

## Victorian park gets £7m boost

ALMOST £10m is to be spent on the restoration of what is considered to be one of the finest Victorian municipal parks in Britain.

The bulk of the cost of reviving Saltwell Park in Gateshead will come from a £6.9m award today from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The 50-acre park – opened in 1876 on the back of fears for the welfare of Tyneside's working class population – contains 12 listed structures and attracts 500,000 visitors a year.

The restoration will tackle a slow decline which has threatened the park, a key part of Saltwell Conservation area.

## Tinseltoon sequel success



Picture: Simon Hobson



**Higher level:** Chris Goulding, left, author of *Graingertoon* with illustrator Chris Mabbott.

**By Tony Henderson**  
Environment Editor

**GRAINGER** the cat has won promotion. He featured in *Tinseltoon*, a cartoon book which topped the regional best sellers list with a tale of how Newcastle's statues came to life at night.

The book, which mixed a fun storyline with the city's history, was the work of actor and student Chris Goulding and illustrator Chris Mabbott, both from Jesmond in

Newcastle. *Tinseltoon* sold almost 5,000 copies after a rapid reprint, and was local best seller in December and January.

Now a follow-up, *Graingertoon*, gives the cat star billing in a story about how the High Level Bridge comes to life and drives a plague of rats, which have been attacking Newcastle's historic buildings, from the city.

Grainger the cat's big break came after the two Chris's toured schools holding acting and art sessions based on *Tinseltoon*.

Youngsters said they liked the cat and wanted to see more of it. For Chris, the cartoon books are a radical change of style from his PhD studies at Newcastle University into the poet Shelley.

"You could say it is light relief. PhD research is very painstaking and the cartoon books are great escapism."

*Graingertoon* is published by Newcastle Libraries at £4.99. The library service is producing Christmas cards based on the cartoons at £1.99 for a pack of six.

Wednesday, October 6, 1999

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