



MALAGO VALLEY CONSERVATION GROUP

NEWSLETTER

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AS WE HAVE SAID BEFORE, Malago Valley Conservation Group is a political organisation - but in the sense that we care about how our City works and is governed and we try to influence it to improve our area. We certainly aren't interested in *party* political games. In that spirit, we congratulate and welcome the newly elected councillors on our patch - Kevin Quartley and Tim Kent - and we thank the councillor who wasn't re-elected - Colin Smith - for his interest and support over past years. The fact that each of these represents a different political party rather makes the point ...

Much of this *Newsletter* is about Manor Woods Valley (yes, again!). As usual, there's a mixture of good news and bad news - though more good than bad, certainly so far as future plans are concerned. Plans include the Celebration Event on 15 July - please donate plants for the plant stall if you can! - and ideas to improve the main entrance behind Bishopsworth Library. We are very grateful to Crossways Tabernacle for their co-operation here.

Potentially less welcome is a planning application which has just been made for a stone crushing plant on part of the Quarries area. This land is paradoxically designated for industrial use *and* as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. It will take a while for this to be discussed and resolved, and we will have more about it in the next *Newsletter*.

This third *Newsletter* of the calendar year is your last chance to pay your 2006 subs if you haven't already done so. The vast majority have, and we're very grateful, but if there's a membership form included, then please return it with your payment or this will be your last *Newsletter* ...

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

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OPEN GARDENS

SEVERAL of our members have kindly agreed to invite you (members and friends only, please) to visit their gardens this summer. These are the gardens and the dates:

Sunday 25 June from 2.00pm-5.30pm

Beryl and Danny Heaton	3 Kings Walk, Highridge*
Brenda Docherty	136 Church Road, Bishopsworth
Marie Jo & André Coutanche	14 Queens Road, Bishopsworth*
Paul & Janette Worsley	119 Queens Road, Withywood
Anton Bantock	131 Queens Road, Withywood

Sunday 2 July from 2.00pm-5.30pm

Mavis Palmer	18 Vicarage Road, Bishopsworth
Angela & Tony James	4 Perrycroft Road, Bishopsworth*
Chris & Mike Lillington	23 Grange Road, Bishopsworth
Lola & Harold Hardingham	84 King Georges Road, Bishopsworth*

* tea available.

All these gardens have their own character. Some have interesting features, like the Malago running through, or a theatre being built! Their owners will be delighted to welcome you.

No entrance fee. Donations to M.V.C.G. for tea welcome!

MATTIES BLOCK

THE FULL STORY of our continuing efforts to get effective enforcement action taken on The Parade, Bishopsworth, is still not over (and would take several *Newsletters* to tell ...). As you will have seen, the building itself is looking a little better, but the railings and the landscaping are not right. The City Council has agreed to pursue enforcement over the railings, if necessary, and will use other legal means to get the land tidied up. We *may* be getting there ...

HERE WE GO GATHERING NUTS IN MAY

NO, NOT REALLY. Anything but. Ninety eager children from Headley Park Primary School in their red and white uniforms, lunch packs on back, clip boards in hand, with five teachers and as many parents. They were waiting for us at 10.00am at the Vale Lane end of Manor Woods Valley on Friday 13 May for what the Headteacher predicted was going to be a ‘WOW’ experience.

Heather Jarrett and I were a little late arriving as we had filled at least three plastic bags with garbage on the way down; so the first part of the operation was the highly educational experience of unloading the garbage into the waste-bin and conserving the cans for recycling. The result was that as we set out for Bishopsworth, ninety pairs of hands went into action gleaning up every bit of garbage we had overlooked.

At the Interceptor there was a pause; the party scrambled onto the sides of the ‘Roman amphitheatre’ for 10-15 minutes uplift and preparation from Sir. Then we plunged into darkest Africa. The party thinned out into a thin red line winding through an ocean of wild garlic. Sunlight shone through the lofty trees. One little girl fell down in the mud. ‘Please sir, how do you clean the mud off your slacks?’ ‘Don’t rub it, let it dry and you can brush it off. It’s *clean* dirt.’ Little girl not convinced. Then: ‘Please sir,’ said one little boy, ‘my friend says will you take him out of here.’ He was in tears. A teacher comforted him. ‘It’s not scary here, is it, Mr Bantock?’. ‘Well, not now,’ I said, as we picked our way across the huge crater left by an exploding landmine in 1944.

