

Mendip



From the Chair

Leading on from the last Newsletter I am pleased to report that Judith Tranter has had her knee replacement and is now steadily upwardly mobile. Judith is however still in need of offloading some parts of her workload.

I am also pleased to say for those who didn't meet her at the AGM that Pat Fraser has stepped forward to take the Committee Meeting Minutes and stood in for Judith at the AGM.

The Mendip Society committee has agreed to put an advert out for an Administrator/Organiser to join us; this post will receive a fair remuneration and expense's, Details can be found in this newsletter and will be on the website and in August's Mendip Times. If you know anyone who has a few spare hours a week and is looking for part time Job, or if you feel you are able assist the Society move forwards please get in touch before the 31st August.

The role will coordinate Walks and Talks in readiness for the programme, flag up Events and recruit members to help man the Information Gazebo that helps to promote our work and the Small Grants Scheme. The successful candidate will also support the day to day enquiries (secretarial), and help gather Information for the Newsletter (editor).

At the AGM on the 14th April we finished with an interesting talk by Nick Green, Farm's Director for Alvis Bros Ltd. Nick spoke passionately about his work on covering all aspects and sections of the farming enterprise where he has spent most of his working life.

There was great interest in the setting up and running of 'FarmLink', an organisation which enables school children to visit the farms involved to see first-hand where the food on their plates come from. There were plenty of questions and keen answers at the end, including many on Alvis's home produced Cheese production and Exports. We thank Nick very much for coming to be our speaker at this AGM.

Wishing everyone a happy summer on our lovely Mendip Hills - **Tina**



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COVER PHOTO – by Elaine Jones

A beautiful sunny, and still rather hot, later evening in June. Elaine, a member of the group guided round Chancellor's Farm by Kate Lawrence, loved the beauty and peace of the meadows of flowers, and the grazing majestic Ruby Reds. She sent a few photographs to me with her article (on P 6 of this newsletter). One, that of the farmhouse from across the fields caught the eye of Mike Harvey – who thought it captured the peace and beauty of the place so well, You can view it on the front cover.

Congratulations Elaine on your 'photographic eye'.

From the Editor

What a very mixed year we have had so far –both extremely dry when we needed rain to help all the little tree saplings we have planted, and extremely wet and windy when we needed the sun and warmth to keep the flowers in the reserves blooming. It never seemed to be just right – but this, maybe, is what we are going to have to get used to.

But, through it all, our volunteers in the reserves came when asked and we are very grateful to them.

We have done our best to arrange a programme for the next four months, some visits and walks we hope you will enjoy.

And enclosed with your newsletter this time you will notice the 'Programme Leaflet'!

If it looks exactly like it always used to before Covid interrupted its production – that's because it has been put together once again by Geoff Timms, for which I thank him very much indeed. Another very much appreciated volunteer.

You very nearly didn't get a newsletter at all!. With all the half completed pages safely saved inside my computer, the machine decided to break down completely. And here I have to say a heartfelt 'Thank you' to member Steve Eggington who came to the rescue when all else failed- so a heartfelt thank you, Steve.

THIS YEAR 2023, IN THE LAST FOUR MONTHS WE HAVE ATTENDED, WALKED, VISITED, CLEARED, AND ASSEMBLED –

In March we presented a talk by John Smith in Priddy village Hall – over 60 people attended.
The Romans in Britain by Mike Harvey.

It was a dank, misty day, and but for the modern warmth and comforts of Priddy Village Hall it would have been an easy job for one's imagination to believe that a Roman Legion was emerging from the gloom to take up position all around us. We were confronted by a fully armed Roman soldier, dressed in armour that he had just put on, piece by piece in front of us. But this was no apparition from the past, this was archaeologist, historian and Roman re-enactor John Smith, who had started his talk dressed in just a simple shift and sandals. Piece by piece, John dressed himself in items from his extensive range of props, armour and weapons, describing each piece as he did so, and debunking a few myths along the way.



He pointed out, for instance, the huge impracticality of the enormous plumes so often seen on Roman helmets in the movies. These, he asserted, would act as a massive sail on top of an already heavy and cumbersome helmet, the slightest crosswind making it almost impossible to hold one's head upright, leave alone fight! He also showed his fascinated audience a few variations in helmet design, clearly demonstrating how improvements and developments became adopted and incorporated over time.

The practicalities of wearing heavy armour on the march were also mentioned, John pointed out in practical terms, how important it was that a good, comfortable fit was achieved if your average Roman soldier was not to cut off the circulation to his arms while on the march, rendering him useless as a fighting man once he had made his way to the battle.

There was also a fascinating insight into weapons technology – especially the way that javelin (spear) design had evolved to ensure that the shaft of the weapon bent or even splintered on impact meaning that your enemy had little chance of using your own projectiles against you.

