

# The Moor Pool Duck



www.moorpool.com



Residents' Newsletter for Moor Pool Garden Suburb. No 50 September 2010

## 50<sup>th</sup> Issue!

### Happy Duckday! Moorpool Duck.

#### Letter from the Chair

Hello Everyone,

I do hope you will enjoy reading this 50<sup>th</sup> issue of the Duck. The Duck is so important for keeping you up to date with what is happening on the Estate and I am extremely grateful to Mike Frost who has been a great Editor for many years. It takes time to put together a publication, even with modern computer software as the stories and columns don't write themselves. I must also thank those Duck deliverers who have gone out in all weathers over the years to get your edition delivered and I can say from experience that some letterboxes and entrances can be quite challenging!

Two important events are coming up shortly, the dance and the Festival. Do support them by coming along. The Dance is the chance to get together socially, whilst the Festival is our way of promoting the Clubs and Estate to a wider audience. Tickets for the dance are available from the shop, or if you contact me I will put you in touch with one of our ticket sellers.

Finally, thanks to all those past Committee members and supporters who helped to make your Residents Association a reality again.

Rob Sutton

**Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Moorpool Duck!** - Gisela Stuart

"Strong communities and supportive neighbourhoods is something everybody wants

but few are prepared to do what it takes to create and maintain them.

But things are different here on the Moor Pool. It had a good start when it was originally designed as a garden suburb but over the years absentee landlords, economic pressures which for example led to the closure of the post office and the threat from builders has provided a fair number of challenges.

Local residents have risen to those challenges and the Moor Pool Duck newsletter is the most visible demonstration of a thriving local community. The Duck is written by people who care for each other and the place they live in. It's not easy and it takes a lot of time and commitment, but Moor Pool residents aren't afraid to get involved and fight for what's important to them.

But there are still big challenges ahead. Apart from the need to invest in the estate and keep the developers in their place, I think it's also important that young and old and the well off and not so well off can go on living together here on the estate. Times are tough for many, but they are particularly hard for those on fixed incomes. We must make sure that the properties of those who rent are properly maintained and that rent increases are kept at reasonable rates.

When it comes to traffic controls, dealing with planning applications and protecting the historic nature of the estate I hope that we the politicians will go on putting our party differences aside and work together with you. The Moor Pool is setting an example to us all. " ... Happy 50<sup>th</sup> Moorpool Duck!  
Gisela Stuart M.P

## **50<sup>th</sup> Duck Congratulations – John Alden**

"I would like to congratulate the editor and editorial board of the Moor Pool Duck for having reached the milestone of the 50th edition. It has been very successful in keeping everyone informed of the happenings in the Moor Pool Estate. I look forward to reading the next 50 issues."

Councillor John E. C. Alden.

## **Moor Pool – a jewel in Birmingham’s Crown** Mike Whitby.

In celebration of the 50th issue of the Moor Pool Duck, Mike Whitby, Leader of Birmingham City Council and Chairman of the Harborne Ward Committee comments on the importance of Moor Pool for Birmingham as a whole:

“Birmingham currently boasts one of the best records in the UK for quality of life, as the only city outside of the capital to appear in the ‘Mercer Index’ of the top 100 world cities (ranked 55th). It is the Council’s stated ambition to build upon our success to date and, by 2026, take this city into the top 25.

To achieve this we clearly need to address a multiplicity of issues right across the city. Key, however, to our success to date – and our success in the future- is being able to boast some of the most characterful and charming neighbourhoods and communities in the country.

Amongst these, Moor Pool is undoubtedly one the jewels in Birmingham’s crown. As an almost complete example of a true “garden suburb” this historic area is a living link to Birmingham’s proud past, Indeed, despite being over 100 years old there is a value and particular resonance in Nettlefold’s thinking around sustainable communities and development – with lessons many modern cities would do well to learn from.

I recently had the pleasure of a walk around the estates “hidden areas” with the editor of the Moor Pool Duck - and was struck by the number of true beauty spots the estate boasts. It is, without doubt, one of the real selling points for Birmingham as a city and makes my job of ‘selling’ the benefits of our city, as location for new jobs and new investment, much easier!”

Councillor Mike Whitby.