We arrived at the Bridge over the River Kwai, and the children settled down to draw flora and fauna before opening their lunch packs. Ninety copies of the potted cartoon history of Manor Woods Valley from *My Manor Woods Book* were distributed and the children went home to write up their ‘Mr Bantock mapless, trackless experience’.

Thank you, Headley Park Primary School; I was beginning to think my life was to be condemned to entertaining the silver-haired fraternity ...

ANTON BANTOCK

MANOR WOODS VALLEY WORKING GROUP

OUR GROUP meets once a month to exchange news and to discuss problems and new projects. In February we invited Julian Cox, our Community Parks Manager, to talk about 2006. We hope the mowing regime will improve (see the Christmas *Newsletter*). We have also asked again for signs at the entrances and for at least one picnic table and new bins where needed.

In early January we noticed that the path from Valley Road into Manor Woods Valley was full of litter and there had been fly-tipping. Though some of our members had collected litter there before, we felt that it was now beyond our means. We alerted the Parks Department, but it took two months and a lot of e-mails for Continental Landscapes to clear it to an acceptable standard. Then seven of our members spent an hour one Saturday morning in March clearing the very old rubbish buried under the vegetation: bottles, cans, plastic bags etc. We filled half a dozen plastic bags. As we believe from our past experience that rubbish attracts rubbish, we hope we have brought a long-lasting improvement to this path.



Extracting antique rubbish



Bagged up and booted out

After the garbage raid, Marian took us to the meadow on an orchid-spotting walk - tricky when there are just leaves to look for! But they were already growing and visible to the knowledgeable eye ...



The 'Dawn Chorus' Walk in Manor Woods Valley on 22 April. Left: John Tully listening hard. Right: Everyone looking hard.

We are currently working on the Celebration Event on 15 July (see the back page) and on improving the main 'gateway' to Manor Woods Valley behind Bishopsworth Library. In April we planted more wild flowers on the bank; the primroses were pretty in the spring. We also plan to paint the railings which belong to Crossways Tabernacle and then, probably, plant native shrubs on the Tabernacle land behind the railings. If you would like to help with this work, please get in touch. Even if you can't wield a paintbrush or spade, please let us have any suggestions and news about Manor Woods Valley.

MARIE JO COUTANCHE

MALAGO TREK

THE MALAGO TREK - the fourth! - on 14 May was blessed with perfect weather for a stroll, and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Thanks to those M.V.C.G. members who helped to guide the walkers through Manor Woods Valley. Most of the Trekkers hadn't done it before, and we had many appreciative remarks. We also sold some *My Manor Woods Books* and copies of *Walks on Dundry Hill!*

BADOCK'S WOOD

VISITED on a lovely sunny evening, along with about 30 others from four or five different groups, Badock's Wood was shown at its best. Flowering wild garlic was everywhere and complemented the ancient semi-natural wood dating from 1600 which includes oak, beech, Scots pine and sycamore (which will be thinned in the future).

We were given a brief history and management plans by Alan Aburrow of the Friends of Badock's Wood, and Sally Oldfield told us how the wild meadow was sown - 26 six-year olds from the local school each with a bucket of seeds mixed with sand and scattering supposedly in a grid formation. It has seeded quite well but towards the far end was a bit sparse. They reckoned about 5 million seeds were probably used.

Badock's Wood got its name from Dr Stanley Hugh Badock, (born in 1867) who was a local industrialist; this included being a director of Capper Pass & Son who owned the famous copper smelting works in Bedminster. He planted specimen trees that can still be seen which are not indigenous to the area. Dr Badock gave the land to Bristol Council in 1937.

