

## **TRANSCRIPT of Saturday 19th July 2014 in Day's Park**

The torrential rain on this Saturday morning caused the traffic to come to a stand-still on the A 303 from Ilminster heading east, and it left 6" deep puddles on the Kingston Maurward to Wareham road, delays all the way! So by the time I arrived at Day's Park, Northbrook Road was parked out, and Dick Riding was in full swing with his talk on the history of Oldfeld.

Sadly, I had missed the first talk by Alan Aldridge, so here it is, for all readers who were unable to attend. This is what he said:-

Good afternoon and welcome to Day's Park. May I start by thanking the Day's Park Trustees for allowing the association to plant this memorial here and hold this unveiling ceremony today? I would like to acknowledge the contributions to this afternoon's proceedings of four men. The first is Dr Iain Kidson, President of the Swanage Grammar School Association. He first conceived the idea of a memorial early in 2009 and he laid the foundations for its design and installation at that time. Iain can't be with us today because of his commitments as President of Rotary in Fordingbridge, but he sends his greetings and best wishes for an enjoyable and rain-free afternoon.

The stone itself was supplied by Trev Haysom, who is at this very moment due to deliver a speech at his daughters wedding, so we don't expect to see him today.

The engraving on the stone was done by Brian Bugler and is a magnificent example of the stonemason's art as I am sure you will agree when you see it. Brian doesn't like crowds so we shan't be seeing him today either.

The installation of the stone was carried out by Barry Audley and his team from Kingston Contractors. Could we have a round of applause for them all please?

Another long-time friend who sends her best wishes is Madge, widow of Arthur (when I was in the RAF) Gaskell. She celebrated her 100th birthday on 3rd July, and although not as mobile as she used to be, she retains that twinkle in her eye and a remarkable zest for life. Now ladies and gentlemen, I would like you to welcome some special guests. First of all, a couple of people representing a section of the community who generally have a pretty bad press even though they perform a function that is essential in any healthy society. Politicians rarely get public recognition for the good things they do on our behalf but without them, especially at the local level, we'd have a great deal more to complain about, so I'd like you to give a warm welcome to Ali Patrick, Mayor of Swanage, and Bill Trite, Town Councillor, Chairman of Purbeck District Council and County Councillor.

Another group who are indispensable in a properly functioning community are the press and they have also been under the hammer of late. I am happy to say that our Purbeck journalists operate to the highest standards, following the example laid down over many years by our next guest. His is one of the finest intellects in town, he is knowledgeable, principled, witty, shrewd, scholarly and – hang on I can't quite make out what he's written here – oh yes, percipient and perspicacious and he has also been a great friend of Swanage Grammar School. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome George Willey.

It is vitally important for the future that our children and grandchildren receive an education that teaches them not only how to pass exams but also empowers them to reach their full potential, spiritually and emotionally and to play an active role in their communities. Swanage has excellent primary schools to start that process and now has its own secondary to continue that work through those so crucial years of adolescence. We look to the Swanage School to build on the pursuit of excellence that was carried on for 45 years in the now crumbling edifice on the other side of this hedge and welcome some of those who fought to establish the school and who are now charged with the task of carrying it forward. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr Paul Angel, chairman of the governors, and Mr Tristram Hobson, headteacher.

That brings us to two very special people whose presence here today means so much to all of us who were influenced by them for the better as they led us through the intricacies of Latin and Divinity,

English and Maths. As they did so, they helped us through that difficult process of growing up. Please welcome the patrons of the association Mrs Pat Churchill and Mr David Saville.

Finally, I want to welcome the most important group of people here today and that, fellow pupils of Swanage Grammar School, is yourselves. You all passed through those doors behind me, girls on the left, boys on the right and took part in that great ongoing social experiment called education. For some, those days really were the happiest of your life, for others, it was a time to be endured until you could escape into the real world.

You left this place and went on to become scientists, doctors, nurses, bus drivers, civil servants, housewives, captains of industry – some even became journalists and politicians – and each one of you changed the world a little and made it a better place. That is down to the training you received here, the qualities you absorbed and the standards you carried forward into adulthood and that is why you have returned today.

This lump of stone, with its hidden time capsule, is not a memorial to that sad, sad building behind us. It is a testimonial to the men and women who laboured there and to the boys and girls who passed through its doors and carried and continue to carry its spirit to a waiting world.

So welcome to you all and have a wonderful afternoon.