Beyond all this, John also went into the reasons that Mendip was so attractive to the Romans. Not only, it turns out, as a source of lead, but also because the locals had a reputation as good metalworkers. This, plus a readily available supply of slave labour and good growing conditions to produce the food needed to keep them fed apparently made our geographical location a prime target for the advancing armies of Rome.

John Smith has been involved in archaeology since 1971 and has clearly built up a comprehensive understanding of not just the clothes, weapons and military side of Roman life, but also the culture, lifestyle and legacy of Roman occupation in Britain. He paints a very vivid, believable and convincing picture of what it was like to be either a Roman soldier / occupier or a Mendip native under the control of Rome during the period of occupation.



Rapt Audience Attention - Photo by Judith Tranter

In May, 16 of us walked with The President to see the woodland he calls 'Fox Wood'

The Presidents' Guided Walk 2023 – by Mike Harvey

Tuesday May 6th saw the start of a long period of dry, sunny, yet not too hot weather, ideal for a group of us to climb up from a secluded car park in Cheddar. Through Mascalls Wood and out, via some impressive dry-stone walling produced by our own members to Fox Wood, Les Davies' very own patch of Mendip.



The work of the Society's very own dry stone walling team.



Bluebells in Fox Wood.



Les, as ever, had plenty of stories of local interest, which he recounted during our frequent breaks to admire the view – and to catch our breath! He also described the work he is doing to encourage native species and keep others under control in Fox wood. All in all, a very pleasant way to spend a sunny afternoon in good company.

In June we walked and learned a great deal about being **Geologically Un – Conformed**

A Special Interest Walk with Professor Tony Watts – by Richard Frost

On the 24th June the Society was very fortunate to have the benefit of the first class leadership of Professor Tony Watts as our guide on the visit to two of the very rare sites of Special Interest covering the features known as “The Great Unconformities of Eastern Mendip”.

This geological feature is almost unknown in the U.K. and its importance cannot be ignored. Aptly named by Mr. De La Beche, who discovered it about 200 years ago, and situated in Vallis Vale definitely makes it a treasure of Mendip!

I should explain that an unconformity is a missing bed of rock that has been eroded away due to the natural forces of Nature, for example, water.

On this site the horizontal Jurassic limestone rests upon a dipping Carboniferous limestone due to the missing layers/beds of Permian / Triassic rocks. In terms of time scale, that is one large missing layer !!



We also visited the nearby Tedbury Iron Age Camp site near Great Elm, where rocks of the Jurassic period were stripped by quarrying to reveal a lower Jurassic ancient sea bed imbedded with fossils which bored their way through the rock. You can also see the very steep angle to the horizontal layer of the planed off Carboniferous Limestone, shown by Tony's use of his angle meter in the photo below left.

All in all, we had a really interesting day in the company of an expert who kept our interest high with an accompanying commentary of interesting facts and information despite the sapping heat and high temperature.

My thanks go to Dr. Tony Watts for this wonderful day out.

All this should prepare us for the forthcoming Mendip Rocks Festival in October, which yet again is part sponsored by the Society. So keep your eye on the website for further information of the walks and events we have arranged for the month of October



Standing on the top of the Un-conformity.

In June we also visited Chancellor's Farm, the Coronation Flower Meadow

VISITING CHANCELLOR'S FARM by Elaine Jones



photo – Elaine Jones



above, by David Tranter and on the front cover) is over 500 years old and is mentioned in The Domesday Book. We heard the lovely story of two sisters who once lived there without running water but daily collected water from a well about half a mile away carrying it in pails on a wooden yolk for themselves and the animals!



Setting off for a walk around the wild flower meadows we first encountered 'Peregrine' a six year old bull who was keeping a couple of older 'ladies' company in their dotage! He did a little 'charge' to impress us but luckily in the opposite direction! Walking on we went through the start of the amazing wild flower and herb meadows with so many species to identify including orchids. I especially liked the hay rattles which signify when it's time to mow the hay by rattling in the wind! Throughout the farm there are wonderful dry stone walls as boundaries. We went on to see the Ruby Red Devon cattle, so velvety. (left, by E Jones) There was excitement when a green butterfly so cleverly camouflaged as a leaf was spotted.... possibly a Green Hairstreak. Everywhere nature was teeming with beauty especially the delicate dog roses, pink hawthorn blossom, wild foxgloves and vetch. More stunning untouched meadows with seed heads of bluebells and cowslips. All too soon, our walk finishes by The Coronation Meadow! A fabulous evening and insight into this wonderful Somerset Wildlife Trust treasure!

In May and June we cleared the area in front of Gully Cave for the summer dig.

