

The Arno and its Beautiful Rose Beds Wirral Parks, Coast and Countryside

The Arno

The Arno is situated on the site of a former sandstone quarry. For generations the site had been in the ownership of the Earls of Shrewsbury, and their family titles are remembered in the names of many of Oxton's roads - most notably in the case of the Arno - Ingestre Road.

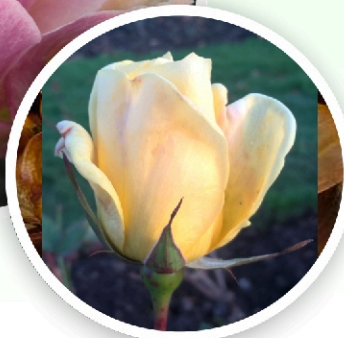
Stephen Harding suggests in his book the Viking Mersey, that the name Arno comes from Arne (or Erni) Howe, with Arne being the family name of an important local Viking settler and Howe meaning a small pointed hill.



A hoard of Roman coins was discovered by quarrymen working there in 1834. Towards the very end of the 19th century, and once quarrying had ceased, the quarry became a popular but informal area of recreation for local residents. In the early years of the 20th century, two local residents - Catherine King and Edmund Taylor - began to campaign for the conversion of the former stone quarry into a formal park in Oxton.



In 1910 the Earl of Shrewsbury advised Birkenhead Corporation that he was willing, without charge, to hand over the deeds of The Arno if the Corporation would agree to create a Recreation Ground on the site - and to maintain it! His offer was accepted and the total cost of converting the disused quarry into a formal park was £1,106 8s 9d. The sundial (unfortunately now removed) was erected as a memorial to Edmund Taylor, who was instrumental in obtaining the site for a park. George Proudman, the Mayor, officially opened the Arno Recreation Ground on Saturday 30th March 1912 and the park celebrates its centenary in 2012.



The Roses of the Arno

The Arno has a spectacular set of ornamental rose beds with 29 different varieties including Oriana, Blessings, Apricot Silk, Halle, Evelyn Fison, You are my sunshine, Diamond Days Forever, Indian Summer, Belle Epoque, Pensioners Voice, Elizabeth of



Glamis, Royal Volunteer, Sunset Song, Fragrance, Bride, Chinatown, Iceberg, Freedom, Tickled Pink, City of Leeds, Kings of Ransom, Silver jubilee, Lady Mc Robert, Mountbatten, Dr Jo, Masquerade, Zambra, Super Trooper and Pot of Gold.

Rose folklore and uses

Apart from their partriotic and political meanings, roses are mostly seen as a symbol of love. However, it is not that simple as that, different colours mean different things, yellow roses symbolise friendship, but if given with red roses symbolise happiness. Lavender roses symbolise love at first sight, whereas coral symbolise desire.

A dark pink rose offers gratitude and appreciation whereas a light pink symbolises Admiration, sympathy or sweetness.

Roses where not initially given on Valentines day as they are not usually found in flower in February and are often imported from Columbia or Europe. The Roman's used roses to celebrate the life of St Alban, It is reported that as he walked up a hill to be killed flowers sprang up where he stepped. St Albans Patrial Day is the 22nd June.

Often found in religious carvings on fonts or on gravestones the thorns symbolise life's tribulations and the flower is symbolic of hope and that life can be beautiful too!



Apart from their aesthetic appeal roses can be used to make syrups, perfumes and the smells are can be used in calmative essential oil mixes to lessen anxiety

Once popular in parks rose beds are rapidly falling out of favour as they are very expensive and time consuming to maintain, don't stand up well to modern park practices and subsequently displays like the ones found in the Arno are vanishing.

