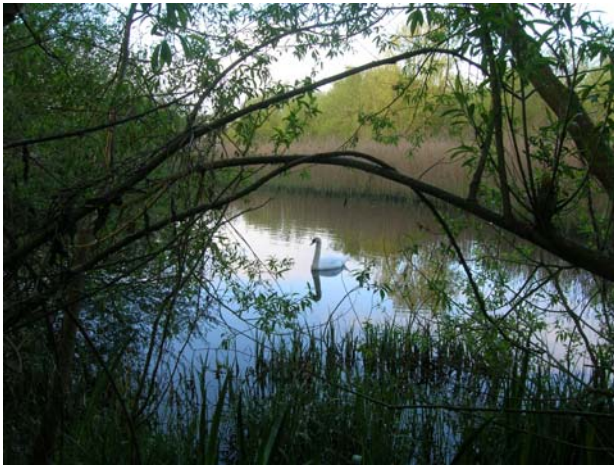


May Birdsong - 1 May 2010

My March Blog was about rubbish - so here's one about a rubbish dump - or rather, the remains of a rubbish dump. We'd got up at dawn (yawn) to cheer on our local morris side (Headington Quarry) and the equally ancient [Eynsham Morris](#) (except they are bright young chaps - and I mean young) whose flamboyant stick crashing and hankie waving were truly inspirational.



Then we were off on 'Dawn Chorus' walk around a Victorian rubbish dump adjacent to Oxford's canal, the [Trapp Grounds](#). Recently declared a Town Green and preserved for ever, it felt for all the world like a primaeval forest, the babble of birds broken only by the clatter of trains rushing alongside. In vain I struggled to distinguish a wren from a warbler, but no matter. It was yet another place in the heart of Oxford I had often walked past and never knew was there. There's always somewhere new - or old - to discover here.

But the day had hardly started. [Oxford Preservation Trust](#) had decided to help us appreciate their open spaces in and around Oxford with their Discovering Oxford programme of guided walks. So, over the next 3 days we saw the Mad Hatter's house (whose dog the real 'Alice in Wonderland' used to take for walks) and the Kennington water meadows, en route encountering St Hilda's first male boat crew (the college was women-only until this year), learned how folk had to leave their carriages to climb Shotover Hill on foot - vulnerable to attack by footpads and highwaymen, and visited the [strange well house](#) at a local farm. After which I needed a good rest. Maybe next May Day I'll take a holiday.