An Exciting Discovery whilst Clearing up the Debris

"In May and June Mendip Society members, along with some AONB volunteers, were up at Gully Cave to help Prof. Danielle Schreve of Royal Holloway University prepare for the summer dig. The team have helped out in previous years and now have the "mattocking, shovelling and bucket chain method" down to a T!



L - The clearance diggers arrive for work in front of the cave entrance (at centre right). Photo by Andy Chamberlain

The main task involved removing the slope deposits outside the cave entrance so that Danielle and her students have a clear run to carry out a systematic excavation in this area when they return. The slope deposits are formed of coarse limestone breccia, probably younger than 25,000 years old but the precise age has been unknown until now because this type of deposit is very difficult to date as it usually does not contain fossils.

It was therefore extremely exciting to recover a well-preserved toe bone (a first phalanx) of an Ice Age horse, found by Richard Ellis, and some fragments of reindeer pelvis. These can be sent for radiocarbon dating in future and will help to refine our knowledge of the evolution of the sediment sequence.

Danielle thanks everyone who helped out and looks forward to welcoming Society members on a visit on the morning of the 26th July.

In May we also assembled a 'comfortable facility' in our Reserve at Tania's Wood

We can all sit comfortably now – by Judith Tranter

With all our tarpaulin shelters blown away or disintegrated by the weather, the Forest School children had no-where to keep dry when it rained hard – nor did our own work parties, come to that. So as reported in the last newsletter, a shelter has been built: so the Committee decided we should also provide somewhere for anyone in the wood for any occasion should have somewhere to also sit and rest comfortably. So they bought a 'table and benches', but nothing comes easy does it? It was in kit form!

Ever willing and helpful Peter and David volunteered to assemble the dozens of screws and bits and pieces which all had to go in the exact right places. Not so easy, as they found out – but eventually – one table and benches was put the right way up by three press-ganged passers-by! And it works perfectly.



Some of the bits and pieces.

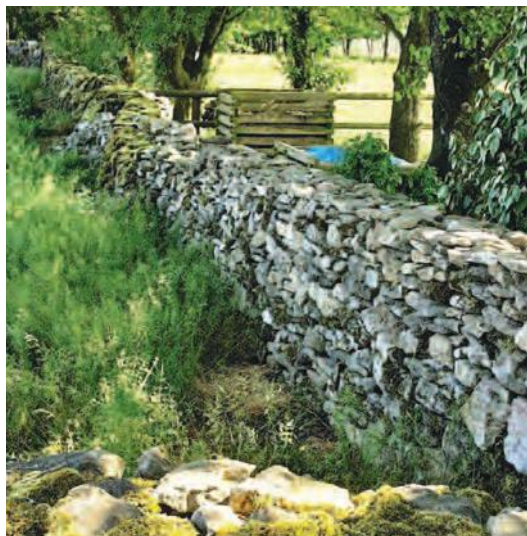


It always helps to read the instructions.



It works perfectly! Well done lads..

WHAT A SUMMER IT HAS BEEN – A BIT OF EVERY KIND OF WEATHER THERE IS – HERE'S WHAT TO COME IF WE'RE LUCKY!



Saturday 19th / Sunday 20th August

A beginners walling course at Chancellor's Farm, near Priddy, with tutors Tina Bath & Phil Smith.

Maximum of 8 places each day, which must be booked. Members are free- non-members £10 per day. (I'll let you into a secret – it's as cheap to join the society as it is to pay for 2 days walling tuition. Joining and other info will be sent before the course. Contact Tina on 07880 664207 and chairman@themendipsociety.org.uk

Left. The wall started on the previous session, can you see where the start of the re-build needs to be?

Sunday 20th August

A Special Interest 'easy – going Walk of 4 kms to visit the Mendip Hospital Cemetery – ST 456555. – Leader, Jo Bradshaw.

We will meet at the entrance to the Bishops Palace, Wells, at 10am and walk to the Cemetery for a guided tour around this lovely peaceful place, starting at 11.30am. We suggest bringing a picnic. There is no need to book, but please advise Richard Frost if you are coming, on 01275 472797 & 07745 834513.

Photo Chris Fisher.



Tuesday 29th August

Part of the Mendip Hills AONB summer programme, “**Moments on Mendip**” for which The Mendip Society is a sponsoring partner, is holding a ‘Drop-In’ Photographic Workshop for families in the afternoon, 1-4 pm in Cheddar Community Pavilion. The event will be free for everyone – to try making creative sun prints, do a light painting, take a photo walk in nature, see local archive film and find how to submit a photo which could be projected on to the rocks of Cheddar Gorge.

For more details go to:- [www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk /events](http://www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk/events).

