

Timeline Medlock Valley in East Manchester

This section contains a summary of people and events that have shaped the history of the Medlock Valley in east Manchester and significant historical dates. You can also explore some of this information using the Interactive Timeline.

Date	Fact
700BC - 0043	The salt road approached the area passing Clayton Hall through Clayton Mount, passed Clayton House and into Clayton Vale . It followed a similar route as the present Vale Street going straight down through the Vale over Clayton Vale Bridge and up to Culcheth Lane.
0078	Roman Road built through Failsworth
1066	Battle of Hastings
1086	Completion of Domesday Book
1416	Medlock Hall (now Daisy Nook Garden Centre) was built, although the earlier barn is dated pre-Norman
1564	William Shakespeare born, died 23 rd April 1616.
1605	5 th November Gunpowder plot at Westminster
1666	Sep 2-6: Great Fire of London, after a drought beginning 27 June
1697	A bridge at the site of Clayton Bridge, Berry Brow (Clayton Vale) is first mentioned in 1696. Before this an old ford was located at this point and indicates an ancient river crossing that may have been used since prehistoric times.
1792	Work begins on the Manchester to Ashton canal, one of the earliest canals in the North West. It would be used to carry raw materials, finished goods and coal for the cotton mills in the area. Today it serves the leisure industry, being used by holiday boats and supporting a cycle route. It runs through the SportCity area and next to Philips Park .
1794	Crime Valley filled with water at 54 deep it submerged two houses
1798	Clayton Vale print works opened
1800	Culcheth Hall was located on Clayton Vale near to Culcheth Lane. The Bay Horse Inn served the small hamlet of Clayton Bridge which sprang up in the 18th and 19th centuries as a result of the dye and print works. Originally a farm building, it became a pub in the 19th century - known then as 'The Grey Mare'. It was home to many dwellings, including 'Andrews Brew' - once a small lane off Berry Brow, which housed thatched roof cottages which demolished in the early 1990s. Saint Cuthbert Church on Clayton Vale was also erected around this time, but has since been demolished.
1800	Mark Philips is born on the 4th November 1800. He would later play an important role in the opening of Philips Park , which would bear his name.
1800	Sand from Limekiln Lane in the Lower Medlock near Pin Mill Brow was used to pave the streets of Manchester. The location for the industrial factories in the Holt Town and Lower Medlock area took into fact the prevailing wind direction. This ensured pollution generation was distributed across other industrial areas in east Manchester and working class homes instead of the wealthier residential areas.
1808	Reservoir built at Holt Town . By 1895 it fed water to Manchester by means of the first steam engine. After this Gorton Reservoirs were opened before the demand increased and Longendale construction began.
1818	Manchester cotton spinners' strike
1819	Aug 16: Peterloo Massacre at Manchester.
1820	Failsworth Dye & Finishing Works was on Clayton Vale from 1820 until it was demolished in 1932. Messrs Wood and Wrights Clayton Vale Print Works located on the southern bank of the river near to the Brick Bridge today. It is shown on Johnson's 1820s map and 1848 OS map. Barsley was a timekeeper in 1869 and maps indicated by 1888 it was disused. Between 1898 and 1909 the buildings were demolished. Near the Print Works the river burst its banks in 1872 during the great flood and caused massive destruction at the works.
1820	Bank Bridge Works and Tannery was located at Bank Bridge Meadow, Philips Park . The chimney is all that remains, which was once shown on Johnson's Map of 1820.

1833	The House of Commons begins to consider legislation for establishing public parks to help improve the conditions of the working classes in the growing cities of the industrial revolution, many of whom were living in poor quality housing: an estimated 20,000 people are living in cellars in the centre of Manchester, with regular outbreaks of contagious diseases such as cholera, typhus and smallpox.
1837	Queen Victoria (r. 1837-1901)
1844	In January, over a hundred local firms and leading citizens request that the Lord Mayor forms a Committee for Public Walks, Gardens and Playgrounds in Manchester. The Committee is formed in August the same year, at a public meeting which rose over £7,000 in donations - Mark Philips MP is elected to the committee, and donates £1,000 of his own money. In September another public meeting is held at the Town Hall to begin the process of buying the land for public parks in Manchester: it is attended by 5,000 people. By Christmas 1845 over £30,000 had been raised, including a £3,000 government grant and £1,000 personally given by the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Peel. (Image: left - Sir Robert Peel; right - The old Manchester Town Hall).
