

Reference: XXX
Accession Ref: XXXX
Name: Liz Richardson
Address: [Not given]
Date of Birth: [Not given]
Place of Birth: [Not given]
Date of Interview: [Not given]
Interviewed by: Roger Kitchen
Duration: 00:24:56

Liz worked for John Moffat, an Assistant Director at the Council. After the Queen Mother's death, when flowers were left outside Marks & Spencer, it was recognised that there needed to be a proper place for commemorations. It took until 2008 to get Council approval and a sum of money. A Steering Group was formed. Liz took the minutes, became more involved and later was made a Trustee. The idea was to do something modern. Liz and Debbie Brock organised a workshop about municipal monuments and sacred landscapes. The Council's Arts Officer, Marie Kirbyshaw developed the brief and steered the way towards the artist, Gordon Young.

The Rose, a perpetual calendar marking important dates was his idea. Some pillars had to be there: the designation days for Milton Keynes, the Open University and the Parks Trust. The public was asked for suggestions and a Pillar Panel, chaired by the Lord Lieutenant, made decisions with guidance from Gordon. The Trust encouraged organisations to come and animate them. Sometimes, that took a long while. The proposing group for new pillars was expected to animate them on the relevant date. Initially, a pillar was done every two years, but that was switched to one every five years.

The opening ceremony was wet and the first Armistice Day event even wetter. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the award of City Status were on the same, brilliant day. The flowers and candles for the death of HM the Queen were very memorable. Experience showed that once people were there, they got it. And it has been used for spontaneous memorials, including the Paris shootings, the New Zealand earthquake and the Manchester Arena bombing.