



# MALAGO VALLEY CONSERVATION GROUP

# **NEWSLETTER**

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2006

**L**OTS of nice pictures and reports of summer events to squeeze in to this issue, so I'll use this space to bring you up to date with some planning matters.

We have written to oppose the planning application for a stone-crushing plant on part of the quarries area of Manor Woods Valley (see the last *Newsletter*), and we gather that more information will be needed from the applicants before things go further. We have also queried the mess which is the club house on Highridge Playing Fields, where Highridge United Football Club have a planning permission to redevelop and improve the sports facilities, including a new club house and pavilion. That permission cannot proceed until various 'reserved matters' are applied for, and until a Community Sports Trust is set up. There is no sign of either step happening, and we see no reason to put up any longer with something in the heart of the Conservation Area that looks as though it has strayed from a South American slum. The Planning Enforcement team will be checking the status of the current 'buildings'.

The big planning news concerns the planning application by Urban Splash to develop the former Wills office block in Crox Bottom (see *Newsletter* 66, Christmas 2005). We have welcomed this, asking only that arrangements are made for continued public access in some form to the lake. The application goes for decision to the South & East Development Control Committee of the City Council on 26 July. I won't be able to go to the meeting (I sit in the public gallery at most South & East meetings, and very educational and entertaining it is too!). I urge you to go along to the Council House at 2.00pm if you can for what will undoubtedly be a very interesting discussion which could mark the start of a major improvement on our patch.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

## IN THIS ISSUE

Going Green . . . . .	Page 2
Can Collecting Hazards . . . . .	Page 3
Celebration Fête . . . . .	Page 4
Butterflies and a Brook . . . . .	Page 6
The Programme . . . . .	Page 7
Wild BS13 . . . . .	Page 8

## GOING GREEN

ON 22 June a small band gathered at the library entrance to Manor Woods Valley with the intention of making the approach look more attractive. Tony James had researched the task and come up with a plan so he was our 'boss' for the project.

We cleared the area behind the railings then set to work cleaning the metal bars, Tony having straightened the tops using a heavy stone. It must be said that his efforts made a big improvement though it was rather ear shattering at the time! Our next job was further cleaning with white spirit before applying a mild acid to prepare the surface for painting. All this work took considerable time and effort, and we felt it was enough for one day. Arrangements were made to paint the railings the next day. Unfortunately the task force was reduced as the rest of us had other commitments. To their credit they finished the painting on Friday even though fatigue had set in.

We think the area looks so much better with a fence of forest green and the vegetation cleared. We are very grateful to Crossways Tabernacle for their permission to paint the railings, and special thanks must go to Tony for organising everything. Plans are afoot to treat a couple more panels in a similar way and then planting can begin. Watch this space.

BERYL HEATON



*The last stretch.  
It may be only  
shades of grey  
here, but go  
and look at the  
real thing!*

## THE HAZARDS OF A CAN COLLECTOR

**B**EWARE of blustery days - like the ones we've been having this spring and summer. The huge double-size dustbin liner I had filled with cans on a walk between Temple Meads railway station and Gloucester Road was set down on the pavement while I sketched the façade of an interesting Regency villa in Montpellier. A sudden gust of wind caught the dustbin liner and scattered three or four hundred cans across Gloucester Road. The busy traffic did not stop, and the sound of detonations as the cans rolled under trucks and buses was quite deafening. Leaping in and out of moving vehicles, I recovered most of them.

Getting this huge sack back to Witherwood was a nightmare. The no. 75 bus was packed - standing room only. I was carried, sack and all, up the stairs by the surge of pushing passengers - but in the crush I lost my grip on the sack. All I could do was to listen helplessly as an avalanche of cans cascaded down the stairs. When the crush had subsided a little and the bus began to move, I went down sheepishly to recover the damage. When I apologised falteringly to the downstairs passengers for the truly awful noise and mess, they gave me a look which could only mean one thing: 'E's not quite all there - a bit odd - but 'armless.'

Waiting for the bus in Bedminster I caught sight of yet another can, but when I retrieved it I found it was full of beer. So I put it on the kerb and stamped on it. The contents shot out and hit a woman in a seat, full in the face. I didn't even notice it until I saw her wiping beer off her face. She was very nice about it, but a young harridan at the end of the queue, and nowhere near, had witnessed the incident and loudly proclaimed to all and sundry that she and her baby had been sprayed by stale beer and raised merry hell all the way back to Hartcliffe ...

And the Twitch. In my old age I have developed an involuntary twitch. Even when there isn't a can in sight, observant onlookers will see this old man unaccountably doubled up in the act of picking up something from the ground. They will also notice that the right arm is several inches longer than the left ...



ANTON BANTOCK  
*who, in 2005,  
picked up 77,000 cans*

# MANOR WOODS VALLEY CELEBRATION FÊTE

**I**T WAS *VERY* HOT and it was a little breezy, but that didn't stop a good turn-out for the Manor Woods Valley Celebration Fête on 15 July. What was particularly nice was that many people came fairly early on and stayed for the afternoon, settling down in the shade to enjoy the atmosphere, whether or not they took part in all the activities.