1845	The land for Philips Park , approximately 12.5 hectares, is purchased from the estate of Lady Houghton for the sum of £6,100. Joshua Major and Son of Knowsthorpe, near Leeds, win a competition to design the park. The construction work is carried out by Pim and Richardson of Ardwick.
1846	Philips Park opens on the 22nd August after Peel and Queens. Jeremiah Harrison is appointed as the first Principal Keeper and Gardener of the Park.
1846	Clayton Bridge Railway Station on the line between Manchester and Stalybridge opened in April 1846 and became a victim of the Beeching Axe, closing in 1968. The station buildings were to the west of Berry Brow, the signal box was on the opposite side on the north of the line and was also used to manually operate the level crossing gates. Nothing remains of the station near Clayton Vale . The station consisted of two platforms, booking office, waiting rooms and station master's house.
1847	Games and play equipment are moved from the Amphitheatre at Philips Park into the main body of the park. Ornamental beds are installed in their place, these are still there today.
1848	Ancoats Vale Dye and Sanitary works was located near Arden Close, Lower Medlock . Ardwick Lime Works located near Arden Close/Ashlar Drive, Lower Medlock . Medlock Lodge a large house located Holt Town near the reservoir was home of David Holt who was a Quaker and a manufacturer of cotton thread.
1849	Work begins on creating ponds out of a natural stream that crosses Philips Park from the south east to the north west, flowing into the River Medlock. Weirs are constructed and 3 ponds formed, though this would later increase to six. The ponds are used for boating, paddling and one was stocked with wild fowl. All except the latter would be eventually filled in and levelled.
1855	The Victoria Brass Band gives the first Saturday concert in Philips Park . Sunday concerts were prohibited.
1855	The Round House on Every Street in the Lower Medlock was founded in 1855 as a church and graveyard but only lasted until 1880. Restorations took place in 1928 but found only the walls to be serviceable. 1929 saw Luncheon Club open in the basement. In 1940 the basement became an air-raid shelter for 200.
1856	The lodge by the entrance to Philips Park Cemetery is opened, becoming the park's eastern entrance. It would eventually be demolished in 1963. Sunday concerts begin in Philips Park in July, and are well attended. As most people worked on a Saturday, Sunday was the only time many families could attend outdoor entertainment together. However, opposition from religious groups, particularly Sunday Schools, would lead to the concerts being prohibited again.
1857	Two horse drawn grass mowers are purchased for £11 each, plus a pony to pull them for Philips Park . Prior to this the grass was cut by hand and sold to local farmers. 4 Russian guns from the Crimean War are presented by the War Office and placed by the South West Lodge at Philips Park . These would be removed in 1940, along with the park railings, as scrap metal to aid the war effort
1858	Women fight for the right to vote begins.
1859	In the booklet "Manchester Walks and Wildflowers", which were extracts from the Manchester Weekly Times during 1 st May 1859 to July 1859, Clayton Vale was described as "pleasant walks, especially near the borders of the Medlock, which winds among trees and green fields that are really picturesque."
1859	Nov 24: Charles Darwin publishes The Origin of Species
1859	The new science of geology is a popular subject, and a large boulder stone, originally from Ulverston in the lake district but carried to Ancoats by glacial action in the ice age, is donated to Philips Park . It is located next to the head gardener's lodge (next to the lodge), where it remains to this day.

1863	Manchester Corporation holds an open competition for the design of a cemetery to be laid out on grounds to the north of the Philips Park , on the other side of the River Medlock. From 40 entries submitted, Manchester architects Paul and Ayliffe's design the buildings and William Gay of Bradford's design the grounds.
1867	Philips Park Cemetery opens on 75 acres of land north of the park. This was to ease pressure on the cities churchyards and became the first municipal public cemetery in Manchester.
1868	Alfred Derbyshire, is commissioned to design a new lodge and gates at the Mill Street entrance due to the original buildings at Philips Park becoming run down and unusable. It was completed in 1870, at the cost of £529. Today it is the only remaining lodge in the park, and it serves as a Visitors Centre. Alfred Derbyshire would later design Manchester's Palace Theatre.
1871	FA Cup introduced. First FA Cup - 16 th March 1872 Wanderers FC beat Royal Engineers AFC 1-0 at the Oval
1871	Croquet and cycling are banned in Philips Park , but marbles are allowed in a special area. Cycling would be later allowed, but only between 6.00 and 8.00am.
