

More History

For many years after Olivia donated the land to the city, it was dry-farmed and pastured, and slowly converted to annual foxtail grasses, known as a nuisance to pets and humans as well as a high fire hazard. Annual mowing prevented the Coastal Sage Scrub habitat to re-establish, and except for the spring months when the beauty of the remnant penstemons, sage and buckwheat broke through in a colorful fashion, the vegetation went downhill.

In 1987, a third generation Redlands resident, Dr. Harold Hill, who was Chairman of the City Parks Commission and active Redlands Rotary member, envisioned a native plant botanical park that was revegetated with attractive shrubs, trees and wildflowers. The concept he presented to the City was accepted and a task force of Rotary Clubs and the City Parks Department developed the park, with Redlands residents donating vital monies, landscaping and irrigation infrastructure, professional services, expertise and lots of hours.



[Overlook with plaques honoring major contributors to Caroline Park.](#)

The park was dedicated in April 1988. Following the lead of active participation that created the park, 31 people met to establish the Caroline Park Endowment Fund, which provides income for the maintenance of the Park. Please consider becoming a member. (Contact Dr. Harold Hill 792-4830 or Joanne Lessard 794-5036). Individuals or families donating \$1000 are honored with a plaque at the overlook terrace. A dedicated volunteer work force does most of the maintenance, assisted by several City of Redlands departments. Caroline Park is a great example of what happens when people work together to provide the city a place of beauty and enjoyment.

Caroline and Olivia Phelps Stokes are buried side by side at Hillside Memorial Park, with Olivia well-known for her generous philanthropy in Redlands.

Linda Richards/August 2011

Photos by Joanne Lessard



People enjoying Caroline Park (above and below)