



MALAGO VALLEY CONSERVATION GROUP

NEWSLETTER

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2000

NOVEMBER isn't the most jolly month, but this *Newsletter* has quite a lot of cheerful news to report. The royal visit to the Hartcliffe Community Campus (page 2) was rightful recognition of good things happening in an area where good things often *do* happen - but the perception is too often the contrary. And on Dundry Hill (page 3), there is now a subtle and imaginative work of art which will delight and intrigue people for years to come.

Not that M.V.C.G. can take any credit for these two developments. But we can blow our trumpet (no pun intended) about the 1500 daffodils which are laying in wait to gladden the eye next spring at Elm Tree Corner (see page 4). A big 'thank you' to all those who helped with the planting.

Thoughts of spring, combined with the fact that there are Christmas presents to think about, might incline you to buying a copy or two of *My Manor Woods Book*. At only £1.50, every young person of your acquaintance could find one in their Christmas stocking. *My Manor Woods Book* is on sale at M.V.C.G. meetings, or direct from Committee members (phone numbers on the back page), or at Bishopsworth Library. A discount can be negotiated for bulk orders!

Next spring also brings the once-a-decade national census, on 29 April. M.V.C.G., along with other community groups, has been asked to publicise the need for a number of part-time (paid) staff to deliver census forms and to collect those not posted back. The work will take place at evenings and weekends, so could be combined with an existing job. If you'd like to know more, contact Royston Griffey on 964 1916.

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ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

H.R.H. HITS HARTCLIFFE

THE DUKE OF KENT visited Hartcliffe Community Campus on 27 October. He came to open officially two of the facilities on the Millennium Green - the children's play area (provided as part of the 'Sure Start' scheme), and the new Youth Shelter.



M.V.C.G. was invited to the event, along with representatives from many of the organisations which H.C.C. works with. Local people and children from Teyfant Community School were also there, the children providing displays and entertainment during the morning.

ABOVE: The Duke of Kent (right) and Gus Grimshaw, Headteacher of Teyfant School, after the opening of the Youth Shelter

RIGHT: The Duke of Kent and Margaret Boushel of Sure Start at the play area



The royal visit was a happy and successful occasion, and both a celebration of what Hartcliffe Community Campus has achieved so far and an opportunity for H.C.C. to demonstrate their ambitious and exciting plans for the future.

DUNDRY HILL GROUP MALAGO SPRING PROJECT

AT A FASCINATING MEETING on 17 October, environmental artist Deborah Jones told M.V.C.G. members how she had designed and created the artwork at the source of one of the tributaries to the Malago.

The site on Dundry Hill is on the edge of the Woodland Trust's Mannings Wood site. It is a very special place, tucked away and secluded by surrounding trees, but with spectacular views across Bristol.

The spring, like several others on Dundry, deposits a stone-like substance called tufa over objects in its course. This comes from the dissolved calcium in the water after it has percolated through the oolitic limestone cap. Some of these types of springs are important wildlife habitats, supporting rare invertebrates and lower plants. To ensure that we weren't going to do any damage, samples of the mosses and liverworts growing in and around the spring were sent to Somerset Environmental Records Centre who specialise in these habitats. Our spring did not have the indicator species, but suggestions to improve the area for these species were made. These included creating a pool area and allowing more light to reach the site by thinning the tree canopy.

Deborah has now nearly finished the work and a celebration event was held on Saturday 18 November. The spring site has a magical feel to it. It is partially enclosed by the semi-circular drystone wall and surrounding hazel coppice stools. The water emerges through a stone arch in the wall before splashing onto boulders and flowing over the oolitic limestone slabs which have been carved with evocative words and the footprints of native animals that have lived here over the past 10,000 years. The crystal water then briefly pools, before continuing on its journey down the hill to the Malago.

The spring can be enjoyed by sitting close by on the oak seat in the wall or on one of the boulders or tree stumps or crossing the pool on the stepping stones where the view across the city is best.