Tuesday 12th September 10am

A Visit to Avalon Archaeology

Avalon Archaeology is a place to discover local heritage alongside the natural environment in a beautiful rural location. History is brought to life through archaeological reconstructions celebrating human interaction with the Somerset Levels over thousands of years.

There are reconstructions from the Iron Age, Roman, Saxon and Viking Somerset; there are faithful reconstructions of buildings, including a **Saxon longhall**, and the dining room of a **Roman villa** (with working hypocaust heating).

The address is **Avalon Archaeology**, Avalon Marshes Centre, Shapwick Road, Westhay, Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9TT and **what3words** are ‘renovated.outsiders.guard’



Our tour of the site lasts a maximum of 1.5 hours. After the tour, we'll have the site to ourselves to continue exploring, before the gates are open to the public at 1pm. The cost for the tour will be £6.50 for adults and £4.50 for concessions ; and we have a maximum of 15 places. There is a cafe on site and tables can be reserved if we want, we'll ask when you book. It serves hot and cold drinks, and a varied light lunch menu including freshly made soups & quiches. Payment for entry and café are by card only, no cash. (We can help if you have no card!)

Left: The Viking ship outside the Longhall.

****The price includes free re-entry to the site during normal opening hours for the whole of 2023**.**

Part of the tour will take place outside, so dress appropriately for the weather.

It may be darker than we're used to in some of the areas, so you could use a torch if you like.

Their website is worth browsing www.swheritage.org.uk/avalon-archaeology/visiting-2/

You will need to e mail Sally who is arranging this trip by the 27th August (if possible), on:-

07816 266531/ sallydavis99@hotmail.com. You could always enquire if there are spare places during the one week before the 12th September. .

Whilst you're in the area, after your visit, you can make use of the Avalon Marshes Centre and visit the Somerset Crafts gallery. You can also journey onto Shapwick Heath National Nature Reserve and see replica wooden prehistoric trackways

Saturday 23rd September: Visit to The Leigh Down Stone Circles

Following a successful previous visit to this interesting site, we have arranged another day for Members & family or friends to this Ancient Neolithic Stone Circles sited in our Mendip Hills.

The site is on Crown Hill, Regil, BS40 8AY (for Sat Navs)/.on O/S Explorer 154 ST 542639.

The landowner Mr Nic Colton will explain the history and legend of this fascinating place and his work there with its link to our Neolithic ancestors, and their place in our landscape. His guided walk around the circles and avenues will **start promptly at 10am**, and could take anything up to 3 hours.

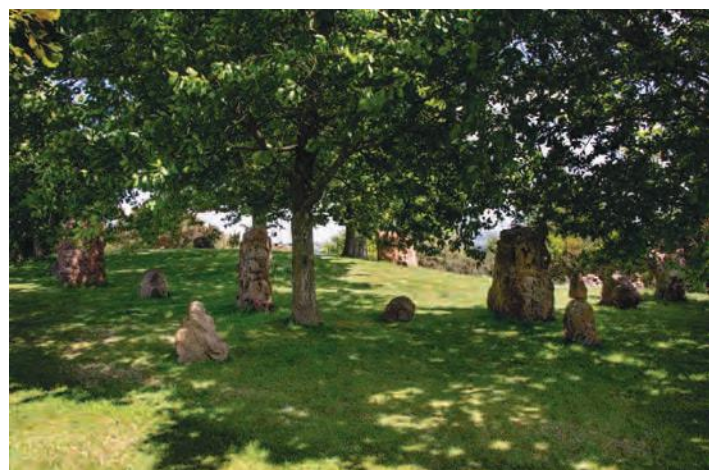


Photo by Roger Harvey

Tel. 01275 472797 & 07745 834513 or richardfrost608@gmail.com

There is no actual booking system, but please let Richard Frost know if you are coming so that we can have some idea of numbers that will help us with parking etc.

This is a day for anyone interested in history, archaeology and all countryside lovers alike.

This event is free and if wanted for after the tour of the circles, please bring your own picnic, food & drink, not forgetting maybe a chair or a rug; the position is quite an exposed one for sitting but the extensive views are magnificent.

Wednesday 27th September: Mendip Ploughing Match

This is an all-day event at a farm near Chewton Mendip; all the details will be on the Mendip Ploughing Society website a short while before the day.

<https://www.mendiploughingsociety.co.uk/>



Mendip Ploughing match continued

We will have our gazebo along with other organisations of like ilk , showcasing our Society. We are one of the match sponsors; for a day which includes dry stone walling, hedge laying and horse ploughing classes as well as ones for the traditional tractors.

