

PROJECTS

UPDATE by JOHN OWEN, Chairman of the Projects Committee

BT
environment
May 22-31 1993
week

THE DOVER SOCIETY'S

VICTORIAN LEOPARD BOLLARD RESTORATION PROJECT

EVER SINCE Joe Harman's article in the September 1991 *Newsletter* it has been felt that the dilapidated state of the Victorian Leopard Bollards, especially on the Zig-Zag public footpath and Harold Street and Harold Passage, should be put right. Their refurbishment would be a worthwhile and noticeable contribution to the tourist scene and an expression of our Society's civic pride and regard for our heritage.

Researcher Joe Harman, in his article, highlighted the importance of the St. Martin's Priory leopards in the history of Dover and this was, indeed, to feature strongly in their restoration. The Project Sub-committee, seeing the time was right to take on another project and believing that here was a manageable objective, sought, with the help of Dover District Council, St. Mary's school children and a small but strong team of dedicated Society members, to tackle the



Work in hand on part of the old Deal Road. Joe Harman and Barry Late at work, Anne Owen and Rupert look on. left: Children of St. Mary's School help with the project.

Teacher: Mrs Vicki Brown

restoration with the completion date scheduled for ENVIRONMENT WEEK, (22/31 May). Such was the enthusiasm of the volunteer team that Charlton Green and Brookfield Place Leopard Bollards were also refurbished in the allotted time.

Work started on 20th March sharply at 07.30! and continued until noon each Saturday through to 29th May (the children doing their bit during mid-week sessions).

The regular team of Ernie, Barry, Joe and John were frequently advised and sometimes helped by casual passers-by. Many were not quite sure what to make of a situation where so much energy was being expended on a Saturday morning in a public place. Volunteers it must be, they concluded! First chipping down to bare metal, numerous advisors suggested less energetic systems but failed to deliver! Priming was followed by black paint with the heads and top band gilded in the style of the refurbished one at the corner of Castle Street and Eastbrook Place. The detail has been so well picked out that the names of the suppliers now appear quite clearly: WRIGHT and JOYCE, both Dover firms.

The children of St. Mary's C.E. School, in whose area the project was set, were enthusiastic from the start. Organised by Mr David Hadley and led by Mrs Vicki Brown



The work completed and Joe Harman's dream comes true

the children, after a short introductory talk by Mr Harman, set to work wire brushing, rubbing down and painting. They also attended to the finishing touches during ENVIRONMENT WEEK itself. Their headteacher, Mr Fischer, on seeing their work said "how good it is when the young can participate in preserving their environment". Four of the children were lucky enough to be interviewed live on BBC

Radio Kent and thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the studios.

No project is without its humour. The over-zealous volunteer who insisted we worked at the Easter weekend was the only one on the day who failed to turn up! The Reverend gentleman who, out walking his dog, stopped to encourage (and help) only to find that Sophie had wandered off (home?) alone. There was the young New Zealander interested but unable to help as he was hitching his way to Murrayfield for the rugby, capped only by him who said "Let me know when you are finished and I'll give you a hand." Then the father 'knowingly' pointing out the lovely pussycats to his offspring. Two youngsters at Charlton Green: "What are you doing that for?" – a prudent count to ten and they biked away and Ernie continued 'cutting-in' his leopard heads.

Lezanne César, on behalf of the school, received a Dover District Council plaque from Mr McFarnell who represented Councillor Barry Smith and Katie Davis received a St. Martin Shield from the Dover Society, presented by Mrs Sheila Cope, the Hon. Membership Secretary, who acknowledged the School's valuable work for the environment. Approximately thirty children

84 helped the adult team of four, altogether putting in 200 'man' hours, the Council paying for the materials used. A congratulatory certificate from the Civic Trust has been received by all who participated in the project along with a 'Thank-you' letter from the District Council.

NOTE from Joe Harman. *Operation Bollard has been a success, and the children of St. Mary's School have enjoyed participating. It was thought that the bollards were all supplied by Wright of Dover but at Harold Street we found that the two there were supplied by J. Joyce of King Street. Joyce also provided the gates at Charlton Cemetery. Another 'Leopard' post has been discovered in Walmer at the end of an alley near the old church.*



OPERATION 'DOUR SCOUR 93'

CADETS NOT DETERRED BY EARLY MORNING RAIN

THIS YEAR WE MOVED AWAY from Environment Week (late May) back to our original March slot for the Dover cadets' spring-clean project, finding dormant nature more suited to our purpose.

The modest area selected was just manageable as an incredible amount of rubbish had accumulated to form a serious public eyesore.

Regardless of poor early morning weather Sunday 14th March saw the cadets concentrating on the south bank of the River Dour downstream of the 'wooden' footbridge to the rear of South Kent College and they soon filled with rubbish the skip provided by the District Council.