

A Viking Legacy

Just over 1000 years ago the Vikings came pouring out of their homelands to trade, raid, conquer and settle, driven by a thirst for adventure. They dominated much of Northern Europe and locally they dominated the Wirral Peninsula.

As they sailed their majestic long boats into the River Dee they would use Tansky's Rocks as a water break sailing past Hilderberg Island (Hilbre Island) to Meols.

Look out of the porthole in Tansky's today at low tide and marvel at the sight of Tansky's Rocks that rise out of the water, named by the Vikings over 1000 years ago.

Now Tansky's cafe-bar is the centre of top quality coffee and handmade individual cakes and a tranquil haven to romanticise over a carafe of wine served with olives and whitebait as the sun sets. Perfect on any occasion, special or otherwise.

Contributed by Hannah Watson

Help Required

We need help to ensure the smooth running of our **Christmas Craft Fair on 26 November**

- Preparing and serving food and drinks
- Baking cakes
- Taking cash
- Manning our stall
- Donating raffle prizes

We also need help to marshal the **Lantern Procession on Friday 11 November** commencing 5.15pm. Hi-viz jackets provided.

Can you help?

Please get in touch with me on **0151 625 5158** or by email: peter.vryan@hotmail.com

R HINTON & SON

97 Banks Road Tel 625 5605

Family Butchers specialising in
Fresh Meat & Poultry

Licensed to sell Game/ Venison/
Pheasant/ Wild Duck (seasonal)

Free daily local deliveries

Design, Typesetting and Printing by Jon Tarrant Design & Print.

Proud to be associated with Friends of Coronation Gardens

- graphic design • web design • logo design • marketing
- branding • website SEO • printing • photography

07816 293 097 www.jontarrant.org



Jon Tarrant
Design & Print

How To Join Us

You don't have to have gardening skills!

You may just wish to give us moral support or help us with fundraising. See us in the Gardens on the first Saturday of each month 10-12 noon or get in touch via our website www.friendsofcoronationgardens.co.uk or phone **0151 625 1676**

We only ask for £3 for individual and £5 for family membership.

Travelling Light Lantern Peace Parade

Friday 11 November at 5.30pm at
Coronation Gardens

"Linking Armistice Day to Martinmas to
celebrate peace and reconciliation with
ourselves and with the earth."

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM will be held
on Wednesday 9 November at
7.30pm at Westbourne Hall

2011 In Review

Our Summer Events are again a memory, but we can report a great deal of success and an increase in numbers of visitors to the Gardens.

The **First Sunday Arts Fairs** proved to be a popular attraction with many new artists and crafts people joining in.



Although making money from these is very much a secondary consideration, we are pleased to report almost £500 were raised from donations, despite frequently adverse weather conditions. Brian Larsen was once again the easy-going but persuasive manager of these events, latterly assisted capably by Jenny Dunlop.

The **May Bank Holiday Fair** was affected by rain in the morning, but proved a great success thanks to the persistence of the stall holders who stayed on for an extra hour to reap the



benefits of the sunny afternoon.

It was a profitable event, raising around £400 but, more importantly, introduced the Gardens to numerous new visitors, many of whom confessed to not having visited for several years. They were invariably complimentary about the transformation of the Gardens from their previous sadly neglected state.

Another way of ensuring that passers-by don't just pass by is to create **windows in the "ovens"** which is planned for the next stage of development. By the time you read this, four of the glass-block windows will have been installed and we plan for more to come. This is not a cheap project - the four windows we have installed have cost almost £8,000. The Local Authority have paid £4,000 towards this, a sum already committed to as part of the Green Flag Award, the remainder coming from our own funds, plus a Your Wirral Grant obtained by John Chapman - one of our hard working committee members.

Peter Ryan

A New George Thompson Painting

We take a keen interest on matters outside the gardens, especially the alcoves and seating on South Parade which are part of our local heritage. When the park was built, these alcoves had windows and these are being reinstated (see 2011 in Review). Due largely to pressure from the Friends, repairs to the roof are being made and the seating has been repaired and repainted. George Thompson has produced a new painting of the Hydro Hotel and swimming pool in a scene from around 1960. The prints will be available at our Christmas Fair on 26 November. They will be a limited edition of just 80, so be sure to claim yours as when they're gone - they're gone!

John Christian



In This Issue...

- 2011 Review
- Can You Help?