It's a lovely day out, you get to see many interesting things and meet a lot of people. We do need a couple of volunteers to man the gazebo, this gives time for both helping the society on our stand and enjoying everything to see of the day, please contact Tina, who will also be there, for the Mendip Ploughing Society.

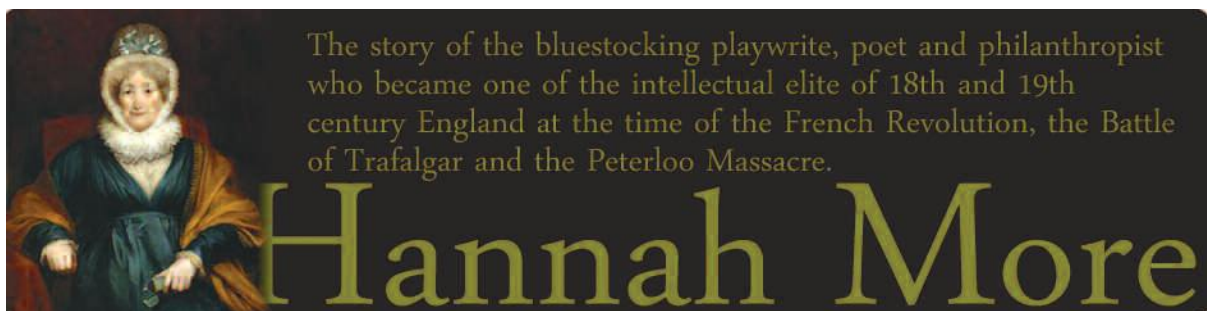
chairman@themendipsociety.org.uk



All safely ploughed and finished before the storm – J Tranter



Friday 29th September: [The Hannah More Film Showing](#)



The new drama about Bristolian social reformer Hannah More, will be shown in Shipham Village Hall at 7.30pm; doors will be open from 7pm

Born into poverty in Fishponds in 1745, playwright, poet, philanthropist and champion of female education Hannah More was a complex woman.

A politically conservative evangelical Christian, she has been portrayed as both an anti-feminist and a feminist pioneer. What is not in dispute is that she became one of the most influential women of her era. She set up two schools in Bristol. As a friend of William Wilberforce, she was also a staunch abolitionist.

Her story is told in a new feature-length costume drama from Bristol's Redcliffe Films [1]. A collaboration between retired BBC staff and students from Bristol University, UWE, The Old Vic Theatre School and Bath Spa, "Hannah More" was filmed on location in and around Bristol. The £35,000-budgeted feature has been selected in 50 international film festivals around the world which include 14 awards.

Pay on the door tickets £10 to include refreshments after the film

For further information of the evening, email les.davies@westcountryman.co.uk

[1] For more on the film see <https://redcliffefilms.co.uk/>

Saturday October 7th : a great opportunity for an “exceedingly good walk” in October
Around Coleford – the old canal and remains of coal mining
10.30 start. Led by Sue Gearing and Les Davies

An interesting circular ramble looking at the coalmining around Coleford and Vobster - the lifeblood there for centuries - and following parts of the Somerset and Dorset canal. We visit several old collieries, pass remains of a Waddell fan and go under the Hucky Duck. This is all set in attractive countryside crossed by the busy Mells Stream. There is a short steep climb at the start and a couple of other uphill but is mainly easy-going with several stiles.



This was Sue's walk in Mendip Times in March this year, and we thank her (and Les) for reprising it for us this month.

4.5 miles, about 2-3 hours walking and exploring
 OS Explorer 142, grid ref 686 486, postcode BA3 5LU.

Parking and meeting place: In the old part of Coleford in the car park of the popular local, the King's Head. (Coleford village is south of Highbury and north of Leigh-on-Mendip.) Landlord, Dave, is happy for us to park there. If the car park is full, park nearby. Meet in front of the pub

(Left - How many knew this is the Hucky Duck? Be honest now)

Sunday 15th October:

A special Interest Walk – Part of The Mendip Rocks Festival
Coalfields, Canals and Railways of Camerton with Richard Frost

The focus of this walk is the Camerton Colliery; 3kms, easy going but needs stout footwear.

OS. 142 ST. 682577. Meet at 10.30am at the junction of Camerton Hill and Durcott Lane for a walk & talk about this colliery, the railway, and canal, plus a visit to St. Paul's Church and a stroll through Camerton Court.



This walk is part of The Mendip Rocks Festival and MUST be booked.

Camerton Court

Richard Frost. 01275 472797 & 07745 834513 / richardfrost608@gmail.com

See also The Somerset Earth Science Centre for the full Mendip Rocks Festival programme
<https://www.earthsciencecentre.org.uk/> in late September / early October

More Moments on Mendip – Sunday 22nd October

(not yet confirmed date please check the websites beforehand)

An 'Outdoor Photo Gallery' will be held in Cheddar Gorge as the last day of this project; a finale at dusk is planned with projections of the best photographs onto the rocks of the Gorge.

