



# MALAGO VALLEY CONSERVATION GROUP

# **NEWSLETTER**

No. 53 - September 2003 edition

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**THERE'S A WATERY THEME** to this *Newsletter*. We have reports of the great Malago Trek and of our annual Amphibious Garbage Raid on the Malago in Manor Woods. Our 'winter' season of talks continues this theme with Kathy Derrick speaking about *Our Streams and the Bristol Living Rivers Project* (see the Programme on page 7).

But there's lots more to squeeze in as well. We've pictures of the fascinating visit to the Redding Pits near Winford, another surprising report of the wildlife to be seen in BS13 and an update on planning applications - some old, some new.

And speaking of old and new, there are some personnel changes to report in two of the City Council departments that we regularly deal with. In Development Control (planning applications) we say good bye and best wishes to COLIN BLACKBURN. Many M.V.C.G. members have met Colin at our A.G.M.s and he has been 'Mr South Bristol' for planning matters for as long as most people can remember. Colin has taken early retirement following health problems. The M.V.C.G. Committee wanted to show our appreciation of Colin's friendly help since M.V.C.G. started, so we commissioned a special drawing from Anton Bantock referring to many of the sites in South Bristol which Colin has worked on over the years. I gave it to him at his informal leaving 'do' at Brunel House which his boss, Zoë Willcox, kindly invited me to attend. Colin's successor is CLARE DAVIES.

And in Leisure Services (Parks), a reorganisation has resulted in a new system of 'Community Parks Managers'. KAREN STAGG, who used to be the Landscape Manager for South Bristol, has

been replaced in our area by JULIAN COX. We look forward to working with him and with Clare.

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

## **WILD BS13!**

WE WERE driving home at 7.00pm on 19 July and as we reached the Swimming Baths in Whitchurch Lane, a SPARROWHAWK flew across the road in front of us with a starling in its clutches. It landed on the cottage wall at the top of Headley Lane. Unfortunately, of course, we couldn't stop and see what happened next.

The next unusual sight was five minutes later as we got out of the car (on the drive). A seagull above us was screaming and attacking a KESTREL. I've seen crows doing this and groups of small birds, but not seagulls - I wonder why.

ANGELA JAMES

## **MEETING ELFINS IN THE WOODS!**

NO, this isn't *Harry Potter*! Though the group concerned didn't lack any of his sense of adventure and fun. Who are the Elfins? They are children from three to eight years old who belong to the Woodcraft Folk.

On Thursday 19 June, a group of about 20 of them and half a dozen adults met at the Library entrance to Manor Woods. They came from Windmill Hill City Farm. One of the leaders, Lynn Parfitt, had contacted us and was keen to use *My Manor Woods Book* to explore our open space.

Guided by André's presentation and encouragement, we all set off. 'Watch! Listen! and Smell!' was the motto. 'Wild garlic!' shouted a little boy. Stickleback in the stream - elder flowers - two little girls took no time to learn and repeat the name of our favourite Manor Woods plant - 'Corky Fruited Water Dropwort'. We used the page of ideas of things to do from *My Manor Woods Book* and the children had great fun finding things and learning about them.

It was a lucky evening. The heron paraded on the mud of the pond for us before flying off and perching at the top of an oak tree. One of the adults who was at the head of the party even managed to see a kingfisher. What more could one want?

MARIE JO COUTANCHE

- *You don't have to be an elfin to enjoy Manor Woods! 'My Manor Woods Book' (£1.50) is available at Bishopsworth Library or direct from us on 964 3106.*

## **MALAGO TREK: SUNDAY 17 AUGUST**

*The sun shone and the people came (at least 60 of them, we reckon) and a trekking good time was had by all ...*



*Lola sets out her stall at the entrance to Manor Woods*



*Sunday or not, Marie Jo has no problem swingin*



*Ben seems to regret having suggested the trek*



*At the Malgo Spring artwork - with the artist he*

*Right: Picnic sur l'herbe*



## PLANNING MATTERS

'PLANNING APPLICATIONS old and new' were promised on page 1 - and here they are. Some are so new that they don't actually exist yet; they are 'imminent', to use a word which sometimes seems in a planning context to mean almost the reverse of its dictionary definition.