1872	During the great flood on 13 th July 1872 after 2 days of rain the river rose over 12 feet and one of the lodge embankments gave way washing parts of Messrs Taylor and Boyd's Calico Print Works into the river at Clayton Vale . At Philips Park Cemetery it washes away tombstones and between 40-50 bodies from their graves. In December the Borough Surveyor is asked to prepare plans for a wall along the banks of the river, to prevent damage from future floods. This was to be carried out with red brick, hence its local name of 'The Red River'. This type of river engineering can be seen from the Iron Bridge in Clayton Vale and at Philips Park . Houses which were next to the river also flooded. During these times 4/5 people were living in the cellars in the City Centre. It was reported that people had to be rescued by boats out of the flooded cellars.
1872	A report from the Head Gardener at Philips Park noted that trees and shrubs had to be replaced every 3 years due to heavy pollution. The same year, a chemist in Manchester called Robert Smith coined the term 'acid rain' and described the damage it caused to plants and materials. In August, Manchester's first bowling green is opened by the Mayor in Philips Park. The site is now the peace garden next to the present bowling green.
1878	Manchester United Football Club was first formed in 1878, albeit under a different name - Newton Heath LYR (Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway).
1880	Manchester City Football Club - After five seasons of activity for the St. Mark's (West Gorton) CC the decision is taken to establish a football team. Later evolves to become Manchester City FC - with Anna Connell recognised as founder.
1880	Thomas Kidd & Co Ltd, flint and coloured glass manufacturers were located on Gibbon Street (now Cambrian Street), Bradford Road, Ancoats (Holt Town). They were famous for their 'Penny Glassware' which was very cheap even in the 1880s and 1890s. Penny Glassware was the name for commemorative or novelty items made and sold for 1 penny. For Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (1897) they produced two commemorative pieces, a bust of the Queen and a portrait plate with inscription on. A bust can be seen at the Art Gallery on Mosley Street in Manchester. The company closed around 1900.
1888	Standing near Clayton Bridge, on the sharp bend of the river on the south bank was one Clayton Vale Print Works. This was shown again on Johnson's Map of 1820, but by 1888 the OS map shows the works as being disused and in 1909 the ten buildings of the complex were demolished leaving little to be seen today. However, foundation stone can be seen in the river bed. A Nunnery was located just outside the Vale a large house on Culcheth Lane.
1889	The Parks Committee decide to construct the city's first open air swimming bath at Philips Park . The bath was made using the upper lake in the south east corner of the park at a cost of £3,000. The open air swimming pool opened on 10 th June 1891, for men and boys only. At the opening ceremony, boys without trunks dive for coins thrown by the mayor. Shortly after, a sign is installed that reads 'All persons of 12 years and upwards to wear Bathing Drawers'. The pool would last for over 50 years before being closed in 1953 to make more room for play areas.
1890	Vauxhall Farm was on Clayton Vale from 1890 till 1932 when it was demolished.
1891	Jeremiah Harrison dies. Although he had retired from the position of Head Keeper in 1886, he had continued to work at Philips Park up to his death.
1893	Culcheth Dye Works at Clayton Vale shown on the 1893 OS map as a collection of buildings with large reservoirs. Because the more modern dye works made a greater demand on the water supply than could be provided by the river, the industry known as the Failsworth Dyeing and Finishing Works fell into disuse in the late 1960s. The site has since been landscaped. The works once stood next to the present day Visitors Centre.

	There were a number of reservoirs on Clayton Vale the one near Culcheth Lane still exists on the site. Others have been filled in over the years.
1893	Gum Works located near Ashton New Road opposite side to Holt Town .
1894	1 st Jan - Manchester Ship Canal opens 1 st March - Blackpool Tower opens 21 st May - Queen Victoria opens Manchester Ship Canal
1896	Tulips are now an established feature of the Philips Park . In May, the Manchester Guardian makes the first reference to what would become known as Tulip Sunday In August, Philips Park celebrates its 50 th anniversary. Celebrations included a procession of local Sunday schools, trade unions and friendly societies. An ornate commemorative drinking fountain in sandstone and red granite is also installed, near the main entrance it is still there today.
1897	John Readitt born on 19 th January. He lived at no 2 Berry Brow and on leaving school he entered the family business of clogger and shoe repairer at 600 Ashton New Rd. It was here that he gained a ten year contract to repair the football boots of Manchester United F.C. He was awarded the Victoria Cross in 1917 for his service in the 6 th Battalion of the Prince of Wales Volunteers (South Lancashire) Regiment.