Everyone is welcome to this event which will be free of charge. All details will be on our, and the Mendip Hills, websites in due course. www.themendipsociety.org.uk, www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk

Dew ponds, composting toilets and more – Part two By Mike Harvey

In the last edition of the newsletter I told you about my neighbour Roger White, his dew pond restoration project and the long-term plans he has for his land. As this is ongoing – and is partly funded by The Mendip Society, I thought it only right to update you on progress.

Just before Easter, during their holiday period, a small group of tutors from Weston College volunteered to help erect the composting toilet required before groups from the college could be allowed to stay onsite to work on the dew pond and other parts of the project. It has been sited between two existing wooden buildings and so is almost invisible to the casual observer.

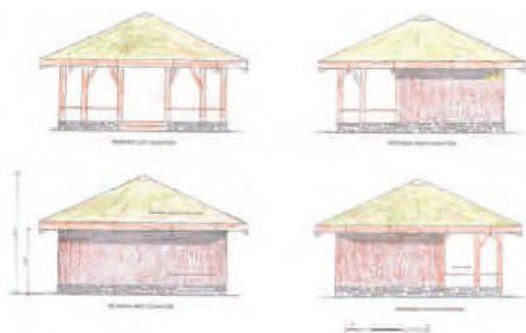
My pictures below show them hard at work – and possibly a little too much detail of the inner workings...



Weston college tutors hard at work. They volunteered to help build up the toilet provided by a Mendip Society grant – I suspect a few beers afterwards might have been involved!



Two mini wheelie bins sit within the structure – these need emptying occasionally, but if the instructions are followed then (apparently) the resulting product is a good quality compost.



Since completion of this facility, two groups (at the time of writing) have stayed onsite and many more are planned over the summer. Roger has also now submitted plans for his roundhouse to the local authority, (see left) with support from the parish council and others.

The proposed roundhouse design.

(ED: We will be able to show pictures of the groups at work soon, you will appreciate that we need to have the permission of parents/guardians before we can do so – and this takes time to gather!)



Roger White looking over the work so far.

Trees (mainly ash) whose roots threatened the dew ponds walls, have been felled and a lot of digging out has been done

And now here is news of another ‘round- house , in our Tania’s Wood Reserve which was reported on in the March newsletter

TANIA’S WOOD NOW HAS SHELTER!

By Nicky Orr, the Forest School Leader



Sheltering in the rain – photo by Nicky Orr

The after-school Forest Club from Blagdon Primary school who visit Tania’s Wood every week had been struggling to keep dry on site, especially in the recent rainy weather. Luckily for this group of kids the Mendip Society, who manage the site near Ubley, got together with a few parents and built this beautiful wooden temporary shelter. The children love it and have added their own creative flare by decorating it with natural weaving.

This great shelter will be used when year 1 at Blagdon school attend their Forest School sessions next term, as well as a dry spot for the Mendip Society volunteers who come to maintain the site and visitors on training or courses.

We would like to say a big thank you to James at “Angusdesign” who planned and built the shelter, local volunteers who helped put it up, “Somerlap” who donated much of the resources and the Mendip Society for on- going support in encouraging children to engage in nature at Tania’s Wood.

BOOK CORNER – with Mike Harvey

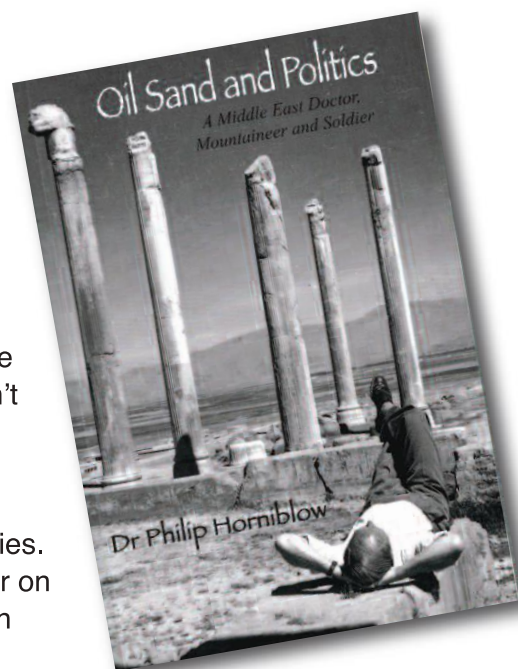
Oil Sand and Politics

I know that Dr Philip Horniblow was known to many members. I can only regret that I never met him in person. His memoir is subtitled “A Middle East Doctor, Mountaineer and Soldier.”, which is, it seems to me, to be a much-abbreviated summing up of a multi-faceted man who lived a very full and varied life.