But we start with an old one - or at least, a new application on an old site. At THE OLD VICARAGE, Bishopsworth, the developers have followed up the dismissal of their appeal against new houses in the garden with an application for two new bungalows with two parking spaces off the turning head at the end of Ilex Close. Considered in isolation it isn't unreasonable - but the only way to actually consider it is in the history and context of this controversial site. The developers themselves acknowledge that they are intending to bring forward proposals for further new development and the only way we would be happy with permission for the two bungalows is if it marked the final development on the site.

The application at PENTIRE AVENUE for a revised block of flats went to the City Council's South & East Development Control Committee on 13 August. Slightly to everyone's surprise it was refused, on a narrow vote, on the grounds of over- intensive development. Whether there will be an appeal remains to be seen.

There are new planning applications for the site of the MENDIP GATE, Queens Road, Withywood and for the site of the former Esso GARAGE on Bishopsworth Road. The Mendip Gate application is for houses and flats, which is fine in principle, though we are concerned about the appearance of the frontage onto Queens Road and the traffic implications. The garage site application is quite intriguing: a block of flats in a modern architectural style, two storeys at the front and four storeys at the back where the ground slopes away steeply. The front face of the building would be at the back of the existing garage forecourt, i.e. the whole block would be in what we think of as the Manor Woods open space. The forecourt would become garden and parking. We are still thinking about this one!

'Imminent' applications are promised for the MORRISON'S SUPERMARKET at Symes Avenue; the former WILLS OFFICE BLOCK (conversion to flats); HARTCLIFFE COMMUNITY CAMPUS; and the NEW WITBYWOOD CENTRE on Queens Road; perhaps some of them might even figure in the next *Newsletter* ...

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE

- Want some money? There are strings attached, of course. **Greenworks Grants** are available for environmental projects in the SRB5 area. If you've an idea for an improvement, ring CHRIS MCFARLING on 964 0114 for more information.

## MALAGO MUCK AND MUD

*The usual fun and games at this year's Amphibious Garbage Raid. Only three or four big items, and they went straight to the tip. Where the dozens of cans came from is a bit of a mystery - not to mention the safe with back ripped open!*



*Several that **didn't** get away*

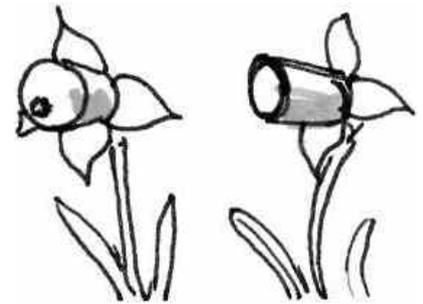
*'Bags me*

*Fortunately we  
didn't need this  
(left) in order to  
have this (right)*



## TURNING THIS YEAR'S CANS INTO NEXT YEAR'S DAFFS

AS USUAL, in the September *Newsletter*, we are planning our annual planting of daffodil bulbs on a public open space in BS13. This year we will be at Cheddar Grove, opposite St Oswald's Church. Meet at 10.00am on Saturday 8 November, and bring suitable tools if you can.



## A RED(DING) LETTER DAY

The visit to the Redding Pits near Winford on 15 July was well attended and everyone enjoyed a fascinating guided tour by Melanie Patch.





<< *More pretty colours ...*

*Here be bats >>*



## HENGROVE PARK NATURE RESERVE

JUST OUTSIDE our 'patch' - but of interest to many M.V.C.G. members - is 'The Mounds' or 'The Bowl', the westernmost part of Hengrove Park overlooking the Hartcliffe roundabout. It's an incredibly rich area for wildlife and has been designated a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. Future development at Hengrove Park may affect this gem, and the Wildlife Trust are encouraging people to write in to support its protection. Write to: Cllr Anne White, The Council House, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR.

## PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS

IT'S AUTUMN - so the 'winter' series of talks at St Peter's Rooms (side of St Peter's Church, Bishopsworth) is now under way. Garbage raids, of course, take no notice of the seasons. Greenworks walks are shown as (GW), and M.V.C.G.'s own events are marked with a **M**.

