



You can tell who it is by the knee pads. Jill is an habitual wearer of this very useful bit of kit. Withymead continues to produce some lovely surprises in the variety, scope and interest of the tasks waiting for us

### ARCHAEOLOGY AT WITHYMEAD

Archaeology at Withymead! Well not really, but it was rather exciting while pulling nettles to come across a concrete edge which must have been part of one of the boatyard buildings of the Saunders boat building yard that flourished there between 1897 and 1911. Nettles were forgotten as I cleared the outline of part of a building.

Apparently in 1910 there were 2 main sheds, one for building and one for repair, various workshops, a sawmill, timber store a boathouse built over the backwater and a sail loft. The slipway winching gear could pull up to 30 ton boats from the river. It was a considerable business.

It seems likely that the building that was found was the big boat building shed. Tracing more of the outline was rather foiled by the large trees which now tower over the site.

I Googled Saunders boatyard Goring and found more about it all on the Withymead site, but do recommend clicking on "Spuds rural exploration" and the "Images" on the top bar to give more detail and pictures of today including the Sand pipers' palace.

Jill K

Everybody asks me, but no relation, would be good if it was (hon.ed)

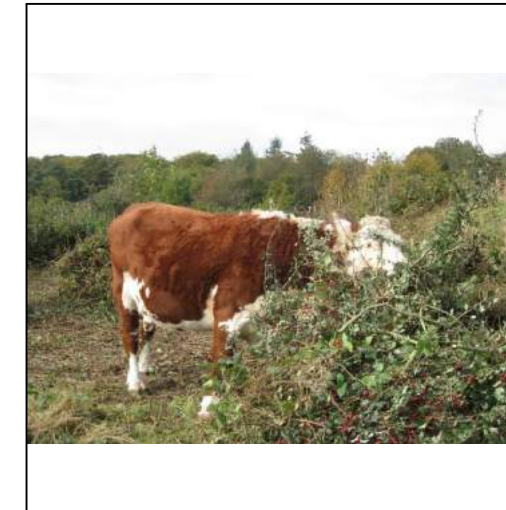


### Kennylands Field

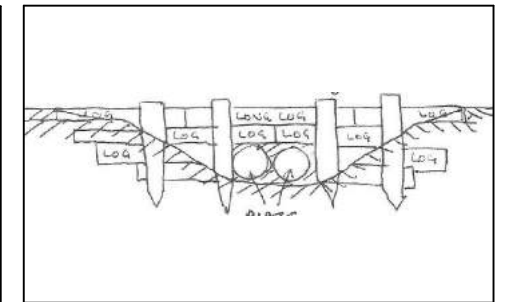
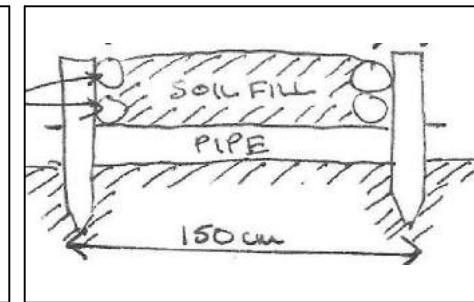
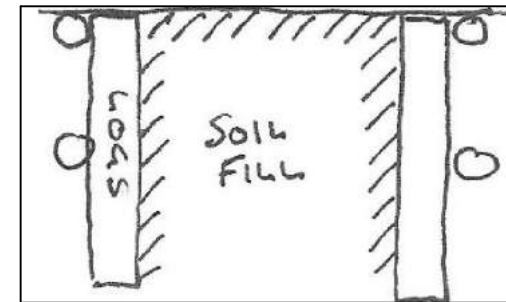
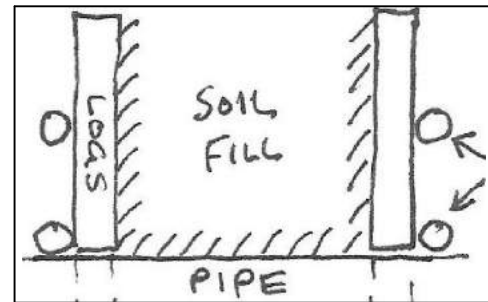
An excellent turn out meant the two main jobs of hay raking the wild flower area and cutting the beech hedge field side was near completion by tea break. Most of the hay was put into jumbo bags for dragging to the dump site. The rest and all the beech trimmings had to go to Oakleigh Wood for recycling at a later date. Several other jobs were completed after tea including trimming back a crab apple tree to prevent the marble like apples falling on the path and therefore a danger to walkers and joggers. Last year we scrapped off some of the surface grass to allow wild flower seeds to be set and we did the same this year with the seed being set at a later date.