His soldiering (He was an SAS reservist) gets a few light mentions here and there, but typically of such men he has little to prove and so doesn't tend to dwell on this side of his life – bar recalling a few humorous moments. Much more attention is given to a career spent setting up health services for several Arab states, all of which seemed to depend heavily on experienced outsiders to plan and build much needed facilities. He was also a keen and experienced mountaineer who acted as doctor on many expeditions and a keen sailor who took to the water for relaxation whenever his duties allowed.

The book ends as he takes up a new role in Yeovil and the West Country – we can only wonder what a book covering that period might have contained.

The book is written in a style that feels like one is spending a pleasant evening in the pub while Dr Philip recalls his life over a pint or two – informal, yet informative – a thoroughly good read about an interesting life. Priced at around £20 in paperback (shown here) or, the original hardcover version if you can find one.

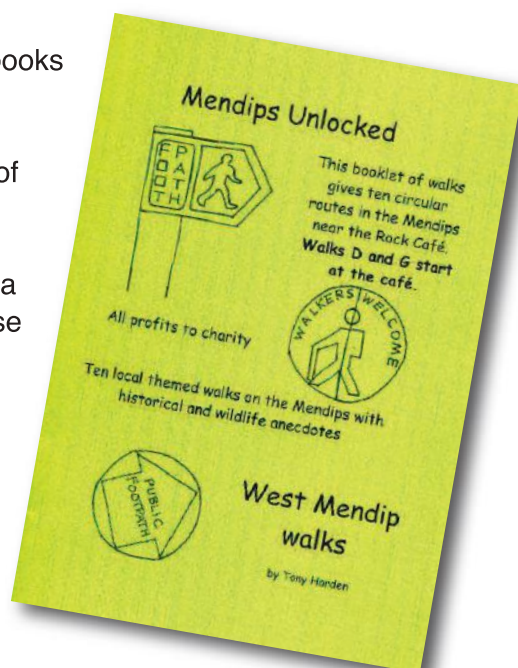


Mendips Unlocked

In response to my request last time for readers to suggest local guidebooks etc. for review, a submission has come flooding in....

My thanks therefore to Tony Harden for offering up a copy of his book of ten circular walks around West Mendip, all based around Rock Café*, which as many will know, is situated at the lower end of Burrington Combe. Each walk has a detailed written description of the route with a hand-drawn map, which offers additional snippets of information. These are delightful and informative in their own right, though personally I would also take along the appropriate OS map for back up. There is also a selection of hand-drawn pictures of local flora that one might spot along the way.

The book, which is a handy A5 format and so should fit into most map pockets, is printed on a superior grade of paper, which should resist creasing, rain, mud and the occasional coffee spill.



*NB. Rock Café is currently closed.

All profits from the sale of this handy little guide are being donated to Avon Wildlife Trust. Copies are available from Mother Hen Cafe, Wrington. Open Thurs/Fri/ Sat 10-4 price £5, or by Mail order from. tonyhardenuk@aol.com price £7 incl postage.

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMITTEE

JOB VACANCY – PART TIME ADMINISTRATOR AND CO-ORDINATOR

We are looking for someone to work on a part time basis as an organiser and coordinator of all our 'events'. The job will entail:

- Being the first point of contact for general enquires/secretarial duties.
- Communicating with event leaders in preparing a schedule of events.
- Working with the Management Committee to expand the annual calendar of events.
- Coordinating walks, and talks in readiness to be passed to the programme and website masters.
- Preparing and editing the Society's four monthly 'Newsletter'.
- Informing Society Members & the general public of events together with pertinent details thereof.
- Preparing and issuing regular reports to the Management Committee showing all organised events.

The Applicant will be expected to be flexible with regard to the number of hours worked each month.

On average it is expected that the position will require working approximately 16 hours a month.

Remuneration will be fair and reasonable according to experience. Expenses will be reimbursed.

For further information please log on to our website. You will find an expanded description of the role.

Please submit your application in writing by post or email to our Secretary, Judith Tranter
www.themendipsociety.org.uk judith.tranter1@btinternet.com / 01275 874284 for queries.

WALKING THE MONARCH'S WAY – with John Price

John was booked in 2020 to give the Society a live talk in Winscombe on his Monarch's Way journey, instead Covid lockdown intervened. But he came up trumps and gave us our, and his as well, very first zoom talk. It was very successful too.

He has written to me about the progress of their epic journey, very much disrupted by the Covid years and with details of his new website so we can refresh our memories of the beginnings of it all.

