national trust, exhibited in the winter garden at mottisfont for christmas 2014. they then spent a year packaged up and gathering dust in my son's bedroom. during that time, i went to the friends of riverside park, and got the go ahead from the friends, and the parks representative from the city council to install the geese in the trees where you see them today. i love the park - so much of my life in bitterne park has been centred around it: from small boys' birthday parties and bird feeding, to daily dog walks, to the steam train rides with visiting family, i have many fond attachments to this place. so it felt right to install the geese here, as testament to my happy times, in recognition of the few much sadder events that have taken place there, and as a gift to the bitterne park community.

and that is where the riverside park community came in: on march 17th i set up a crowd-funding project on kick-starter to raise the money required to repair the geese. in less than 24 hours, the project was funded. i was astonished at the love felt for the geese, and that 87 people generously donated to keep them flying.

a piece of art for the community, sustained by the community.



THE STORY OF THE RIVERSIDE GEESE

artist: sarah filmer image: richard bull

DOUG PERRY: CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Welcome to the second newsletter from the Friends of Riverside Park, and my thanks to Sarah Filmer for her collating and editing work.

It was back in 1963 that cricket was first played on Riverside Park – there were originally three pitches, and the first game was a representative between a team from Southampton Cricketers and cricketers from Hampshire County including local player, Peter Sainsbury. Peter attended Bitterne Park School, played many seasons for Hampshire, and also played for England. For years, the bat signed by the Hampshire players was in the groundsman room, so was not seen by anybody. It is now on show at the Aegeas Bowl. The first 6 scored on Riverside Park was not by any Hants cricketer, but by Dave Creedon, another Bitterne Park boy, who was playing for St Georges. Now owner of trophyman.

The committee has been pretty busy the last few months:

Besides our monthly litter picks, we have done additional litter picks to celebrate the Queen's birthday.

We have started repairing the hedge along Manor Farm Road: we have planted 22 whips, and ordered more for October when we hope to remove some of the sycamore to try and get the hedge back to mainly hawthorn and blackthorn.

We have ordered bulbs to plant on Wednesday of the October half term school holidays (26th)

We are planning a bird nest boxes building event again in October, where we hope to get children involved.

We have been pursuing the council to remove some of the trees that have fallen, and place them along the side of the Dimond car park (next to the tennis courts) to stop cars driving across the park.

We are also in discussion with council initiative 'Active Nation' to repair the footpaths, which are becoming dangerous in places.

I would like to thank Darren the groundsman for his help in keeping the park in such a good state for everyone to enjoy, and the dog walkers who daily dog walk and pick up litter.

The Friends of Riverside Park would really benefit from a larger membership, so if you can spare a few moments, or a few pounds (£3 pa or £20 life membership) or both, we can work together as a local community to keep our park beautiful, clean and accessible for us all.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, and if you would like further information, please contact me on 02380-492503

Doug Perry
Chairman, FORP

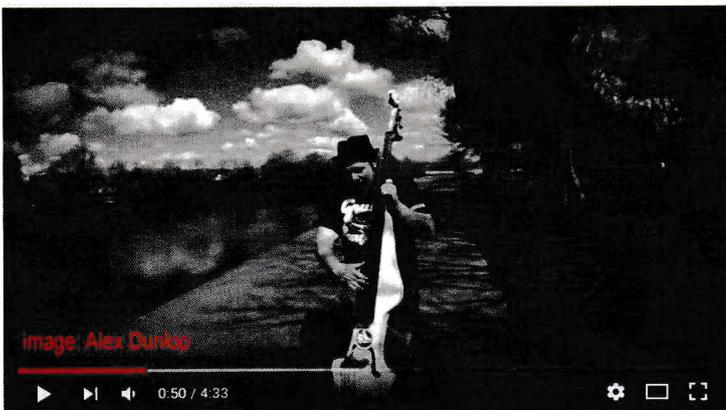
SMALL NEWS, LETTERS, MEMBERSHIP

What a joy to visit Riverside Park at sunset and see the newly restored Snow Geese, complete with engravings, glittering pink and orange reflecting the evening sky. The first cygnets of the year have hatched. The black swans have beaten the mute swans to it with their second ever brood. Breeding pairs in the wild are a real rarity so these New Zealand natives must like it here on the Itchen. Who can blame them when they have such a beautiful park to live in?



Marie Keates mariekeates.co.uk/

The park had a starring role in the latest music video by local lyrical firebrand Grant Sharkey. "the park was a key inspiration for the video" said Alex Dunlop who filmed it " I was very clear that I wanted the clip to have a real sense of place and as Grant and I both live near the park, I was very keen that we film there" NB, Grant's video contains swearing



Dear Editor,

I wanted to take a moment to thank the person I walked past the other weekend who was cleaning up the area along the path in Riverside Park. Since he wasn't wearing a uniform, I can only assume that he was a generous local resident who wanted to do his bit to keep the parks looking lovely. I'm assuming that he is park of the Friends of Riverside Park group, as I've seen posters for their regular litter picks [Editors note: 1st Saturday of the month, 10am meet at the Sports Pavilion]

We were on a schedule, as we were starting our walk to Winchester along the Itchen Navigation Trail, a route that takes you all the way through Riverside Park, past Woodmill and under the M27, so I only had a chance to call out a quick 'Thank you!' to him.

I don't live in Bitterne or St Denys, so I pass through the parks every so often on my bike, and it is always such lovely surroundings. So thank you again to that gentleman and all the other people who help out with keeping the park so beautiful.

Kind regards, Megan from Shirley



Note from FORP treasurer, Ann Bennett:

The black swans have had their 3rd brood Unusual to have the teenagers in the group as well? Every now and again if the babies get too far from mum, the older cygnets give them a nip on the neck and they run for cover on the mum's back. I believe they are from Australia, though some in New Zealand.

A little egret has also been much in evidence this week feeding on the park side of the river.

FORP MEMBERSHIP

Become a friend of Riverside Park and make a difference.

It's easy to join and there's a choice of membership:

Annual: £3 Lifetime: £20

Subscriptions help to fund the running of this community group, whose purpose is to keep the community involved in the future of the park, and maintain it's physical and natural environment in liason with the council

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