

Martin Norwood recalls playing in the water gardens as a child.

Interviewer:

OK. So as a child did you, did you, play in the gardens?

Martin:

Yeah, we used to go fishing down there with our fishing nets. er with the jam jar with the bit of string round the top. Take your fishing net down there. Get the minnows, the gudgeons and the sticklebacks. Yeah, catch a few fish and have a sandwich by the side of the river with Mum, and Dad. Yeah, we used to walk along there quite frequently.

Interviewer

OK, Any, sort of little stories come to your mind through through through the years of.. being aware of the water gardens? Anything, anything come to mind?

Martin:

Other than falling in, no.

Interviewer:

OK you'd better tell us about that then!

Martin;

Well we was out one afternoon, and er I always used to walk along the edge, looking for the fish, as most kids did I suppose, And there was a point, I believe, I recollect, where the bridge crosses at the bottom of bridge street. And I'd gone too far at the end of the edge of the bank. It was slippery, and I just went straight in. And I'd got good shoes on, good clothes, and I just went straight in but stood up and, got told off by Mum, and was taken home in a bit of a soggy mess!

Interviewer:

OK, and probably not allowed to forget it for a while?

Martin:

No, but I was always falling in the canal, so it didn't make a lot of difference! No, one way or the other (laugh)

Interviewer:

OK. So how do you feel the gardens changed then, over your er time in Hemel?

Martin:

I think a ..I feel like a lot of other people that the way the gardens were allowed to fall into disrepair , they became more of an eyesore rather than a beauty, than a thing of beauty. Certainly when the plants were changed to become more like.. evergreens and the kind of plants that you put in your own garden, border plants, that kind of thing, that, that lost the beauty and then other things were added. More trees were added. Yeah, I just think they were there as a means to an end. Try and do something with them. Plant sort of plants in that didn't need too much keeping and too much care. So, um , yeah, they detracted and they became quite scruffy and untidy I believe.