At the celebration event

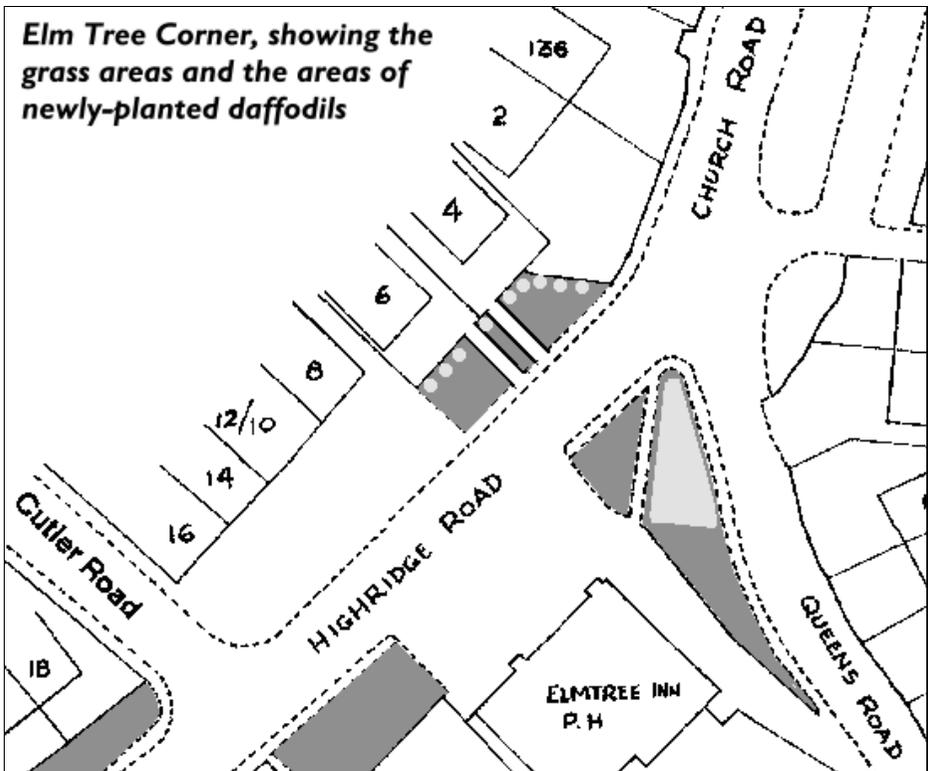
BARBRA WHARTON, DUNDRY HILL GROUP

WATCH THIS SPACE!

THERE ARE NOW 1500 newly-planted daffodil bulbs at Elm Tree Corner. A splendid turn-out of over a dozen people made short work of planting the 'February Gold' variety of dwarf daffodils in a wide area below the wall in front of the 'Elm Tree' pub.

We planned three planting sessions - Sunday 29 October, Friday 3 November and Saturday 4 November. We were worried that the Bishopsworth clay would make for slow, back-breaking work and that we might not even get planted all the 1500 bulbs which we had estimated we would need.

In the event, the dreadfully wet weather which preceded (and followed!) the first planting day had left the ground as workable as our local soil ever gets. And the small bulbs meant that we didn't need to excavate too deeply, so the main planting area was finished in an hour and a half.





The bulbs came from Riverside Garden Centre, and we are very grateful to them for their advice and help, and for supplying the bulbs at a good price. The 'February Gold' variety will 'naturalise' - the bulbs will divide and spread to provide a solid carpet of spring-time colour.

We weren't just putting things *into* the ground; there was quite an interesting variety of items coming out of our excavations. Our apprentice 'Time Team' discovered one old penny with Elizabeth II's head on it, two George VI halfpennies, a George V sixpence, four marbles and some bits of Victorian pottery.

The success of Sunday's planting had the perverse result that we then hoped no-one would come for the Friday event, otherwise there would be nothing to do on the Saturday! This turned out to be the case, and the Saturday session was far more modest - four M.V.C.G. members planted the remaining bulbs along the hedges at the back of the grass areas near Pembury's Cycle Shop. The archaeology here was less rich - just a piece of electrical insulator.

A very useful result of this planting was making positive contact with the new people at the 'Elm Tree' and at Pembury's. We're now looking forward to working with all the shop-keepers and residents on future improvements and to the elm tree being planted in front of the pub before long.

IN THE BOX

EVERY SO OFTEN (as with this edition), some of the names in the box on the back page change. As there isn't enough room to say exactly who everyone is and why they are on the M.V.C.G. Committee, a few words of explanation are appropriate.

It's always been M.V.C.G.'s policy to seek out links and communication channels with other groups and individuals whose work and interests overlap with ours. So far as the individuals are concerned, that means City Councillors; and the six councillors (two for each ward) for the three wards which are wholly or partly in the BS13 area have been invited to become co-opted (non-voting) members of our Committee. Cllr Helen Holland, as Executive Member for Environment, Transport and Leisure (and formerly Chair of the Planning Committee) understandably and rightly declined formal co-option but remains a good friend of M.V.C.G. Of the other five councillors, all but one have accepted our invitation. Other councillors appear on the list because they are paid-up members of M.V.C.G. and want to be involved, or because they have particular interests which interact with ours.