Tony

The two pictures show bagging up hay and the second scrapping.



It's nice to have a few different pics from time to time so here are some Hereford cows and calves who came to see what we were doing at Greys Court. Photos supplied by Susan. Geoff carries on regardless whilst Greg and Lily pause in their efforts. Well one excuse is as good as any.



At Hurst Water Meadow we constructed a bridge with a conduit pipe running beneath. The diagrams showed us what we had to achieve. In a very watery site with numerous flooded meadows these conduits are vital to reduce the amount of standing water. One suspects the Dorchester Abbey monks were adept at water engineering and in these meadows the problem and the solution present itself in the same way now as then..



The pond near the cross roads at Moor End Common was full of reeds but no water when we arrived in October to cut down gorse and birch saplings around its edge . There were only seven of us, but by the end of the session we had removed the thick vegetation to open up views of the pond from the surrounding paths, leaving a few hazel stands.

We came across several varieties of fungi, of which one delicate specimen was coloured a pretty purple. It was a lilac bonnet (otherwise lilac bellcap, *Mycena pura*), a common species in deciduous and coniferous forests and sometimes grassland. It contains a small amount of the poison muscarine so is inedible, but nobody was considering it for coffee break.

Julia



Nice picture Mike but where did you take it from- the middle of the river? Has any one seen your actual sand martins yet here at Withymead would make a lovely close up shot?

Over to you Susan? Julia? Jill K?

So here's a festive thought from Julia:

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

The holly and the ivy  
When they are both full grown  
Of all the trees that are in the wood  
The Green Gym will cut them down

Oh the rising of the sun  
And the running of the deer  
Time to open up the tool shed  
To collect the tools and gear

The holly bears a prickle  
Far worse is the black thorn  
No matter where it jabs you  
It will fester by the morn

Oh the pulling on of waders  
And the chopping of the cress  
We may clear out all the channels  
But it grows back nonetheless  
The ivy bears a flower  
It's winter food for bees  
So on certain sites we cut it  
Though one warden disagrees

Oh the feeding of the bonfire  
When we've cleared back the scrub  
We look forward to our coffee break  
With some scrummy home-baked grub

The holly and the ivy  
They'll never disappear  
We'll down tools for Christmas  
Back to felling in New

Year

JMB

Lopper Editor: Mike Saunders  
michaelbsaunders@yahoo.co.uk  
Tel 01491 872965  
The Green Gym  
C/o Health Centre, 39 Wood Lane,  
Sonning Common  
Enquiries - Robin - 0118 972 3528

Green Gym



"THE LOPPER"

full of little cuttings.

Sonning Common

Number 50 December 2016

This is Lopper 50. What were we doing when Lopper 1 was published? Please find inside an A5 booklet which reproduces Lopper 1 for the period Q3 2004 and the first program for Q4 2004.

From the Desk with a View

When I started this came thoughts of mellow fruitfulness with the onset of Autumn but it has continued on and on with warm wet winds and sunny periods. Where are the snows of yesteryear? Crushing snow in the churchyard at Greys Peppard and on the hillside of Aston Rowant seems a distant memory . But all to the good when we work en plein air as we do.

As to sites-we have developed our links with Hurst Water meadow engaging in bridge building and delight of delights a hedge laying day and a swish session with the Austrian scythe. Yes, as used by Prince Charles at Highgrove, I tell you my dear, the only way to manage a wild flower meadow.

So let me finish with Warmest Good Wishes for a Happy Christmas and a Fruitful New Year to all Ggers and their kin, our clients friends and confederates. Da-da!

Apologies to all those who sent pics and text that could not be squeezed in limited as we are to 4 pages.

Lastly apologies to all those who sent in pics and text.



Work continues scrub bashing- what else? - at Aston Rowant and is always enjoyed for a number of very good reasons, namely the satisfying nature of the work, the fun of the bonfire

( why are these so popular?) and not least the stupendous views whatever the weather.

Here some regular Ggers get stuck into the task in hand.



We were tasked with widening the path by the side gate at Withymead.. This involved scraping away the turf and weeds then lining up border boarding before pouring and spreading scalpings over an old carpet membrane.

We were tasked with widening the path by the side gate at Withymead. This involved clearing soil and turf from the area, lining up the border boarding, spreading scalpings over an old carpet underlay.