

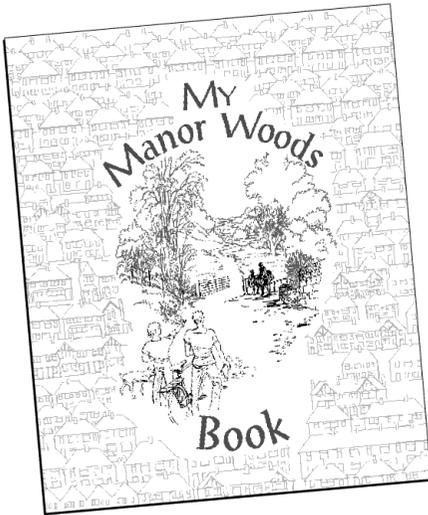


# MALAGO VALLEY CONSERVATION GROUP

# **NEWSLETTER**

No. 34  
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2000

**A** S I WRITE, it's good weather for a walk - a walk in Manor Woods, of course, with a copy of *My Manor Woods Book* in your hand to help you appreciate what you can see there.



Yes, we've done it! After three years work, on and off, *My Manor Woods Book* was launched on 11 July. The Deputy Lord Mayor (and one of the councillors for Manor Woods), Cllr Bernard Chalmers, officially 'opened' the book at a happy ceremony at Bishopsworth Manor House.

Among the guests at the launch were representatives from some of the schools in our area. We hope to sell books through schools, and we have been given a flying start by Paul Stephens of CSV Environment who runs 'Environment Clubs' in some schools. He has persuaded

his boss to buy 100 copies of *My Manor Woods Book* for use by the Clubs. We're tremendously grateful. Also present at the launch were our friends from Bishopsworth Library, who will also sell the book, and Freddie and Marie Alliston of the Malago Society who will carry the book on their bookstall. Because of the generous sponsorship of Bristol City Council and Bristol Water plc, all the printing has been paid for, so we can sell the book for just the cost to us of the folders - £1.50 each. You can buy your own copy (or copies) at M.V.C.G. meetings, or directly from me, or at Bishopsworth Library.

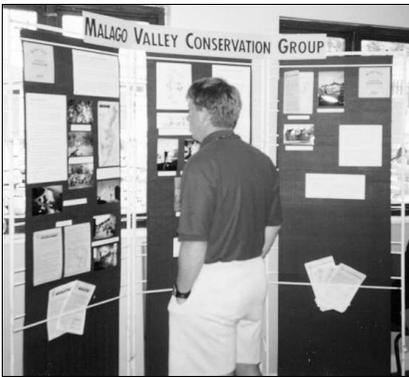
ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

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## HOLD THE FRONT PAGE!

**W**E'VE BEEN GETTING some good publicity lately, and there should be more to come. The South Bristol edition of the *Evening Post* has mentioned *My Manor Woods Book* three times, and we've also been invited to appear on the Radio Bristol morning show to talk about the book. Sue Walker (who wrote the wildlife sections) and I are scheduled to hit the airwaves on Friday 11 August. It all helps make people aware of the book - but what we really want to do, of course, is sell copies, so if you have any ideas for marketing, please give me a ring.



*Fun on the Farm*

currently at Bishopsworth Library to support sales of *My Manor Woods Book*.

Finally, a *Video of Bishopsworth, Hartcliffe and Withywood* is being made by 'First Take' Productions who have made many videos about Bristol, including the fairly recent one about Bedminster which featured Anton Bantock. Anton (of course) appears again in this new one, along with yours truly talking about what M.V.C.G. does, and the intrepid Garbage Raid team in action at Symes Avenue. The video should be out before long.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

Our *Exhibition Boards* have had a revamp, and have had two outings in quick succession. The first was at the 'Fun Day' to publicise the SRB5 initiative in Hartcliffe and Withywood. This was at Hartcliffe Community Park Farm on 1 July and went very well. On Monday 10 July, Avon W.I. held an 'Organic Day' at Dundry and we were there, at Hill House Farm, while an amazing number of brave visitors enjoyed the exhibits despite the torrential rain. The boards are



*Talking Rubbish*

## BIKING AND BIRDING

**D**URING the early summer days I decided to cycle to work, mainly because my route took me through Manor Woods and I knew how refreshing it would be after a hard days work to amble back home stopping and looking for birds and animals of interest.

After a couple of days (and many aches and pains) the ducks got used to seeing me speed past. One Thursday evening I was stopped in my tracks by a vision of golden feathers! I couldn't believe my eyes, so I dismounted and gingerly stepped forward and there amongst the ducks was an oriental pheasant! Obviously it had escaped from somewhere but I was amazed at how the other birds seem to take it all in their stride!

