



# SAVE A POND

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Aslackby's SAVE A POND project started in May '74 as a result of reading about a National Campaign to further this cause. I did not know we had a village pond so was taken on a tour of inspection. Pond? - well at least there was some water but it looked more like a local rubbish tip. A handful of other people in the village were interested in the project so a small committee of six people was formed and we set to.

As the pond was on land owned by the Aslackby Estate and farmed all around we had to have the permission of Mr. T. Conant and Mr. P. Ash. They considered the plans we put to them and then agreed that we could go ahead, the only proviso being that we adequately insured ourselves and the general public who would use the area, against accidents.

We were full of enthusiasm but there were to be many times in later weeks when aching backs, sore hands and the smell of rotting rubbish made us wonder just what we had let ourselves in for.

With the aid of an odd assortment of equipment, rakes, old rope, a boat hook, but mostly bare hands we started to haul out the rubbish. We wondered how they had managed to get the old car there, a nissen hut, miles of barbed wire and tins of - well we dreaded to think what was in some of them from the colour and the variety of odours. A bag of bones - ugh! We decided we had better get ourselves vaccinated against Tetanus - briefly painful but we felt safer.

Out it all came - a mountain was growing, so help was requested from the local council who very willingly took away three lorry loads of rubbish to be dumped on an authorized site. Gradually things were beginning to look better and we called in the Lincolnshire Trust for Nature Conservation for advice on future planning. They sent someone to take a look and he gave us guidance on how to plan ahead and also pointed out some of the pitfalls we might encounter.

Eventually the pond was clear of debris and looked really beautiful, full of clear water and bursting with life. Then we had to take the decision as to whether or not to have the silt and sludge dredged from the bottom. We were advised to

go ahead and a very co-operative local man loaned us a J.C.B. and the job was very efficiently done one week-end. Gone was our lovely grassy bank, instead a mess of ugly, smelly sludge - was it worth it?

Gradually it dried out and started to sprout fresh grass and plants. It still looks rather sad but no doubt with further care and attention will revert to a pleasant green sward again.

So now the pond was back to about the size it used to be in the 1930's - a time when it was used for watering cattle owned by the villagers, the water was taken through sluices into wells and then pumped into troughs in farms lower in the village.

During all this activity our resident moorhen happily bred two lots of young; and the wren who was constantly hopping around the rubbish raised her family of six very successfully.

In the midst of the very dry spell of 1974 the pond was drying out and causing some concern, but after making enquiries we found this was natural enough and eventually the pond filled up again, becoming clearer and looking like a healthy pond should look.

A constant check is kept on all the flora and fauna and lists are made of all the life that uses the pond. Any new plants introduced are always carefully noted and records will be kept every year that there is someone still interested enough to do this work. We also have a large collection of photographs showing all the aspects of the work carried out.

In the spring of 1975 we planted trees, oak and ash around the edge of the field, and alder, silver birch and hazel in the immediate area of the pond. There is always work to be done around the pond, grass to be cut, trees needing attention and the constant listing of birds, butterflies, insects and pond creatures that use the area.

During the early part of this year we had the 'flood' which for 24 hours submerged the pond and field into one. After the water had gone down we noticed it had cleared a certain amount of oily substance which had been in parts of the pond and although it became very muddy this eventually cleared and gradually the whole area settled down again, and none of the trees appeared to have suffered.

We have been a very small group and the work has at times been very hard, but we have certainly enjoyed the challenge even though all the years ahead maintenance will still be required. We have converted quite a number of people to the all important work of conservation and shown that

even though you live in a beautiful area there is always the need to take care of what you have - one day you may suddenly find it has gone.

A number of local children have taken a great interest in the work and have given us a helping hand from time to time; these are the ones who will have the responsibility in the future to look and care as we do now. Anyone is welcome to visit the pond to study or do a project, or just to sit - it is surprising sometimes just what you see.

We have given back to our village a pond - the old Duck Pond fondly remembered by the elderly as the place where, as boys they used to take the geese and ducks early in the morning before going to school; a pond mis-used by our generation, hopefully to be cared for by the youngsters of today.



## Local Find

Early this year Mr. Ernest Storey of Corby Glen found an old coin in buildings between Bourne Rd and Station Rd. It was taken to the museum in Grantham and later sent to the Museum of Lincolnshire Life in Lincoln for identification.

The coin was eventually returned with the following comment:

'The coin is an sestertius of the Roman Emperor Hadrian and was minted in oricalchum rather than bronze'.

Detail from coin:

HADRIAN (117 - 138)

(Oricalchum) Sestertius)

Obvious: (HAD)RIANV(S) A(VGVSTVS) ?

Laureate r.

Reverse: Figure 1 (Illegible)

circa. A.D. 125 - 134.

N.B. Should you find any item of possible antiquity it would be advisable to leave it in the condition in which it was found, until specialist knowledge has been sought.