1897	Ardwick Lads club erected on Palmerston Street, Lower Medlock . Paul Schill, founder of Ardwick Lads' Club The 'Federation', once known as Manchester and District Lads' Club Federation was formed in 1907 and celebrated 100 years of service to the community last year, 2007. As you can see above, the Federation has undergone several different guises over the years. Now it has finally settled on the title; Greater Manchester Federation of Clubs for Young People, which is an amalgamation of the Greater Manchester Federation of Boys' Clubs and the Manchester & Salford Playing Fields Society. The organisation was formed out of a number of large voluntary 'Lads' Clubs'. These sprang up in the most deprived areas of Manchester and Salford in the late 1800s after several philanthropic businessmen realised that society's youth was going to amount to nothing if they didn't find a way to occupy and educate them.
1901	King Edward VII (r.1901-1910)
1901	A new railway viaduct across the east end of Philips Park is proposed. This would link the main line with a new power station and chemical works in Clayton and Openshaw. Some of the viaduct arches in the park would be used as play shelters. The viaduct near the visitors centre was built to carry the Manchester and Leeds Railway over Millstream Lane and the Medlock River and is known for obvious reasons as the "Ten Arches Viaduct".
1905	Before the Industrial Revolution the area was mainly used for pastoral agriculture. It would have attracted local farmers to the area because of the water supply from the River. This attracted the first chemical works to the area and would have attracted industry during the industrial revolution because of the natural water supply from the river. Weirs were constructed and the river channel was straightened at the eastern end of the site and the reservoirs to the north were completely filled. The fill is thought to comprise of domestic and trade waste, pulverised fuel ash (PFA) and colliery spoil.
1905	Work began on the brick channel which ran from the Iron Bridge at Clayton Vale through Philips Park to the bridge at Mill Street now Alan Turning Way. Locally the river became known as the Red River to local residents from the red bricks that were installed to help with the flow of the river and to prevent flooding like the famous one in 1872. The River Medlock on 1909 map is shown as being culverted (A structure used to enclose the river to allow it to pass underneath a structure e.g. road).
1907	Manchester Corporation began to purchase the buildings on Clayton Vale for plans to use it as a tip for the ash cinders from Stuart Street Power Station and a Municipal Tip.
1909	The landfill of Clayton Vale took place prior to the Control of Pollution Act 1974 (which required that the disposal of all controlled wastes onto land be licensed); therefore the exact nature of the fill materials is not known. However, a review of documentation and historical maps held by MCC indicates that tipping commenced in Clayton Vale prior to 1909, with a small area of waste disposal located to the west of Clayton Vale House near Clayton Vale Bridge.
1909	When the Manchester Ship Canal opened, and the city became an inland port, an isolation hospital was required to nurse sailors with infectious diseases. Originally known as Clayton Infectious Diseases Hospital, on Clayton Vale it was shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1909. By 1933, it became known as Clayton Smallpox Hospital. On the north bank of the River Medlock, opposite the site of the print works, the foundation stone is clearly visible along with brick walling on top of the stonework. To the south of the river stood the nurses home, known as Clayton House. The site also contained other associated buildings.

1909	The Council borrow £15,000 to pave the bed of the River Medlock between the Philips Park and the Cemetery.
1910	Railway strike and coal strikes in Britain
1910	King George V (r. 1910-1936)
1912	10 th April the 'unsinkable' Titanic sinks on maiden voyage losing 1,513 lives
1914	Daisy Nook Easter Fair ceased due to the outbreak of war, reopened in 1920
1914	The First World War begins. It would last until 1918. The transport of Dutch tulip bulbs necessary for the annual displays in Tulip Meadow would be interrupted by the war.
1918	The Old Naylor's public house, situated next to the River on the north side between Culcheth Lane and the Visitors Centre at Clayton Vale , closed sometime between 1914-1918. Its original name was Vale Cottage but gained the name Old Naylor's because of the landlord James Naylor who was well respected in the area. He sold mild bitter and ale together with tobacco. Later local residents knew the area down to Clayton Bridge as Daddy Naylor's.
1920	Larger-scale tipping appears to have started in the early 1920's at western end of Clayton Vale , adjacent to Bank Bridge Street, Clayton Vale Lane and the Manchester Corporation Sidings. Around this time nurseries begin to supply a tree that is resistant to industrial pollution. Clones from a single male example of the English native Black Poplar are used extensively throughout Manchester, so much that the tree becomes known as the Manchester Poplar. The large mature specimens in Philips Park are the only remaining poplars from this period.