I rode home and told Lis I'd made a sighting and she had 20 guesses to find out what I'd seen - after guess 12 she was exasperated and I told her. We decided to ring the R.S.P.C.A. because it was getting dark, but they said 'I'm afraid it will be a gonna'.

The next morning I cycled through the woods looking for my new found friend. There was no sign of him - but no mass of golden feathers either. I'd like to think the owner found him ... but I'll never know.

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A couple of weeks later I cycled down through the woods and as I approached Bedminster Road I saw a flock of various birds mobbing something. I got off my bike to take a closer look and the mobbed bird flew into a garden fence, then hopped over it into someone's back garden - it was a snowy owl! I started to walk towards the house when the startled resident shouted 'Oi what are you up to?' I explained and asked her to bring down a blanket. Once I'd covered the owl, the other birds dispersed and the lady called the R.S.P.C.A. who informed her it was probably worth upwards of £500 but usually nobody claims their owls back. The R.S.C.P.A. came and took the snowy away and I cycled on towards work. Do you think they believed my excuse for arriving late???

LEE PIBWORTH

## WELLIES AND SECATEURS

ON 29 May the 'Wellies and Secateurs' raid took place in Manor Woods. Eight of us met at Bishopsworth Library and split into two groups. One was to make an amphibious garbage raid on the stream whilst the rest of us were to tackle the path from the Dam to the Interceptor which had become overgrown. Our earlier idea was that secateurs would be adequate for the attack on the path but this proved not to be the case. Some parts were almost impenetrable. Happily Norman had brought a good selection of lethal tools including mattocks, shears, and scythes. Lola and I started at one end of the path whilst André and Marie Jo began at the Interceptor. We waved a cheery 'Goodbye' and said we would meet them in the middle.

As we set about hacking through the brambles and nettles, the sun shone and the stream gurgled by. We soon began to realise that our hopes of meeting André and Marie Jo were remote, unless it was easier going at the other end. After a while we were joined by the 'wellie' group who had completed the clean up of the stream. Lola and I watched in amazement as Lee, wielding a mattock, rapidly made inroads into the nettles. We checked on the progress at the Interceptor. The undergrowth here was even thicker so our meeting had no chance of taking place.



*On parade*



*Shear hard work*

Soon after 4.00pm we packed up. We trudged back through the woods with an overladen trolley containing an amazing collection of objects - a Pram, a large umbrella, various containers and a long length of metal whose purpose it was difficult to fathom. We had no room for the motorbike! After André's boot had been filled with assorted garbage, we made our way to Mary's for a very welcome cuppa and a resolution to finish the path off soon. Hopefully people would then use it before nature takes over again.

## *Sequel ...*

On 29 June six of us assembled to finish off the path. After admiring two heron who seemed to be a bit cross at the intrusion, we set to work. At first we were filled with dismay as it looked as though the undergrowth was impenetrable at both ends. Happily it did get easier after the first few yards as we made rapid progress through the previously cleared sections. As we hacked through the remaining barrier we were delighted to hear voices, then see movement, and after a final attack on some Japanese Knotweed, we were through!

BERYL HEATON

- **Good News!** Following requests from us, Karen Stagg, the City Council's manager for South Bristol Open Spaces, has arranged for the path to be dealt with more professionally by B.T.C.V. - the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. They will be working on the path on **Tuesday 8 August**, starting at around 10.00am. Anyone who would like to come and help will be welcome - please bring what tools you can, but we will provide gloves. And wear long sleeves, whatever the weather - the nettles are vicious!

## PLANNING UPDATES

**H**AVE YOU SEEN the 'Elm Tree' pub lately? It's looking very good and a credit to the conservation area. At the time of writing, there are still some points to be sorted out about some of the outside details - the surfaces, the boundary onto Bishops Cove, and some external lighting - but Scottish & Newcastle have decided *not* to demolish the chimney, nor (apparently) the porch. We welcome this, and will continue to comment on the remaining details.

And the nearby Public Toilets may be disappearing in the future. The City Council are reviewing arrangements for public loos, and intend to close some and upgrade others. The intention is to consult the public about closure and demolition of the block outside the 'Elm Tree'. We have said that we would have no objection to demolition, and, if the block did go, we would like to see the pavement widened and to extend the line of tree planting down Highridge Road.

## DUNDRY AND BEYOND

**T**HERE ARE PLENTY of things to get involved with outside our immediate area, and two recent events were blessed with fine weather which made them particularly good fun.