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## **Japanese Knotweed**

Following efforts by the Residents Association over many years culminating in a petition to the Council, the first steps have finally been taken to deal with the Estate’s Knotweed problem and it is now looking wonderfully ill and dying. It has to stay in its dead-looking brown condition for a while longer before being cut down to allow time for the treatment to spread right through its system. It will need further treatment over the next couple of years and we shall monitor this closely.

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## **Letters to the Editor**

Wynne and Pete Richards wrote in with their thanks for the work of the MRA and MiB – also pointing out some of the visible eyesores to be seen on the Estate and urging everyone to look after and try to keep it as lovely as possible. Wynne and Pete also remarked that when looking over the Moor Pool you can see “ lovely sunsets and golden sunrises .....a golden glow that lifts your spirits”.

If you have something you would like to share with fellow residents, then email [rob@moorpool.com](mailto:rob@moorpool.com) or drop a note at the MRA post-box at Moor Pool News & Wine.

Chair: Rob Sutton. 426 5669.

## Website News.

Do look at the pictures of recent events and also the pictures of the Silver Jubilee and the 1910 Committee. Can you name any of the faces for us? Don't forget the 'Sale', 'Announcements' and 'Wanted' section on the website is free.

The MRG site [www.moorpool.co.uk](http://www.moorpool.co.uk) also carries information re the planning applications etc.

## Coffee Morning

The next coffee morning is on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September. The coffee morning is an opportunity to meet and introduce new residents. Do feel free to bring along friends, and invite neighbours to come along too.

## Moor Pool Trust

In a response to a letter from the MRA, Council Leader Mike Whitby informed us that discussion with Grainger were ongoing and the Trust would be on the agenda at a meeting in August. As soon as we have any information we will inform residents.

## Verge Damage

The MRA has had discussions with local councillors and suggested possible forms of grass protection. At the moment possible test stretches of verge are being considered to try out some of the options.

## Moorpool News and Wine

The place to shop locally and without the hassle of trying to park near the High Street. Please do use it whenever you can instead of going to the supermarket. Raj has a cash machine, fax machine and copier, all up and working, along with tempting special offers on wines and beers. The shop also has the MRA letter box inside where you can post correspondence to us. Opening times are on the website.

## Anyone for Skittles?

The unique and historic Moorpool Skittle Alley opened in 1911; two years later the Moorpool Skittles Club was formed. The alley is

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a twin alley, consisting of a "flat" alley and a "round" (or convex) alley, and is the only one of its kind in the UK. The club meets in the alley which is under the main Moor Pool Hall on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday nights during the autumn and winter, and Wednesday nights during the spring and summer. You can be sure of a warm welcome at the club, and a very entertaining night out, so please come along and have a go!" For more information, please contact Mick O'Malley on 0121 427 5051, or e-mail [mromalley@hotmail.com](mailto:mromalley@hotmail.com).

## **Moor Pool Festival**

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September

11 am – 4.30 pm

The chance to see and visit Moor Pool's Clubs and find out more about its history.

£30 prize for best Edwardian costume.

Teas and refreshments. Face painting, stalls, games and much more.

Starting from Moor Pool Hall  
3.30 pm Free Concert.  
Queens Park Sinfonia  
Not to be missed!

## Moorpool Players

Congratulations to The Duck on reaching such an important milestone. Those of our members who receive copies always find the contents interesting and informative and 'The Players' have made good use of its pages which allow us to give details of all our shows. Having plodded my way around the Estate for years delivering flyers I have nothing but praise for the Duck delivery team.

And now an early plug for our next show. It will be 'Confusions' by Alan Ayckbourn and will be staged from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>

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**November.** Needless to say, watch The Duck for further details in due course.

John Healey

## Memories of Moor Pool

Hilary Everard

*Rob Sutton has asked for memories of life on the Estate to mark the 50th edition of The Duck, so here goes. So many memories, where to begin? At the beginning, obviously.*

*My first memory is of the day our family left the house I was born in, 25 Margaret Grove, to move to 40 Margaret Grove. At two years of age I doubt I would have had any memory of it, except for the fact that a neighbour's dog jumped up me and I was terrified. I can still see the empty room and Mom talking to the neighbour. I lived for the next twenty years at No.40 until I married and have lived on this Estate ever since.*

