

PROJECTS

REPORTS by JOHN OWEN, *Chairman of the Projects Committee*

LYDDEN POND

A Challenge which should hold water!

Ponds may come and ponds may go. At the present time it seems they mainly go, especially if left to their own devices.

Sunday, 3 November, dawned windy but dry after a night of torrential rain; something of a rarity in recent years. Our three-man working-party arrived on the stroke of ten at Lydden Pond only to find it already occupied by avid workers clearing submerged weeds and chattering among themselves, seemingly protesting at our arrival. Our gumboots seemed so inadequate to the task compared with their agility in the watery conditions. Upending themselves as they foraged away we could only stand and stare in the sunshine of this blustery autumn morning.

Venture not we thought, into the watery depths to continue our current fourth session of clearing and digging prior to the proposed lining in 1992. Besides we were outnumbered three to one and they were far more at home in that environment than we mere humans.



LYDDEN POND in the early 1900's

54 Welcome coffee arrived as we discussed with Chairman Jack Woolford progress up to date – strategy, funding, volunteers, materials, professional advice and sponsorship – all essential for success. This alongside the village pond resplendent in its new-found watery expanse and bubbling over with wild-life activity. How nice if this most natural and beautiful scene could remain, the ducks enjoying their natural environment of water and colourful autumn-tinted cover.

Ten ducks had come from we know not where but we do know that within a matter of days the pond will dry-out as it has been doing in recent years, remaining thus until the next heavy rainfall. Far too large an area to line with clay or butyl an attainable objective would be to re-instate part of the area without jeopardising its surface drainage function.

Would that nature would take control and make permanent this impressive backdrop to our discussions which she alone produced overnight! We could put away our plans for little else would need to be done but enjoy the scene and accept a second cup of coffee!

The pond at Lydden has come but will surely go and go and go unless we do something



THE WEST STREET HUNT MEETS AT LYDDEN, early 1900's

The two photographs of Lydden are printed by courtesy of Mr Christopher Carr, of Temple Ewell.

NEWS FLASH

Since this article was written there has been a dramatic development. On 9th/10th Decemberr the Lydden Pond was lined with clay by the contractors and sponsors, Star Plant Ltd. of Shorncliffe.