

# San Anselmo Historical Society *news*



Creek Park shortly after its completion in 1974



## *Creek Park's 50th Birthday Celebrated*

By Judy Coy

Creek Park turned 50 years old on October 12, 2024, and its birthday was celebrated at two events. On September 20th, the Town of San Anselmo sponsored a celebration with a cake and candles, 500 cookies donated by United Markets and Historical Commissioner Dick Miner speaking about the history of the park. Another event on October 12th sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and coordinated by resident Guy Meyer featured local musicians and speakers Dick Miner, Dr. Martin Blinder, former councilman and mayor, and Dave Goltz, son of the park designer Dan Goltz.

Located next to one of the busiest intersections in Marin County, and on site of the town's historic railroad junction, Creek Park is a quiet oasis in the middle of downtown San Anselmo.

During the town's railroad days, from 1874 to 1941, the tracks split at the junction where they head-

ed east to San Rafael and west to Fairfax, Pt. Reyes Station and beyond. When passenger service ended in 1941, the tracks were removed, and Greyhound buses lined up at the depot to take commuters to San Francisco.

In 1960, the railroad power station and switching tower were removed, and then in 1963, the depot was razed to widen Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. The Hub became an unbeautified parking lot for about 100 cars even though some residents argued for a park. All evidence of San Anselmo's railroad past had vanished at the Hub.

When the Town Council began planning in 1968 for the remodel of the Hub to create the complex intersection as we see it today, the blueprint again called for a parking lot. Merchants who favored a parking lot were pitted against residents who wanted a park as a gateway to town. Council endorsed a plan

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View of The Hub on October 3, 1963. Copyright California Department of Transportation, 10077-11 Detail.

for a “park n’ lot” – a combination parking lot and park area. Planning Commissioner and landscape architect Dan Goltz submitted plans with mounded landscaping to hide cars, a boardwalk along the creek and only 36 parking spaces. Town-developed plans had more asphalt, less planting and spaces for 45+ cars. Faced with a petition signed by 200 citizens protesting the 45 spaces, Town Council was forced to reconsider the plan. Councilman Martin Blinder commented “If our children remember us, it will be for putting in a park, not a parking lot.”

Dan Goltz was authorized by Town Council in August 1973 to proceed with final plans for the park which ultimately cost \$200,000 and provided 43 parking spaces.

The park was completed in 1974 and was dedicated to “the principles of the American Revolution” on the occasion of the Bicentennial of the American Revolution. The dedication ceremony on October 12, 1974 featured speeches by town officials, music by the Sixth Army Band and patriotic songs by school children.

Today, benches and picnic tables are located in the towering redwood grove off the main grassy knoll. Over the past 50 years, Creek Park has been the site of many popular local events such as the

Annual Antiques Faire, Music in the Park and Film Night in the Park. Most recently, the Town-produced Live on the Avenue concert event series throughout the summer and the Beatles Music in the Park, sponsored by the San Anselmo Arts Commission, have been held in the park.

In 2019, the Town embarked on the project to reimagine Creek Park. While the project is still planned, it has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, state infrastructure funding issues and potential downstream flood issues which may have to be accomplished before creek modifications in the park. ♦



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