

## Hurst Water Meadow News September 2008

### The meadow

The hay was cut, baled and removed in one day by Simon Payne Rural Services using six machines. About 100 cylindrical bales were taken. A dead willow tree will be reduced to a pillar of about 4 metres high. This should give a habitat for wildlife including woodpeckers which had made some holes in the branches.

The project to oversee 7½ acres of the meadow with wild flowers will be repeated in early September 2008. This was moderately successful in 2006, in spite of the failure of the yellow rattle seed to germinate, and resulted in some increase in the varieties of wild flowers, in particular ragged robin, self-heal, lady's bedstraw and ox-eye daisy. A report is available on our website [www.hurst-water-meadow.co.uk](http://www.hurst-water-meadow.co.uk). Wild flowers are slow to germinate, so we can expect a more colourful meadow and progressively more nectar for bees, butterflies and other insects over several years.

### Coracles on the Thame

Young people from the Caversham Youth Club have built four coracles and plan to launch them at Buck Pool on 20 August and paddle them down to Bridge End. The project is run from the River and Rowing Museum (RRM) at Henley and funded by the National Lottery. They will be filming the activities to make a video display at the RRM. The coracle building expert is Alistair Phillips who can be seen testing the water at Buck Pool.

There are several enthusiastic local coraclers and three of them will be helping. They enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of the Thame and plan to visit regularly. If anyone is interested in having a go, please contact Peter. Coracles have been in use in Wales and the West Country since before Roman times, but not in Anglo-Saxon settlements, as far as we know.



### The late Denis Atkins

The funeral collection resulted in donations to the Hurst Water Meadow Trust totalling £196 for which the trustees are very grateful. Many of us remember Denis and his family with great affection.

**Peter Pritchard, hon secretary 340008**