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## Task Reports 2002 August

### 4 August – Clayfield Copse – Philip Allen

This was a joint task with Friends of Clayfield Copse. The hot weather enticed the largest turn out of the year so far with 14 people to do "pond clearance". There was no water in the cutting along the edge of the car park, (which is not surprising as it was the site of an old railway used in C19th to extract minerals from the woods) although the locals say there is normally water most years. We dug down in search of water piling the soil & rubbish into a series of dams to retain the winter rains in pools so that frogs & newts can breed here. Some of the soil was carted away in the wheel barrow to be spread on the top of the banks to allow wild flowers to replace the short grass up to the tarmac path. At afternoon tea break we went on a tour of the site to give the 3 new volunteers (Steve, Nicola & Mark) an idea of the things we do which went down well as they have all come back again.



### 11 August – Heathlake – David Fiddes



13 volunteers turned out to clear scrub at Heath Lake in Crowthorne. The task had been described as clearing one and two year regrowth, but it turned out to be a bit more substantial than that, and we were confronted with a large patch of 30 foot birch, pine and rhododendron. The impressive turn out and large trees meant a sortie back to Reading for a few extra hard hats. Heath Lake is a bit of a misnomer as it's more wood than heath (there is at least a large lake!). Earlier clearances have attempted to redress the lack of heathland,



and have resulted in some good patches of heather and gorse. We set about clearing birch and small pine to expand these areas. Much to Alistair's lamentation we weren't allowed to burn anything and instead stacked the logs and piled branches and foliage ready for chipping the next day. The newer volunteers seemed to enjoy gaining experience of tree felling and the older volunteers made a good job of clearing a large patch of rhododendron, as well as felling the odd tree or two themselves.



### 18 August – Pound Copse – Neil Frankum

Another session controlling the invading bramble in this small LNR.

**23-26 August – Langton Herring Dorset – Alex Hoinig**



Once again a merry bunch of volunteers set off for BeC's annual drystone walling trip to Dorset. This year ten of us enjoyed a weekend of sun, sea, sand and stones (and cakes, and wine, and my cooking!!).

As always our accommodation for the weekend was the village hall at Langton Herring – just 20 yards from the pub, and only a few minutes walk from the work site.

On arrival the first tasks were to empty the van, claim

sleeping space, pump up a variety of airbeds – and then a short walk to the pub for refreshments.

**Saturday**



An early-ish start as we had to meet the userbody on site. As is generally the case, we split into 2 teams to work on different sections of the wall. The "A" team headed down to the bottom of the field to work on the section we had started last year (famed for my demolition techniques last year). As



this meant we went straight into construction mode so made a net gain on the first day.

Meanwhile the Number "1" team started work on repairing another section of the wall, so their first task was demolition, or rather taking the wall down to a stable state.



For those who have never tried drystone walling, it is basically a 3 dimensional jigsaw, every piece fits somewhere (the trick is finding the somewhere). Although the sound of spending all day lifting rocks may sound like hard work, the reality is far from it, most of the rocks are fairly small, and most of the time is spent working out where to put each one, or standing back to admire your work after you've managed to make one fit (or stopping for tea/cake breaks).





After the days work we headed into Weymouth to spend a bit of time on the beach.

The evening was spent eating my expertly prepared food (I'll leave it to others to comment on my cookery skills – today we had Vege Risotto followed by Eton Mess) and drinking Richard's excellent wines. And we were then entertained by Fran's guitar playing (any requests for next years resi?)

### Sunday

We started the day with a nourishing cooked breakfast (scrambled eggs, bacon, mushrooms, baked beans) – then off



to the wall to continue the jigsaw.

To keep us going during the day we had Richard Wilson's excellent home-made cake (June also provided us with a couple of cakes).



The early evening was spent at the beach near Burton Bradstock – for further swimming and frisbee-ing, and also an intriguing attempt at locating a puncture in Richard Wilson's airbed – the technique used for this task was similar to that used for bicycle tyres, but as washing up bowls are not big enough, the sea was used instead. The puncture was successfully found – although the attempts to



fix it were not so successful – as Richard discovered during the night. Then back to the hall for more of my cooking (tonight's menu was Sweet & Sour Mixed Veg, followed by Yogurt Cheesecake) all washed down with some more of Richard's wine.

*The post meal entertainment included several games of Jenga. During one game, my demonstration of the attacking method of playing the game clearly showed that the laws of physics are somewhat different in the Langton Herring area, as can be seen in the picture on the right. I assume that Richard C's wine had something to do with the fact that that I honestly believed that removing one of the bottom edge pieces wouldn't topple the tower, despite the fact that the first move of the game had removed the centre piece on the bottom row! Amazingly the move worked, much to the horror of the person whose go it was next!! - Ed*



### Monday



Another cooked breakfast, and then a morning at the wall – this gave us just enough time to complete the section at the bottom of the field, and to leave the other section we were working on in a tidy state.

After tidying the hall and finding volunteers to take home the left over food, a few of us headed of the Lulworth Cove for a couple of hours before making the journey back to Reading.

Photos in this issue of the newsletter by Neil, June, Philip, Alex, & David



L&R – finished walls.  
Below L&R – the walling teams  
Bottom – Lulworth Cove  
Bottom right - Sunset



### Cookery Corner

In response to public demand, here is the recipe for the Yogurt Cheesecake. This should make a cheesecake large enough to serve 6.

#### Ingredients:

- 300g cream cheese (philadelphia or similar)
- 150g natural yogurt
- 2 drops vanilla essence
- 2 tablespoons thick honey
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 large chocolate sponge flan case
- 1 tin blackberries drained.



What a Sunset  
Bec Residential in Dorset - <http://june.fotopic.net>

28th August 2002



Beat the cheese and yogurt together until smooth. Add the vanilla essence, honey and lemon juice and beat until thoroughly blended. Chill. Just before serving, spoon the cheese mixture into the flan case and top with the drained blackberries.

Photographing butterflies