1921	In 1921 there was a 3 months strike because of the mine owner's refusal to match the salaries the miners had been receiving during the period 1917-21 of Government control of the mines. Many people visited Clayton Vale or Clayton Alps as it was well known during this time in the hope of gaining some coal. Frank Pritchard a local resident reported his mother sending him to the Dingle, another local name, with a large sugar sack to collect coal from the tip. On arrival he was amazed to see that there was already hundreds of people there doing exactly the same. He returned the next day only to find more people this time digging with shovels and picks just like a gold rush.
1921	Tennis grows dramatically in popularity after the first world war. Eight hard tennis courts are created in addition to the three existing grass courts in Philips Park .
1922	The annual displays of Dutch tulips in 'Tulip Valley', which had been interrupted by the First World War, are reinstated in the spring of 1922. Philips Park would be renowned for its annual tulip displays until the mid twentieth century.
1923	River Medlock now fully canalised and the red brick channel was complete. The river on Clayton Vale between the hospital and Clayton Bridge during the early 1920s was reported to have been reasonably clean with a sandy bottom. Clean enough that local boys would paddle and sometimes swim in the river.
1923	Apr 28: First Wembley cup final (West Ham 0, Bolton 2) - "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles," popular song of the time, became the West Ham anthem
1926	Miners strike - British industry stopped on 4 th May, 1926 when between 3 and 4 million workers obeyed their Trade Unions and stopped work when a General Strike was declared in sympathy with the miners. Mine owners wanted the colliers to work longer hours for less pay. The miners themselves wanted a national basic wage, seven hours work per day and the pits to be re-nationalised, as they had been during World War I. It lasted for seven months and the miners returned to district wage settlements and an increase in working hours.
1928	Women receive same rights to vote as men.
1932	It was indicated on the 1932 map of the time that Clayton Vale had allotment gardens. People would have been encouraged to grow their own produce. Later maps show that these did not exist any more.
1936	King Edward VIII (Jan-Dec 1936) Edward abdicated because of his love for Mrs Simpson.
1936	King George VI (r.1936-1952)
1939	1939-45 Second World War (the "Peoples War")
1945	First computer invented by Alan Turing. The EDSAC was the world's first stored-program computer to operate a regular computing service. The EDSAC performed its first calculation on 6th May 1949 at Cambridge University.
1950	Other Victorian terraced houses lined the west side of Berry Brow on Clayton Vale as it rose to the level crossing at Clayton Bridge railway station, the east side still being occupied by fields into the 1950s. This was known as Andrew's Brow. Many of the people who lived here worked at Bank Bridge Print Works and would walk from their homes through the Vale under the viaduct to what is now Bank Bridge Meadow at the back of Philips Park. The old chimney at Bank Bridge Meadow is still standing. The cottages were demolished in the 1960s.
1952	Queen Elizabeth II (r1952-present day)
1960	Ash from the East Manchester power station almost filled the whole of Clayton Vale which was then used as a

	<p>landfill site during the 1960's and 70's.</p> <p>Clayton House, at Clayton Vale, stood approximately 50 metres away from the bridge by the path that leads uphill on the top of which was Clayton Mount. It was a Georgian building and was known as the Nurses house. It was demolished in the 1960s.</p> <p>Due to original tipping and subsequent landscaping there is now no sign of these buildings or the ancient salt road.</p> <p>In recent years, more river engineering has taken place further up the river bank, near the red brick bridge (known as Vale Street Bridge). The river course was changed in the early 1960s as steep stone walls were installed to prevent flooding.</p>
1960	<p>Coates Farm on Clayton Vale near the bridge on Edge Lane held a summer gala for local children before the First World War, with races, tea and lemonade. The stone wall next to the river is probably one of the remaining walls of the farmhouse.</p> <p>Edge Lane, Millstream Lane and Berry Brow are known locally as 'Pop Brew' and the vale was also known locally as 'the meddie'. Coates farm was cleared by 1960 and a road was made taking Dustbin waste carts to a landfill site along the valley. The pig sty for the farm was demolished during World War Two and in it's place stood an ARP Warden hut. The building still stands today, and is used as a visitor centre. Manchester Central Library online photo archive is a great source.</p>
1963	Nov 22: President Kennedy assassinated in Dallas, Texas;
1964	Public Mortuary located on Hoyle Street near Lower Medlock. This was one of the mortuaries for City Council from 1964-1994.