The other co-opted Committee members (apart from Don Bartlett, who volunteered to join after the last A.G.M.) are representatives of various groups and organisations. Tania Case works for the Hartcliffe Community Campus; Eleanor Davis is with CSV Environment, working on their schools grounds project; Valerie Gay chairs the Highridge Forum; Audrey Milton is on the committee of the Bedminster Down and Uplands Society; Ben Rosedale and Barbra Wharton are the job-sharing Dundry Hill Group Project Officer; Paul Stephens is the local CSV Environment man, who is also very involved with aspects of the Hartcliffe & Withywood SRB5 work; Ted Thomas is the Treasurer of the Withywood Community Forum; and Sue Walker works for the Hartcliffe Health and Environment Action Group.

Some of the co-opted members come regularly to Committee meetings. Some don't, but that doesn't matter; we keep in touch through the minutes and agendas, and through meetings organised by some of the 'umbrella' organisations which operate in the voluntary sector. As a senior City Councillor said at one of these meetings: 'It used to be called having a cup of tea and a chat. Now it's called networking and you can get grants for it.' That may sound a bit rude but it isn't meant that way. M.V.C.G. is a more effective organisation than it otherwise would be because of these links, and we will continue to develop these contacts and encourage others.

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

THE WINTER PROGRAMME of meetings is now well under way, and they are at 7.30pm at St Peter's Rooms by St Peter's Church, Bishopsworth. The **M** symbol indicates our own events.

M Monday 27 November: *Garbage Raid*. Meet at 3.45pm at the 'Elm Tree'.

Sunday 3 December: *Christmas Walk and Lunch*. Meet Winford Church 10.00am, lunch at the Dundry Inn (DHG).

M Tuesday 19 December: *M.V.C.G.'s Christmas Extravaganza*. Only two things are sure about our silly Christmas parties - they're very good fun, and they finish with an American Supper. So please bring a contribution to the feast.

M Monday 8 January: *Garbage Raid*. A new venue for the New Year: meet at 3.45pm at the junction of Church Road and Chapel Lane, by Bishopsworth Swimming Pool.

Tuesday 9 January: Dundry Hill Group meeting at 7.30pm at Norton Malreward Village Hall (this is the regular 'business' meeting - open to all).

M Tuesday 16 January: Simon Carpenter will talk on *The Fossils of the Dundry Hill area*.

M Monday 29 January: *Garbage Raid*. Meet at 3.45pm at Symes Avenue.

Sunday 3 February: *Snowdrop Walk* Meet at the Carpenters Tavern (Upton Lane) car park at 10.00am - return by 12 noon (DHG).

M Tuesday 20 February: Malago Valley Conservation Group *Annual General Meeting and Birthday Party*. More details in the January Newsletter.

COFFEE DAY 2000

OUR ANNUAL COFFEE DAY was held on 2 November and, in spite of a cold, rainy day (no change there!) lots of you came along and, we hope, enjoyed a pleasant hour of coffee (or tea), cakes and chat. All our sales stalls were well patronised, and the Wildlife Trust and the University of Withywood were pleased with what they raised. M.V.C.G. made a total of £71.90 for our funds, and a big thank you goes to all our members and friends for their contributions and support and for helping to make this event another winner.

ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS

EVERY YEAR, at our A.G.M., we announce the winners of our Environmental Awards. Awards are given (in the form of a certificate) for anything at all which has improved the public face of the BS13 area - that can mean anything from a major new building by a commercial developer to a good piece of garden wall by a private individual.

And it's not just for 'hard' building work either. We have recognised the taking in hand of an overgrown garden in front of a shop, and the extensive landscaping around the 'Bishport Fives' flats.

Now we want your nominations for improvements which have happened during calendar year 2000. What have you noticed which has made our bit of Bristol a better looking place? Please let any Committee member have your ideas, or ring André on 964 3106.

Malago Valley Conservation Group

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

Committee Members

Anton Bantock, Brenda Docherty, Royston Griffey, John Taylor

Co-opted Committee Members

Don Bartlett, Tania Case, Eleanor Davis, Valerie Gay, Audrey Milton, Ben Rosedale, Paul Stephens, Ted Thomas, Sue Walker, Barbra Wharton, 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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