



Celebrations

SEVERAL thousand people visited Holywells Park, Ipswich, at the weekend to take part in celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of the park being presented to the public.

The park which lies within half-a-mile of the noise and fumes of Ipswich docks is a haven for wildlife and on Saturday, Ipswich mayor Mrs. Gillian Auton officially opened a study centre in a converted stable block.

Afterwards she unveiled a plaque to the nature trail which has been laid out as part of the conservation project of which the study centre is a part.

The park was given to the borough in 1925 by the late Sir Felix Cobbold.

It was officially handed over to the public a year later on May 30 by the High Steward of the Borough, the Lord of Woodbridge.

Since that date the mansion on the site has been demolished, but much still remains of the former estate life on the park.

As well as the beautiful conservatory being opened to the public for the weekend, there were guided tours of the nature trail and displays by local conservation groups.

A mini-digger, for the continuing conservation work, was presented by the main sponsors of the conservation project, Tolly Cobbold.

Brewery managing director Mr. Peter Watson said that the £3,000 sponsorship, including money to cover maintenance and parts for the digger, represented a commercial investment for his company.

He said people attracted to the park would quench their thirst at the brewery's nearby Margaret Catchpole pub, which was to be improved.

Weekend events in the park, as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations, included a parachute drop, a sponsored bird-watch, several re-enactments of a mediaeval tournament by the Society for Creative Anachronism, dancing, bowls and petanque.

One of the highlights of the weekend was a parachute jump by four members of the

Phoenix Freefall team from the Ipswich Parachute Centre. Several hundred people joined in guided tours of the nature trail at the park and 16 people took part in a petanque competition, won by Terry Nightingale and Steve Kemp.

On Saturday 70 children took part in a sponsored fun run in the park which is expected to have raised several hundred pounds, probably to be used to buy video equipment for the study centre.

The centre can be opened by appointment for schools and clubs and anyone who is interested should contact Ipswich 226037.

The picture shows Mr. Peter Watson (left), managing director of Tolly Cobbold, handing over the keys of the mini digger to Mr. Sandy Sandford (second right), chairman of the Holywells Park Conservation Project. Also pictured are Ipswich mayor Mrs. Gillian Auton and Mr. Randall Bevan, Ipswich Borough Council's director of recreation and amenities.