*Balloons catch the eye and Angela's heron points the way. Tony Insall and Tony James greet visitors (in front of the newly green railings!) and give them a programme*

*Children making masks and kites on Sally's stall. The gazebo holds the popular CSV mud-painting event, and, on the right, the Library and plant stalls and the Malago Society are busy*





*'Small riot, not many arrested'? No, just our new PCSO coming to say hello, and finding much of interest at the Food for All stall*

*Twitchers beware! Sally's mask-making stall hatches some interesting new varieties ...*



*Story-teller Cassandra holds the attention*

Grateful thanks to all those who helped on the day, including Marian for her Herb Walk, and especial thanks to Sally, Angela and Marie Jo for the organisation. Thanks to Sally and Angela for these and other photos in this *Newsletter*. Thanks to Blenheim Scouts for the tent and to Crossways Tabernacle for loo access for the helpers!

## BUTTERFLIES, A BUZZARD AND A BROOK ...

**C**OLLITER'S BROOK to be precise. Curious to find out about this small stream which is very close to where I live, I joined a group of about 45 people to learn more and to follow Colliter's Brook in a short stroll from the Create Centre on Sunday 2 July as part of the series of walks along our rivers and streams organised by BRISTOL LIVING RIVERS.



Before we set off, Ben Barker of the Southville Centre told us about the small piece of waste ground next to the car park which is now the home of 19 species of butterflies. On the way over the Ashton Swing Bridge, we noted the outfall into the River Avon - Tanya Darch of Living Rivers told us the brook was diverted in 1977 as part of the flood alleviation scheme. The brook runs beneath Greville Smyth Park, past the Bristol City Football Ground, under Winterstoke Road and the railway line and then on through Ashton Vale, site of the former iron works, brickworks and colliery, and on to Hanging Hill Wood.

We followed it to the edge of the landfill site and were given a very informative talk by the project manager, Mark Logan, who told us that electricity was generated from the methane extracted there. Whatever we think of landfill sites, environmental factors certainly seem to be taken more seriously now. Whilst walking through this area we saw pyramidal orchids and lots of butterflies, including marbled white. After passing the interceptor we came across the 'waterfall' in the woods which was a very welcome sight - just listening to the sound of water on a very hot day was very refreshing. After having a break for our picnic in the woods we were treated to four youngsters having a wonderful time getting soaked under the waterfall and a very large buzzard was spotted by a member of our party and seen by a few of us before it flew off.

Finding out about this quite peaceful spot so close to where I live was quite a revelation - not an outstanding place of beauty but a wonderful natural area for plants and wildlife just at the far end of South Liberty Lane.

SUE WEST

## PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

**I**N the sweltering July weather we have to think ahead to the autumn. Our main 'winter' programme will appear in the September *Newsletter*, and the **M** symbol shows our own events, to which everyone is welcome.

**M Monday 31 July:** *Garbage Raid*. Meet at 3.45pm at the lower entrance to Kings Head Park on Vicarage Road.

**M Monday 28 August:** *Garbage Raid* at Willmote Park. Meet at 3.45pm at the entrance on Bishport Avenue.

**Saturday 2 September:** *Open Afternoon at Bishopsworth Manor House* organised by the Malago Society to start their new season. Gates open at 2.30pm. Further information at [www.malago.org.uk](http://www.malago.org.uk).

**Sunday 10 September:** *Herb Walk and Workshop* organised by CSV Environment, 11.00am-5.00pm. To book, call Jude English on 978 2187.

**M Sunday 17 September:** Our annual *Amphibious Garbage Raid* to remove what we can from the Malago in Manor Woods Valley. Meet at 10.00am at the entrance behind Bishopsworth Library in old clothes - and wellies if you fancy paddling along the stream bed.

**M Tuesday 19 September:** We have a provisional booking on the *Brunel Tour of the Old Bristol Station* at 6.00pm. The cost is £5.00 per person (seniors £4.50). **A minimum number is needed, which we don't yet have**, so if you are interested, please ring Lola on 964 1116 without delay.

- *Did you enjoy the Open Gardens event? Did you not come for any reason? We'd like to know whether to run it again, and what we could do to make it better. Contact details on the back page ...*

Not all members will have known **DENIS BRISTOW**, who died in June after a long battle with cancer, fought with characteristic stubbornness and good humour. Denis and Lotte, former owners and restorers of Bishopsworth Manor House, were supporters and members of M.V.C.G. from before we started, and early meetings of the steering group and committee were held at the Manor House. When they moved to Compton Martin, and typically got involved with the local history society, Denis told me cheerfully that he nicked the style of our masthead for their newsletter! Our sympathy and love go to Lotte and all the family.

APC

## WILD BS13

**T**HERE'S a bit of a tradition that the *Newsletter* at this time of year has a photo of one of this season's crop of BEE ORCHIDS in Manor Woods Valley. Not this time. Not that they're not there - it's an all-time record of over 100! - but we've got a PYRAMIDAL ORCHID for you instead. One was seen two years ago, and it's good to have it back.

There seem to be more SWIFTS about than for many years - we counted over 30 at one time the other evening. Presumably many of them are this year's youngsters doing their flight training before setting off south. The 'Black Scimitars' could teach the Red Arrows a thing or two about close formation flying, and the cries and screams are as dramatic as trailing smoke!



### 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	939 0698
<b>Hon. Treasurer</b>	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, Tim Kent, 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.