On our way through the wood we passed the boundary of the Westbury Wild Life Park and came to a clearing where prefabs, erected after World War II, were demolished in the 1960s. There is quite a prominent tumulus which is a Bronze Age burial ground dated 1300 BC where bones have been found and there is a stainless steel monument with an inscription explaining the history of the site.

We were also treated to an impromptu talk on the geology of the area by Eileen Stonebridge. The rock is carboniferous limestone and we learned that the area was covered by sea 350 million years ago.

If you are in the area of Henleaze, this wood is well worth a visit - 'as Badock's Wood ghostly windmill sails turn and like a rewind film spin through history to remote times when this mound was buried when wolves prowled and nervy deer ...' (*from inscription on monument*).

SUE WEST

- The TRYM TREK on **Sunday 4 June** passes through Badock's Wood. Meet at Sea Mills Harbour at 10.00am for a leisurely morning's stroll. For more details, see the Living Rivers website at www.bristol-city.gov.uk/rivers.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

LOTS of outdoor walks and visits - fingers crossed for the weather! The **M** symbol shows our own events, to which everyone is welcome, member or not (though the Open Gardens events are for members and their guests).

M Thursday 1 June: *Evening walk* in Manor Woods Valley guided by - er, us! This walk is aimed at green space community groups and river groups so they can see what M.V.C.G. have been achieving. However, all M.V.C.G. members and friends are welcome - just be prepared to spread the word to people on the walk whom you don't recognise! Meet at 7.00pm at the Library entrance.

Sunday 4 June: *Herb Walk and Workshop* organised by CSV Environment, 11.00am-5.00pm. There will also be walks on 9 July and 10 September. The idea of the walks, which are on Dundry Hill, is to see how the habitat changes from June to September and to learn to identify useful medicinal plants. The workshops will include making creams and lotions, tinctures and teas and discussing in more depth the principles of western herbal medicine. To book a place call Jude English at CSV Environment on 978 2187.

Sunday 4 June: *Trym Trek*, starting at 10.00am at Sea Mills Harbour. Organised by Bristol Living Rivers - visit www.bristol-city.gov.uk/rivers for more information.

Saturday 10 June: *Fun Day* organised by the Friends of Hartcliffe Millennium Green at the Millennium Green, Bishport Avenue.

M Sunday 25 June: *Open Gardens*. For details, see page 2.

M Monday 26 June: *Garbage Raid*. Meet at 3.45pm at the entrance to Manor Woods Valley behind Bishopsworth Library.

M Sunday 2 July: *Open Gardens*. For details, see page 2.

Sunday 9 July: *Herb Walk and Workshop*. See 4 June, above.

M Saturday 15 July: *Celebration Event* in Manor Woods Valley between 2.00 and 5.00pm. For more details, see the back page. Please donate anything you have for the plant stall - deliveries welcome at 14 Queens Road a few days before the event.

* * * * * **CELEBRATION!** * * * * *

Introduce your children to south Bristol's hidden green gem -
MANOR WOODS VALLEY, soon to become a Local Nature Reserve!

**Come along on
SATURDAY 15 JULY
BETWEEN 2.00PM AND 5.00PM.
Entrance off St Peter's Rise behind Bishopsworth Library.**

Attractions will include:

- Story telling
- Mask making
- Local information
- Herb walks
- Stalls
- Snacks and cold drinks



www.mvcg.org.uk

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Malago Valley Conservation Group

Chairman	André Coutanche	964 3106
Vice-Chairman	Lola Hardingham	964 1116
Hon. Secretary	Lis Pibworth	939 0698
Hon. Treasurer	Beryl Heaton	964 5780

Committee Members

Anton Bantock, Don Bartlett, Mavis Palmer

Co-opted Committee Members

Valerie Gay, Diana Porter, Sue Walker, CSV Environment, Cllrs Mark Brain, Peter Crispin, Richard Eddy, Royston Griffey, Helen Holland, Kevin Quartley, 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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Letters, articles and suggestions from readers are welcome.

The opinions in this *Newsletter* do not necessarily represent those of M.V.C.G.