- What's in a name?
- A new painting by George Thompson
- A New Name for the Café

Green Flag Award



We were awarded the Green Flag for the fourth year running!

It gives me a lot of pride to say it was achieved largely due to the fourteen members of the Friends Group who came along on the day of the judging and impressed the judges with their sheer enthusiasm.

On looking at the Gardens, you will no doubt be initially impressed with the improvements that have been made. However, closer inspection will reveal the sorry lack of basic maintenance of many of the shrubs and plants. When you see anything new growing, or see the croci and daffodils in the Spring, be assured that they are there because of the efforts of the Friends. Is this a criticism of the Local Authority? Yes it is, and I make no apology.

Peter Ryan
Chairman, Friends of Coronation Gardens

Cover photo courtesy of www.rivinationphoto.showsite.com

Winter Events

Friday 11 November @ 5.30pm
Travelling Light Procession
starting at Coronation Gardens

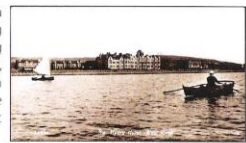
Organised by our friends at FROG - Friends of Grange Cemetery Gardens. There will be opportunities to make lanterns at workshops before the event. The procession attracts large numbers of people, even when the weather is atrocious, as last year.

Saturday 26 November from 11am - 4pm
Christmas Craft Fair
Westbourne Community Centre

We hope to provide an even better display of gift items made by local crafts people and enthusiasts. These often include one-of-a-kind items not available in shops, and unique in every sense of the word. Admission is FREE and there will be tasty food and drink available at reasonable prices. If you haven't been to Westbourne Community Centre recently, come along and see the transformation!

What's In A Name ?

Now that Coronation Gardens is a popular destination for visitors, those of us who are walking about wearing yellow tabards on the first Saturday of the month, trying to look busy or even doing some useful gardening, are often asked about the history of the Gardens. In response most of us shake our heads and say "Well, we might look like it but believe it or not we weren't there at the beginning!"



Over the past ten years I've spoken to many people who have fond memories of the land before it was purchased, when they remembered it as part of what they knew as the Dunes. It seems the area of low sand hills was used extensively as a playground despite the fact that it was a bit rough. At the opening of the new park, John Selwyn-Lloyd, Chairman of the Council, described the area as formerly a 'waste land composed of ugly sand hills ...where the tide broke over leaving a stagnant pool' - most parents will shudder at this yet recognise it as a ready formula for attracting youngsters!

The beginning of Coronation Gardens, as we now know them, was in fact 8 July 1935 when the Clerk to Hoylake Urban District Council signed and exchanged contracts for the purchase of two plots of land adjoining the Hydro Hotel, measuring 3,138 square yards and 7,850 square yards. Both cost eight shillings (40p) per square yard! Isn't that astonishing, compared to today's prices?

The Council then went on to borrow £5,300 from the Ministry of Health in November 1936 for layout and improvement of the land. Thus the total cost approached £10,000. On 9 March 1937 a tender for work on the site was accepted from Messrs. Jackson Bros.

In February 1938 it is recorded that the Manageress of the Hoylake Hotel (presumably the Hydro) asked for permission to provide a gate between the hotel grounds and South Parade Gardens (the Gardens' first name). Incidentally, she was charged one shilling per year for this privilege! On 8 March 1938 a tender was accepted for the tenancy of the new café from a Mrs S G Campbell. In the relevant Council Minute the Gardens were referred to as Banks Road Gardens (another variation). Sunday opening was restricted to 2pm to 8pm.

On 5 April 1938 the Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee resolved that the South Parade Gardens be named Coronation Gardens to mark the coronation of George VI in 1936. The formal opening took place later that month. Therefore the Gardens and the Café, which is currently enjoying a rather splendid restoration, will celebrate their Diamond Jubilee in April 2013.

What a pity, as our next Spring Fair, to be held on Sunday 27 May 2012, is planned to be our best ever, a Seaside Fair with lots of typical seaside attractions; Punch & Judy, carousels, candy floss, coconut shys, etc. It would have been nice to have celebrated the Diamond Jubilee at the same time - maybe we'll have to plan even better for the following year!

John Christian

Sources: Hoylake Urban District Council Minutes; Wirral Borough Council Archives
Hoylake & West Kirby Advertiser, Hoylake & West Kirby News