*Life on Moor Pool Tenants Estate was idyllic. My two friends, the Austin boys, and I were the only small children in the road during the late 30's and early 40's. A bit like the three musketeers we stuck together and could be found up and down the road all day on our bikes, down the road and under the railway bridge to Mrs. Williams sweet shop, up the railway embankment and best of all crawling down the culvert which took the overflow from the Moorpool pond, until we reached the opening under the road, which became one of our dens and a good place to hide. All this continued until we were well into our teens, joined by other boys and girls who lived locally.*

*I was lucky to live near to my Grandfather who had his youngest daughter and his daughter-in-law living with him while their husbands were in the army and another auntie, uncle and cousin living just over the road. Many a night during the early part of the war, Mom, Dad and myself ran down the road when the sirens sounded to sit in Grampa's air raid shelter during a raid.*

*Even as a youngster I was aware of a particular closeness in the community of the Estate. We were lucky to have so many family close-by, but we were also fortunate to have neighbours who were like an extended family, we knew them well and their families also.*

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*Generations lived on the Estate, it simply was like living in a village.*

*In 1971, I served on the Queens Jubilee Celebration Committee and we had a wonderful time arranging fund raising events, culminating in a marvellous response from the residents who turned out on the day itself to take part in and enjoy watching all the various events. The day commenced with children's fancy dress, followed by a Grand March, sports events, a children's party and in the evening a very enjoyable buffet and dance.*

*I do hope that everyone will support our current hard working Residents Committee and attend the planned celebrations for our Estate's Centenary. I know from my own experience in 1977 that it is possible by taking part to make new friendships and to feel part of a wonderful, thriving, community.*

Hilary Everard

### *Siobhan Collins - McCarthy Dance Academy*

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#### **New Pilates Classical Matwork Class**

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Mob: 07896315199

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## Advertising

A scale of charges is available for placing a commercial advertisement in the Duck newsletter and on the website. The Duck is delivered to over 500 homes on and around the Estate. Details can be downloaded from the website. Sponsors are also invited for the forthcoming events.

## Subscriptions

As can be seen from the many activities being reported in *the Duck*, a lot is now happening on the Estate. The MRA tries to help as much as it can, but relies solely for regular income on subscriptions from Residents. Subscriptions of £5 per household or £3 per single person are extremely reasonable and show your support and commitment. The subscription year runs from the date of the AGM so subs for 2011 will be due from this October. Donations are also welcome.

Please send your payment to either Gill Morgan (Treasurer: 80, Moorpool Ave) Rob Sutton (Chair: 64 Margaret Grove), or Mike Frost (Duck Editor: 1 Carless Avenue).

## Dates for your Diary

Coffee Mornings

Sat 4<sup>th</sup> September. Lower Hall

&

Sat 25<sup>th</sup> September. Lower Hall

Moor Pool Festival Dance 2010

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September. Main Moor Pool Hall.

Moor Pool Festival 2010.

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September. 11am to 4pm Various venues.

Residents AGM

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010. 7.00pm for 7.30pm Main Moor Pool Hall

Hall Centenary

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2010.

Unveiling of Civic Society History Plate.

Carol Walk

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2010

From the Main Moor Pool Hall

Harborne Ward Committee

27.9.2010 7.00 pm

Harborne Primary School

Edgbaston Constituency Committee

21.9.2010 7.00 pm

Committee Rooms 3 & 4 The Council House

## **Moor Pool Dance**

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September

Doors open 8.00 pm

Featuring

## **The Starlites** **Swing, Jive, Rock n Roll**



Come and have a great night out.  
All proceeds to support the Festival  
and the Estate.

Tickets £7.50 from the Circle shop,  
Rob Sutton or MRA website.

Not to be missed!

## Plant Sale.

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to the Moor Pool in Bloom plant sale in June. We embarked on the project with no idea whether we would get any donations or indeed any customers but we got both, in spades, so to speak!! Liz Muir worked tirelessly to get the event off the ground and provided much needed expert advice on the day. Even the most ungreen fingered left with something and the confidence to get growing.

The event raised over £200 for Moor Pool

in Bloom so thanks again if you took the time to dig a plant up or sow some seeds and if you made a purchase I hope it's blooming!

Rachel New

## **Crime**

Our local police station remains Rose Road from where the neighbourhood team who cover Moor Pool are based. The following number can be used for reporting minor incidents: 0345 113 5000, then either ask for or dial 7863 6722. The team are led by Inspector Delaney and Sgt John Proudman.