1965	<p>St Cuthbert's Church used to be on Clayton Vale to the left just before the level crossing. There had been a Sunday School on this site since 1880. St Cuthbert's opened as a mission of All Saints in December 1889. The church had its own pipe organ and belfry. The bell at the church was made by Taylor and Co of Loughborough in 1898. After 75 years of serving the local people it closed its doors in 1954. The church was later demolished in 1965. The bell from the church was given to Church of the Holy Family on Lord Lane, Failsworth where it is still rung today.</p>
1966	Waste disposal activities spread eastward down the valley and by 1966 the maps indicate that the entire area of Clayton Vale had either been used for tipping or was in current use as a landfill site.
1968	Bradford Colliery finally closes.
1969	21 st July - Man takes first steps on the Moon
1974	It is understood that tipping ceased prior to 1974 and the historical maps indicate that the site was disused by 1981. Clayton Vale was heavily polluted by industrial waste throughout the industrial revolution and even up to 1983. In 1982 Manchester City Council purchased the whole valley and began the reclamation of the site to turn it back into open space for the public.
1980	<p>The Mineral Railway Viaduct ran from Clayton Vale to Ashton New Road. It was still in place up till around the 1980s.</p> <p>By the 1980s, most of the traditional industries in the area had closed and the surrounding area was largely derelict with many social problems.</p>
1981	<p>Clayton Vale was reclaimed in the 1980's. The huge reclamation of the Vale took until 1986 to complete. The aim was to provide a pleasant landscape setting to maintain and improve access for walkers and to create a wildlife haven.</p> <p>Approximately 250,000 trees and bushes mostly native were planted over a period of 10-15 years in an area measuring 114 acres. A network of paths was installed and two ponds were developed and improved. The trees planted were of short- lived species such as fast growing like Willows & Poplars. Other trees included White Poplar, Aspen, Sessile Oak, Red Oak, Bird Cherry and Silver Birch and were planted to increase the wildlife habitat to include a wide range of woodland species which includes sparrow hawks and jays.</p>
1984	Miners strike - In 1984 there was a strike against pit closures. All the miners returned to work after a bitter one year strike without any agreements on pit closures.
1988	Feb 5: First 'Red Nose Day' in UK, raising money for charity
1994	Stuart Street Power Station near Philips Park is replaced by the National Cycling Centre.
1996	A festival is held in Philips Park to commemorate its 150th anniversary. 'Tulip Sunday', held on a Sunday when the bulbs in 'Tulip Valley' are in full bloom, is revived.
2000	M60 Motorway built
2000	The Community Orchard is created in Philips Park . This is still there today and can be found alongside the allotments to the east of the park. The site has many apple trees and is designed to bring a warm welcome to

	visitors.
2001	Philips Park placed on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, with the site being given grade II status.
2002	The Commonwealth games are held in Manchester, with the official Commonwealth Stadium and many other facilities being sited in the vicinity of Philips Park , in the area now known as SportCity. The Lodge at Philips Park is refurbished and officially opened as a Visitor Centre.
2002	Philips Park Cemetery joins Philips Park as a grade II site on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.
2002	Chris Willan and Tommy Smith were working for the Environment Agency on the storm drains in the Lower Medlock at Limekiln Lane, Ancoats, when he found a film among debris he had cleared from the bed of the River Medlock near Manchester city centre. It turned out to be an old film of the Queen and the late Princess Margaret as youngsters enjoying a girl guide camp. The film, which is believed to date back to the 1940s, was in a steel canister which had almost rusted away to nothing. After a quick wash the film appeared to be ok.
2003	The Medlock Valley Project is launched at Philips Park.
2003	The Peace Mosaic was installed and located next to bowling green at Philips Park.
2003	The Friends of Philips Park and The Friends of Clayton Vale community groups are established and are as strong today as they were then.
2005	Philips Park is awarded its first Green Flag by the Civic Trust. The Green Flag award scheme was set up by the Civic Trust in 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country.
2006	The Medlock Valley including Philips Park and Clayton Vale is awarded £1.3m of funding from the Northwest Regional Development Agency, European Regional Development Fund and East Manchester New Deal for Communities
2006	July saw Clayton Vale gain Local Nature Reserve status.
2009	The Medlock Valley is nominated for the BURA (British Urban Regeneration Association) Award in two categories.