

PROJECTS

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

LYDDEN POND RESTORATION:

The First Year !

A great deal has been achieved since The Dover Society was asked by Lydden Parish Council to consider the 0.065ha (650m²) dried out village pond as a conservation project

The Chairman, Councillor Dick Hubbard, and the Chairman of the Dover Society Projects Committee, John Owen, had the first of many site meetings just over a year ago on Tuesday 19th February 1991.

Twenty-five volunteer working sessions involving some 240 man hours have taken place during the year and additional heavy work by contractors. Volunteers included villagers, school-children, Dover Society members and others interested in the restoration of this environmental amenity.

With the enthusiastic support of Mrs Cross, the Headteacher, the village school-children turned out in force with some of their mothers during Environment Week,

VOLUNTEERS FROM THE WHITE CLIFFS COUNTRYSIDE PROJECT LEND A HAND WITH "PUDDLING"





DIGGER STANDS BY AS FIRST LOAD OF CLAY ARRIVES. About 20 loads were delivered

tidied up the pond, planted bluebells and helped Dover Society Chairman Jack Woolford plant a commemorative sapling willow tree to mark the start of the project.

Originally surveyed and planned by Clive Taylor ARICS (within our estimated budget) for a 10m diameter circular pond lined with butyl, the opportunity of free clay presented itself thanks to villagers Alan Dive and his wife. Civil engineer John Gerrard vetted the clay and the offer was snapped up. Star Plant of Shorncliffe helped considerably by transporting and laying over 200 tons of clay at a very reasonable price.

A vice-president of the Society and local resident, Peter Marsh, wrote of the project: 'it is a very important initiative that the Dover Society has taken to promote and co-ordinate the reinstatement of water and plant life to the Lydden village pond.'

A successful application for a grant from the 'Shell Better Britain Campaign' brought £450 and the project was also successful in receiving a Civic Trust/BT Community Pride Award to the value of £500. The pond requires further treatment following the tracking-in of the clay in December last and the impactor treatment of early January, to improve its water-holding capability. The current treatment entails manual puddling with straw (kindly supplied free) – within living memory a technique practised locally with success. Adequate rainfall is however essential to the process and we remain hopeful!

The signs are encouraging: water begins to lie and the ducks again show an interest. With the arrival of spring the wildlife is stirring and we shall shortly stand aside for a period learning from and observing what nature makes of our efforts.

Our most successful work-session was that of Sunday, 23rd February, when the White Cliffs Countryside Project volunteers led by Mrs Melanie Wrigley responded magnificently to our request, on behalf of the village, for help. Fifteen puddlers plus



THE DOVER SOCIETY, WINNERS OF A CIVIC TRUST/BRITISH TELECOM "COMMUNITY PRIDE AWARD."

SASKIA HALLAM OF THE CIVIC TRUST Presents a cheque to the Chairman of the Society. 23rd February 1992

Ben, a border collie, joined us from 10 till 3 puddling round and round on straw seemingly engaged in 'some ancient spring ritual' to the wonderment of both spectators and passers-by!

Interest in the project continues to grow and the contribution made by many unsung heroes, quietly and effectively, is magnificent.

NATIONAL TREE WEEK 1991

On Saturday 30th November and Sunday 1st December last The Dover Society organised two after-care work sessions on the two hundred young trees planted by the Society in Lousyberry Wood just over a year ago. Being National Tree Week and the first anniversary of the planting, this concerted effort was particularly appropriate. Jim Davis, local Tree Warden, Jack Woolford, Dover Society Chairman and Margaret Robson, local representative of the Council for the Protection of Rural England all provided impetus on what were two dreary but mild and rainless mornings. Eleven-year-old Susanne Glover, from Temple Ewell School, was an example of cheerfulness and industry as she wielded her secateurs.