## **Moor Pool Tennis Club Celebrates its Centenary.**

Tucked away behind the hedgerows on Moorpool Avenue lies Moorpool Tennis Club (MTC) and its two shale courts on two different levels. On the clubhouse walls are the champions boards of winners of competitions dating from 1948 up to the 1990s, but the club began one hundred years ago in 1910.

Former Chair and longstanding member, Ken Wormald remembers joining in 1960. "Then it was a very active club with over 50 full members and a waiting list for people to join". In fact, you had to play a set to be tested and deemed good enough to join and the irony is that Ken didn't pass at his first attempt, but always determined, he tried anew and is now himself celebrating his half-centenary at the club.

Current Secretary of the club, Sue Lilleman, joined the club as a junior. "Saturday and Sunday afternoons were very busy, you were lucky to get two sets in an afternoon! Club tournaments were well supported and the finals day a great event. We held a huge party at Christmas, hiring rooms for the purpose. We had treasure hunts and beetle drives." Today the club may be missing such social events from the past, but for club members the tennis comes first and it is relatively busy on club nights on Tuesday evenings from the Spring right through to mid September. Sunday mornings are popular throughout the year and members have been known to scrape away the snow or to sponge away the rainwater to be able to get in a set in chill temperatures!

Despite being a small club, it still manages to field a ladies team and two men's teams in local leagues. Sue recalls that in a

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previous era after men's team matches "The ladies provided the tea and (then) waited on the men." How times have changed! The men's teams now dine visiting team guests at a local Harborne watering-hole instead, though the ladies prefer to hold their team teas in the bijou clubhouse which Sue Lilleman's father helped to build. "We are hoping to hold a social event and a reunion at the club to celebrate our centenary", reports Sue. Watch this space for details and contact the club at the numbers below if you or a member of the family were members of the club.

Sue has looked into the pre-war history of the club and found a photo of the bottom court and a mention of the club and that there was originally a bowling green on the site. Sue also discovered some old documents about the tennis court and the bowling green being there "to provide recreation for the people of the estate".

Pictures from the club archives show that the club invited the Mayor to celebrate the club's 50th anniversary in 1960. Fast forward another half-century and the club has survived recent plans to be moved (removed?), thanks to pressure from local residents and the local MP, Gisela Stuart. It lives on thanks to the hard work and the commitment of its regular members. Current Chair, John Lewis, and committee member, Roy Walton, have been attending various meetings and discussions with the Moorpool Estate to look at the future of the club. Although somewhat uncertain, the club is open for business.

If you fancy dusting off your rackets and getting some regular exercise and competitive tennis throughout the year, join Moorpool Tennis Club, you'll be assured of a warm welcome. Here's to the next hundred years. Contact Sue Lilleman on 0121 426 1141 or John Lewis on 07715 173 236 for membership details.

Charles Harry, MTC Committee Member.

## **Moor Pool in Bloom (MiB) 2010**

Since our first planning meeting in late 2009 for 'MiB 2010', we have completed or have in hand, most of our tasks, plus added projects like the Japanese Knotweed Petition and the Plant Sale.

Some of the work, such as clearing the Square, has been pretty demanding and it has

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all been done by “volunteers”. My sons joke about it but I insist that Moor Pool in Bloom is not “The Big Society”; nobody manages us, we manage ourselves and the tasks are all of our choosing! Residents do it because they care about this Estate and because the work is sociable and satisfying. The MiB project also has a very positive impact on our elected representatives, council officers and our neighbours.

### **Possibilities for 2011**

1. We will hold another planning meeting in October 2010 – details at the Festival and via the Spreadsheet. Although some projects will need to be carried forward, it is really important that **residents give their ideas and opinions**. This validates the MiB programme on which funding applications are based. If you can't make the meeting, please contact and phone or email us with suggestions.

(Liz Muir e.muir276@btinternet.com, or tel: 0779 247 3975, Anne Marie Flynn 0797 444 8976)

2. Funding could well be more difficult next year and we may not get the kind of funding we had in 2010 (£1860 from the Harborne Community Chest). However, there are good opportunities for MiB to raise funds locally and to seek matching funding. The Plant Sale raised £200 and the Easter Egg event raised £80. B&Q donated the greenhouse through a voucher for £250. This sort of fundraising is likely to be the trend in 2011 and there are many sources we can look into. But funding depends on having a quality programme which depends on Moor Pool residents.

