

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS
COLCHESTER ZOO
EST. 1963

BY JULIE NEWMAN (AGE 59)

I'm feeling SO excited,
As I'm 60 this year too!
I'll definitely be celebrating with,
A day out at Colchester Zoo.

My joy of visiting here,
Began in 1974.
When 11 and on a school trip,
I'd never been before.

10 years passed and I was back,
This time, with my little one.
Only 18 months old – her very first visit,
This was the start of years of fun!

Lots to remember from the 70s and 80s,
And seeing the Zoo develop too.
The miniature railway, mini arcades,
payment hut at the entrance,
That's just to name a few.

Then – the animal enclosures,
How they've changed over time.
Tiger Valley was a firm favourite,
Seeing Sasha was, oh... sublime.

Child number two came along,
He loved the Zoo as well.
So our trips became more frequent,
As our huge collection of photos tell!

We adored meeting Tanya and Zola,
Just by the 'Inn at the Zoo'.
Joyfully watching them plodding along,
With their keepers in tow too!

1990 – a third child was here,
To experience the fun we all had.
Coming to Colchester Zoo and seeing so much,
We never had a day that was bad (HONEST!)

Kingdom of the Wild was amazing,
And enjoying their fabulous new space,
Were Elephant, Zebra, and Rhino.
So wonderful to see and embrace.

So much more was happening,
Each visit there was something NEW.
Different species, new areas like Edge of Africa,
Even a Colchester 'Zoo Crew'!

We've had Birthday parties at the Zoo,
Taken part in Keeper for a Day (A, B AND C!)
I can't possibly choose which was the best,
They were all GREAT, I have to say.

My children grew up but still I came,
Supporting school trips was fun!
Witnessing the wonder and excitement on little faces,
Was truly second to none.

Now retired, grandparent to four and a Zoo Pass holder,
Life is pretty swell!
We visit often with our next generation,
As they LOVE Colchester Zoo as well.

Congratulations on 60 years!
What a fabulous job you've done.
Through tough times (dare I say it, pandemic!)
You still remain our Number 1.

