

Mayor opens Riverside Park MUGA



A dream comes true for Doug Perry after 11 years work.

Eleven years ago Doug Perry, Chairman of Friends of Riverside Park, asked a group of youngsters in the park what feature they would most like to see added to the park. They replied a basket ball hoop.

On October 3rd this year the Mayor Les Harris formally opened the brand new Multi Use Games Area costing £50,000 providing not just a basketball court but potentially space for various sports and it has been in use every day since. In order to achieve this the Friends of Riverside Park FORP made applications to Veolia Environmental Trust for a grant of half the cost of £25,000. The first attempt two years ago was unsuccessful. A second application won approval following work by the FORP Committee in conducting more extensive surveys of local park users to confirm the facility was something the community really wanted and by obtaining the support of local ward councillors. Ivan White, John Inglis and David Fuller swayed the council to award Ward funding to match Veolia's grant. Ward funding is a sum of money made to different wards to support projects of benefit to the community. Heartfelt thanks to both Veolia and the Council and congratulations to Doug for all his hard work and persistence.

Chairman's Report

What an exciting year we had!

At our AGM in February we spoke about the progress of the MUGA (Multiple Use Games Area). We never expected to say by September it had been built and it has been well used though it was only officially opened on 3rd October. Thank you to His Worship the Mayor Les Harris for performing the ribbon cutting ceremony! We obtained a £25,000 grant from Veolia Environmental Trust (the waste people) and we thank them very much. Our three local councillors got the wheels moving, persuading the Council to vote a dedicated Ward grant towards the park, also of £25,000. Our sincere thanks to them and Councillor Rayment for their tremendous support. A very happy ending to 11 years of work towards this project.

We continued litter picking on the 1st Saturday every month throughout the year from March to November and thank all those, including our Councillors, who turn up when they can. We are grateful also to all those undertaking this valuable social service during the week.

The most disappointing part of the year was not to retain the Green Flag. The majority of criticisms made by the judging panel were not within our remit as Friends of the Park to rectify but one item we have been pressing for has been the removal of the decaying container in the carpark on Woodmill Lane which has been a source of vermin for years.

I had the pleasure to meet up with Roy Taylor the Head Groundsman in 1963 when the park was opened; p4 shows one of Roy's first tree planting projects in the park. He recounted many stories of what went on in those years. One thing he told me was that he drove over to Millbrook Road to collect old headstones from



the cemetery located in Whitestone Gardens opposite the big garage. These headstones were used to build up the Woodmill car park where the ice cream van is situated.

More bulb planting took place this November (see p4), and in January further hawthorn and blackthorn whips will strengthen work of two previous seasons along Manor Farm Road.

We are sorry the Pitch, Putt and Golf Football will not open this year but will keep pressing for this facility to be modernised and retained.

This year we supported the initial Riverfest this year and gave away 25 bird nest box kits for families to make and put up at home. We hope to make more kits for next year. Some money for materials came from a Southampton City Council Community Chest award. Thank you SCC! Also in closing I would like to give Steve the owner of Londis in Oaktree Road a big thank you for the gift of £633 from the sale of plastic bags. This helped not only towards the bird box project but also provided tabards, new stick-pickers and bag holders for litter picking.

Please support our AGM Thursday 15th March at 7.30pm Bitterne Park Baptist Church Hall, Wellington Rd, SO18 1PH

Doug Perry November

News from the Riverside Miniature Railway

We have been running each Sunday afternoon when the weather let us and we have had a regular flow of of the faithful. It appears that passenger numbers are a little lighter than in previous years but then we have had Wimbledon, a Grand Prix and rain.

We supported 'Riverfest', in fact we ran from 10 am to 6 at night, a long day but we made well over 1,600 passengers happy. Our Naomi House charity day in July was quite well supported and we made then £350 on top of their stall sales.



Dave Orchard, Railway Grounds Manager

with a roof of strong corrugated cladding so it all stays together and is as vandal proof as we can get it. The "Special Needs Car" is in service and will take a wheel chair, a mobility scooter or a whole family outing! Vacuum braking makes it really safe. We are in the process of improving the signalling system and a chase cut in the concrete will carry a new cable to the signal box. By spring of 2018 the young hedging plants will grow over the tunnel and will hide it too so only observant readers will know anything has been done.



We have two special Saturdays for railway buffs, a 3½" day for the smaller locos to use the track by themselves and the use the inner of the two rails on the raised track. Then in September we organised a 'rolling stock' day with lots of wagons and coaches. Just an opportunity for people from both our own and other clubs to show off that they have made.

Our other charity day was 'Poppy Sunday' the weekend before Remembrance Sunday.

Launching our new Special Needs Car!

On October 22nd we were delighted to welcome his Worship the Mayor Les Harris to open our new venture. The trolley tunnel is completed and linked to the high level track,



Do come down and visit us on Sundays and if you think you would like to have a go at a little model engineering, come and join us. We are all novices really these days!

Regards David Goyder, Chairman

Riverside Park, Now and Then: spring 1963



Roy Taylor, as a young groundsman planting a young copper beech in 1963.

That same tree this November!!

Given shortage of Council funding, together we can maintain a lovely park not just for now but for our children and their children too!



And Now! A great turnout for bulb planting in November



HOPEFULLY this month - to end our news - after years of complaining the rat infested container in Woodmill Lane Carpark is about to be removed!!