3. One big project to carry forward is the Plant Sale (suggested by Rachel New) which has great potential. We now have an allotment greenhouse plus some planting space. The idea is to propagate a variety of quality plants for sale and hopefully double our takings in May 2011 by drawing in the wider community. Of course in the autumn we

hope Graingers will release the West Pathway allotments for clearance.

4. We need to develop our work with children. This is important for the RHS programme. This year Elise Duncan and Mums and Toddlers have made a great start (have you seen the herb garden in front of the Moorpool Hall?) The Easter Egg Quest around the Estate was a great success and hopefully the sunflowers will make it to the Festival! But there should be a broader range of activities for children – perhaps involvement in the greenhouse project. Another possibility is a project with special needs children – something the RHS also encourages. Suggestions of other ideas would be appreciated.

5. Only some of the roads on the Estate have had much attention from MiB. The focus on the Square and Park Edge was determined by their overgrown state and the fact that they are central. Ken Whitaker, RHS, is coming down in the autumn to advise on simplifying maintenance in these areas. Realistically MiB is the sum total of its volunteers and how much gets done is in proportion to their activity and remember, whatever gets done also needs maintaining. But please note:

- There is funding for more bulbs in other areas this autumn so please put in your request.
- Please would residents who have ideas for projects put them forward so MiB can look at supporting them.

6. We should have the results for the RHS entry by the time of the Festival. Would residents like to enter again next year? It creates much work in July, but of course what really matters is what goes on the rest of the year. The IYN part of Britain in Bloom does command a lot of attention but the decision to enter should be a group one because your help will be needed!

7. Finally, we'd like to develop bulk composting supplies for the Estate. The local authority adviser on this subject is paying us a visit soon so please let me know if you are interested.

**Managing the MiB project.** I would like to explain that I resisted having a formal committee for MiB.(Not hard!) The financial and administrative support comes from the MRA Committee, some of whom are involved in MiB projects. There is an informal sub group of interested residents who meet at coffee mornings which has been a bit ad hoc and I hope to improve delivery next year. However information about new projects is always displayed at coffee mornings.

The aim is that everyone should have a stake in the project.

- If you are on the contact list essential information is sent out by email or by hand
- Updates can always be obtained from myself or Anne Marie.

Thank you to everyone involved – it's been an amazing year!

Liz Muir (Co-ordinator Moor Pool in Bloom.)

### **Moor Pool in Bloom Notices.**

**Topsoil for the Square.** We plan to sow grass seed in the Square this September. Topsoil would be very useful to improve the area. If you know of any available, please contact Liz (as above or 0121 427 3973)

**Plants and Cuttings.** Our allotment space is now ready to take some plants and shrubs for use around the Estate and for the Plant Sale next May. We should soon be able to take

cuttings as well. Again please contact Liz Muir if you have material to offer.  
Phone no and email as above.

### **Final Quack**

Little did I think in December 2004 when I edited my first copy of the Duck that 6 years later instead of printing about two Ducks per year we would be producing about six per year. I think this well reflects the greater activity amongst Residents on the Estate and a desire to improve and develop the inheritance that we have here on our unique Estate.

In the fifteen years since the MRA re-established itself a lot of hard work and commitment has been given by various people. However, if we, The Residents, want the Moorpool Estate to keep its character, its sense of community, its vitality, the very essence which makes it the place it is and the place we love, then it is essential that more people come forward to help. This doesn't necessarily mean a huge commitment but the giving of just a little time to contribute to the general well-being of the Estate.

I have been the Duck Editor and also a committee member since 1995, but it is as a Resident that I would like to offer my thanks to all the people who have helped the MRA over the years as chairs, committee members, helpers and those who have encouraged us along the way. I must also thank the team of Duck deliverers and Emma Gray, their co-ordinator, for without them there would be no Ducks coming through your letterboxes and/or cat flaps!

Do support your Estate – give us your thoughts and ideas – join in the Moor Pool Festival – and have a good time here and continue making Moorpool a special place.

Mike Frost (Editor)

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