<http://www.thefugitiveking.uk/index.php/walking-the-monarchs-way/> (copy and paste only, will open it)



"Our Monarch's Way journey continues to progress. We have only one trip left, which will take place in October taking us to the conclusion at Shoreham. Of the four of us who started seven years ago, sadly, Colin has died, but we other three will be there to see it through. Touchingly, Colin's widow has given us a portion of his ashes to consign to the English Channel when we arrive."

What is our link with the Monarch's Way, you might say; well, in Medieval times, a large part of Ubley Parish was in fact a Deer Park. Part of its boundary of hedges with a 'deer leap' bank to keep the beasts in, is now our Tania's Wood Nature Reserve boundary too. The hedges growing high on top of the banks of our reserve (they have been proved to be very old hedges) would have been those same ones which Charles II would have travelled past on his flight from Worcester in 1651. The Monarch's Way (a long distance footpath) crosses the large field adjoining Tania's Wood as can be seen on the OS map.

Tania's Wood Nature Reserve Deer Leap boundary edge, the Monarch's Way is marked by the green diamonds

The king reached Shoreham-by-Sea on October 15th after a journey of 625 miles, I would guess that John and his fellow travellers are aiming to be there on that anniversary date in October ; he will tell us all about it in the next newsletter.

The Society Back Page **A PRESIDENTS' VIEW**

Life is anything but boring and that goes for the weather as well! One of the wettest starts to the year in quite a while has led to one of the driest Mays', lasting into June. I was starting to compare the likes of which with 1976 and 77, until we had a couple of good night's rain. More to come I hope as my apples need it. I don't think I have seen so much hawthorn or 'May' blossom. Mendip was covered with it, leading many to dig into the countryside sayings book and try to predict the weather ahead.

Thank you to everyone who turned out for the President's walk through Mascalls and Foxwood. It's a pity the bluebells had passed their best but at least the weather was kind to us. It would be good to get a few more walks on the programme and I'm grateful to those who have come forward to lead what we have arranged so far. There is going to be a new walk coming on line with Mike Harvey. Mike has taken over Don Browns WW2 walk from retired Mendip Ranger Mike, (Chippy) Chipperfield. I was with them both recently as Mike was familiarised with the format and information that Chippy has developed from Dons original talk. Mike will also move it on, putting his own particular delivery into practice... As AONB Manager Jim Hardcastle says, "We all stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before".

Speaking of which Jim is taking over my 'Mendip Hills Through the Time Tunnel' talk. He will now make it his own as I did when I took it on from Tom Elkin's slide show of 'One Man's Mendip'.

I have also taken 3 boxes of slides into the AONB Office for them to be sorted and scanned. Pictures going back to the 1980's; a Mendip that has changed and the like of which we won't see again. If you have some old landscape stuff and people at work or play on Mendip, give the AONB Office a ring on 01761 462338.



Its summer time and the ticks are out. They love it hot dry and are just waiting for the unsuspecting passerby so they can hitch a ride and get a meal. Long sleeves and trousers are a wise move if your walk takes you through long rough grass and bracken. Check every once in a while to see if you've picked up a tick and brush them off. Light coloured clothing helps show them up and remember to check the dog when you get home. Check yourself over in the shower just to make sure, the few that I've had have been found this way. There's plenty of information on the web to help you out. No need to create a scare but best to be aware ! Finally I leave you with an idyllic summer setting taken from my archives.... The pub, the pint and plate perfectly portrayed and I am already there!!



ADVANCE HEDGING TRAINING NOTICE: following on from a very successful weekend training in our Tania's Wood Reserve this last January we are continuing on the same stretch of our boundary, again with a session for those with some experience ('improvers') of hedge work.

The dates are Friday / Saturday, December 1st / 2nd 2023

There will be 8 places available, members are free, non- members are £10 a day. (I repeat what I wrote in the notice on p. 8, walling days, it's well worth shelling out on the Society membership fee before this course!). All the details will be in the November newsletter. **J Tranter**

TO WATCH OUT FOR:

We will have two events which have yet to be given a date for taking place, but they will be put on the website and circulated by email. So if you are not yet on Peter's "I want to be informed" list, but do want to be kept in the loop please ask to be added on membership@themendipsociety.org.uk

- 1 Slader's Leigh annual cut. We will hope to do this over the first w/e in September, but it does depend on the weather, so it may be a week before or after the 2nd/3rd. We would love to see some new volunteers, you could also learn to scythe as a bonus. We always enjoy this event!
- 2 Mike Harvey's 'Wartime Walk' – this will be together with the Royal Geographical Society, and will be sometime in the next couple of months. Recommended!

THE MENDIP SOCIETY Registered Charity Number 262867 www.themendipsociety.org.uk

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