On Sunday 25 June there was a *walk around Chew Valley Lake*. This was organised by Chew Valley Recreational Trail Association to publicise their campaign for more public access and better pedestrian and cycle routes between the villages around the Lake. Lola had the excellent idea to use it as an opportunity for a sponsored walk for us to raise money for further tree planting around 'Elm Tree Corner' and bulb planting throughout our area. Five M.V.C.G. members started and four finished. (Don't worry - there isn't a dead body somewhere; Lola was also working at the Wildlife Trust stall at Bishop Sutton Village Hall and had intended to do only part of the circuit.) It was a good day out and £100 was raised to help 'green' our bit of Bristol. Many thanks to our generous sponsors.



*Walkies!*



*£750 smiles*

the site. One of the funders is Wessex Water who used the occasion to present their cheque. This was followed by an excellent barbecue. The artist, Deborah Jones, will be telling us all about the project on 17 October.

And on the evening of 25 July, Dundry Hill Group organised a *stone moving and barbecue* at the site of the Malago Spring Project. If you were at our A.G.M. you will have heard about this scheme to mark one of the sources of the Malago on Dundry with an imaginative artwork which includes a dry-stone wall and seat. The funding has now been secured and work has started. One of the sources of stone is a ruined building nearby, and volunteers were invited to help move some of the stone (downhill, fortunately) to



*Hotdog*

## PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**L**OTS OF SUMMER EVENTS from the Dundry Hill Group to tempt you - (DHG) in the list - but our ever-active Programme Group has already got autumn sorted out. The **M** symbol means an event organised by M.V.C.G.

**Sunday 6 August:** *Walk around Chew Magna weir and reservoir.* Meet at 10.00am at Chew Magna car park (DHG).

**12/13 August (weekend):** *Drystone walling training at Littledown.* Meet 10.00am at Dundry Village car park. **Booking essential - ring 935 9710** (DHG).

**Tuesday 15 August:** *Wildlife Watch.* 3.30-5.00pm at Hill House Farm, Dundry (DHG).

**M Monday 21 August:** *Garbage Raid.* Meet at 3.45pm at Withywood Post Office, Fouracres.

**Sunday 3 September:** *Walk from East Dundry to North Wick.* Meet at 10.00am at the Carpenters Arms for a 12.00 return (DHG).

**Tuesday 12 September:** Dundry Hill Group meeting. 7.30pm at Norton Malreward Village Hall. *This is the regular 'business' meeting of the Group: all are welcome.*

**M Tuesday 19 September:** We start our autumn season with a *Visit to the Council House*, arranged by Cllr Ron Hodges. Meet for a **7.00pm** start in the reception area of the Council House, College Green. If you would like a lift, or can offer a lift, please ring Lola Hardingham on 964 1116.

**M Monday 25 September:** *Garbage Raid.* Meet at 3.45pm at Bishopsworth Library.

**M Tuesday 17 October:** DEBORAH JONES, the artist for the Dundry Hill Spring Project, will describe the scheme which should by then be finished (see opposite page). More details in the next *Newsletter*. This, like all our regular 'winter season' meetings, will be at 7.30pm at St Peter's Rooms, at the side of St Peter's Church, Bishopsworth.



*Blooming lovely. This was the slope at the north end of Manor Woods a few weeks ago before the summer cut - a carpet of greens, yellows and purples. There were also some bee orchids. Sorry we don't print the Newsletter in colour - have a look at this Newsletter on our website for the full effect: [www.mvcg.tsx.org](http://www.mvcg.tsx.org)*

## **Malago Valley Conservation Group**

|                       |                 |          |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Chairman</b>       | André Coutanche | 964 3106 |
| <b>Vice-Chairman</b>  | Lola Hardingham | 964 1116 |
| <b>Hon. Secretary</b> | Lis Pibworth    | 987 0825 |
| <b>Hon. Treasurer</b> | Beryl Heaton    | 964 5780 |

### **Committee Members**

Anton Bantock, Brenda Docherty, Royston Griffey, John Taylor

### **Co-opted Committee Members**

Don Bartlett, Tania Case, Eleanor Davis, Peter Hall, Anne King, Audrey Milton, Paul Stephens, Ted Thomas, Sue Walker, Cllrs Bernard Chalmers, Tessa Coombes, Peter Crispin, Richard Eddy, Ron Hodges, Dave Johnson, Mary Sykes *(All the City councillors for Bishopsworth, Hartcliffe and Whitchurch Park wards are invited to become co-opted Committee members).*

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