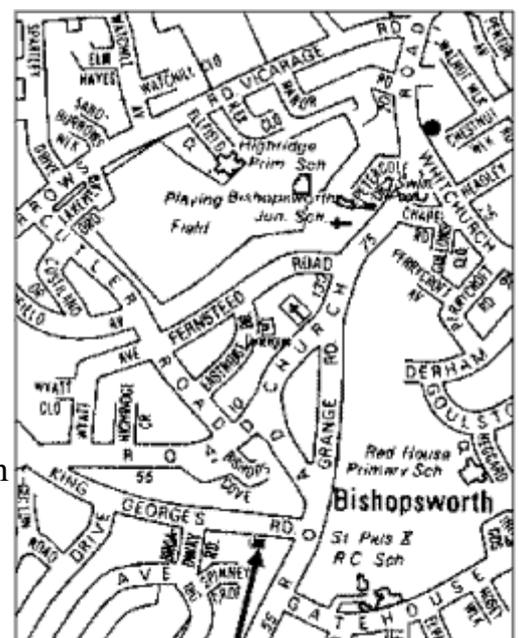
- **Sunday 5 October:** *Walk to Malago Spring.* Meet at 10.00am at Aldwick Avenue. Return by 12 noon. (GW). *This is the last of the Greenworks walks for this season and a good opportunity to visit the wonderful Malago Spring artwork if you weren't able to go on the Malago Trek.*
- **M Tuesday 21 October:** The winter programme restarts with KATHY DERRICK telling us about *Our Streams and the Bristol Living Rivers Project* at 7.30pm at St Peter's Rooms, Bishopsworth.
- **M Monday 27 October:** *Garbage Raid.* Meet at 3.45pm at Bishopsworth Library for a roam around Manor Woods.

- **M Saturday 8 November:** *Daffodil Bulb Planting* at 10.00am opposite St Oswald's Church, Cheddar Grove, Bedminster Down. See page 5.
- **Tuesday 18 November:** Bishopsworth Quiz at the Royal British Legion, Manor Road, Bishopsworth, at 7.30 for a 7.45 start. M.V.C.G. will have a team or two, as usual. Supporters are welcome - names to André by 11 November, please, for registering with the Legion's door-person.
- **M THURSDAY 20 November:** ELEANOR DAVIES, whom many members know from Dundry Hill Group and Greenworks events, recently took time off from her job with C.S.V. Environment to work in *Madagascar*. She will tell us about her adventures. 7.30pm, St Peter's Rooms. *Please note the change from Tuesday to Thursday because of the Bishopsworth Quiz.*
- **M Friday 21 November/Saturday 22 November:** *Christmas 'At Home'*: our annual event to raise money for M.V.C.G., the Wildlife Trust and the University of Withywood. 2.00-5.00pm on the Friday and 10.00am-12.30pm on the Saturday at Lola's at 84 King Georges Road. SEE THE BACK PAGE.
- **M Monday 24 November:** *Garbage Raid*. Meet at 3.45pm at Symes Avenue, Hartcliffe.
- **M Tuesday 9 December:** Our (un)usual *Christmas Jollities* at 7.30pm at St Peter's Rooms.
- **M Monday 5 January:** *Garbage Raid*. Meet at 3.45pm at the 'Elm Tree', Bishopsworth.

## CHRISTMAS 'AT HOME'

OUR annual cunning plan to help you with your Christmas shopping in a sociable way while at the same time raising money for three local good causes (not least M.V.C.G.) continues this year in a slightly revised format.

We are experimenting with two half-days rather than one full day, so come along on **Friday 21 November** between 2.00 and 5.00pm and/or **Saturday 22 November** between 10.00am and 12.30pm. The mixture as before: coffee, chat, lots of attractive things to buy for Christmas. This year it's at Lola's at 84 King George's Road, Bishopsworth.



**84 King Georges Road**

## Malago Valley Conservation Group

**Chairman**

André Coutanche

964 3106

**Vice-Chairman**

Lola Hardingham

964 1116

|                       |              |          |
|-----------------------|--------------|----------|
| <b>Hon. Secretary</b> | Lis Pibworth | 987 0825 |
| <b>Hon. Treasurer</b> | Beryl Heaton | 964 5780 |

### **Committee Members**

Anton Bantock, Don Bartlett, Brenda Docherty, Mavis Palmer

### **Co-opted Members**

Tania Case, Valerie Gay, Paul Mizen, Ted Thomas, Sue Walker, CSV Environment, Cllrs Mark Brain, Peter Crispin, Richard Eddy, Royston Griffey, Ron Hodges, Colin Smith, 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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