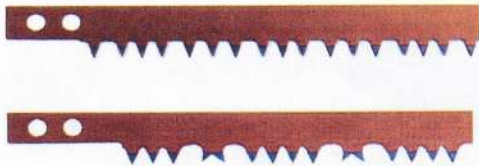


## A SAW POINT



There are two types of bow saw blade that are identifiable by the different design of teeth. The Peg blade (top) is designed for cutting dry wood and produces a fine saw dust. (Wear goggles on a windy day to stop this fine dust getting into your eyes). The Raker blade (bottom) is used to cut green wood. As its name implies, it rakes out lumps of material, rather than saw dust, and cuts a wider channel than the peg blade. Both blades cut dry and green wood well but you should ideally use the right blade for the job.

Our longest bow saws (30 inches) are fitted with Raker blades as they are used to fell trees. The shortest ones (21 inch triangular) that are ideal for small branches and hazel coppicing, are all fitted with Peg blades. Why is this when we are using them to cut green wood?

Lets get pushy  
**Tree felling done correctly should never create problems. Occasionally, a little help goes along way. Sometimes, a tree that is upright may appear reluctant to**

**fall. One reason is that the back cut to the bird mouth is too high above the base of the mouth. (What should it be?). A tree may also sit down on the saw blade making it difficult to use. In this case, do not blame the saw blade!**

**Occasionally, a shove by a hand is enough. Other times we hunt around for a cut tree top with a fork at one end and use that to push the tree. This wastes time and is heavy to manage. To make life easy, I have now developed pushing poles using three part junior windsurfing masts. These are not in use in the winter but are not the property of the Green Gym.**

**They come with a small wooden head that you lock against the tree which can extend to three and a half metres. As we now have four 30 inch bow saws which are best used by two persons, one each end, plus this third watching person with a pushing pole, it means twelve persons can be working in four groups of three, rotating the sawing, watching and pushing tasks. Additional persons turning up on the day can increase the group sizes,**

join in the tasks, and help speed up the cutting up and clearance of the felled trees which is time consuming.

Tony  
\*\*\*\*\*

## .... Christmas Dinner

**Venue;- Badgemore Golf Club on Tues 14 December. 7.00pm for 7.30.**

**3 courses each of three choices plus mince pie and coffee.**

**Cost £16.95 per head.**

**Julia will be circulating the full menu, but this is to remind you to put the date in your diaries.**

\*\*\*\*\*

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**Green Gym**  
  
**Sonning Common**

# THE LOPPER

*Full of little cuttings.*

NO.1

## CHAIRMAN'S CLIPPINGS

Welcome to the first edition of the new newsletter. Thanks to Jill Kendal for editing and producing. We hope the new format will have a wider appeal and may help in publicising the group and attracting more members.

It is pleasing to report that numbers are holding up with 12-15 turning up for both Thursday and Saturday sessions. We also have not had to abandon any sessions due to weather!

Notable events during the last quarter, The opening of the visitor centre at Ewelme-see page 2.

The annual appearance of the Adonis Blue at Fiddle Hill.

The Henley Show-see this page There will be more variety from now on; we will not be excluded from flowering and nesting sites, and we will be able to fell trees again!

## NEW TASKS.

Opening out footpath 4 in Hook End between Lower Farm and Lockmore Wood; another session at Cothill Fen; planting hedges at Tokers Green.

## SEASONAL EVENTS

Spud roast at Aston Rowant- Dec 9  
Christmas party at Badgemore- Dec 14.

Best wishes to you all  
Jules.

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## HENLEY SHOW

Once again the Green Gym attended Henley Show .

The task, this year was to put up a limited mobility kissing gate, which, it was hoped would attract interest and show passers by what GG can tackle. It proved to be a bigger job than expected. The problem was not digging the post holes- GG is hot stuff at this- it was the drilling of holes to bolt on the hinges that tested the skills!

However, with Robert's advice and the practical ability of David Gordon and Ian (from Wallingford GG) the gate was eventually erected. Yes it did attract attention, firstly during the holding posts and

digging phase when the holes were a source of great interest to several young pairs of eyes aged about five years. Two or three people found the gate an ideal place to lean whilst making phone calls, and one local land owner on walking through said, "big enough isn't it, you could get a bloody cow through here". Sadly no wheelchair user came by to test the gate out, but it certainly looked very impressive and will find a permanent home quite soon in the district-no doubt skilfully erected by the Green Gym drawing on the skills learned at Henley Show.

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## SOMETHING THE DUKE NEVER SAW... A BEVY OF BARROWERS.....



OPENING OF THE  
WATERCRESS BEDS  
CENTRE BY THE  
DUKE OF KENT  
JULY 23rd 2004

According to local tradition, a song sung by the watercress men of Ewelme in days of yore was called

*"The Watercress Queen."  
While strolling out one evening  
Down by the running stream,  
Where water lilies were growing,  
It was a lovely scene.  
The sight I saw was better,  
A damsel like a Queen;  
She was gathering watercresses  
Down by the old mill stream.*

These Oxfordshire labourers, our forbears, were obviously enraptured by the sight of this beautiful woman, the Watercress Queen; for "her hair hung down in tresses / As gently flowed the stream."  
Nothing new there then.

OROR

A royal note returned to Ewelme on Friday July 23rd for the opening of the Visitors Centre. Members of Green Gym were deployed with the Chiltern Society, in three groups in the field on the far side of the stream. This gave us plenty of time, while the Duke of Kent was being introduced to bejew-

elled officialdom, to brush up on appropriate etiquette and to adjust forelocks.

Word came through that a single, initial "Your Royal Highness" would suffice, with "Sir" punctuating one's further remarks. Special attention will be paid in 2005 to the New Year's Honours List to check which of us managed this.

\*\*\*\*\*

The day was blazing hot, the stream sparkled in the bright sunlight and the smell of new mown hay filled the air. The Chiltern Society and the Green Gym rightly felt the pride of achievement: both having being part of a major conservation venture, now rightly recognised with some razzmatazz. A royal walkabout was followed by the grand unveiling of a plaque on the Visitors Centre wall. The Duke then drove himself and the Lord Lieutenant off to another engagement while the rest of us explored the inside of the Centre, holding a glass



in one hand, a plate in the other, and a sandwich in yet

another – as one does on such occasions.

We left Ewelme, as we always do, in high spirits. Justice had been done, years of unstinting effort had been recognised: we ask for nothing more. As a soft haze crept over the watercress stream could we hear the sound of a distant song? We strained our ears and thought we heard:.....

*The Watercress Queen was strong in limb  
But her muscles began to ache  
The doctor prescribed the Green Gym  
But she joined for Diane's cake!*

OROROROROROR

**THE RELUCTANT LEADER .....**

You might think that after leading over 100 Green Gym sessions over the past five years that I would now be more laid back and under control- think again! For a true trouble magnet like myself, dealing with hostile natives, or,(after a full briefing session) watching helplessly while an over enthusiastic volunteer cuts down the one tree the client had asked should be left, sometimes leaves me somewhat nervous and wishing that I had eyes in the back of my head.

With the tree felling season upon us, PLEASE take a few minutes to read Tony's excellent article in the April newsletter before you put saw to tree. (Not forgetting the sequel on page four of this edition)

I am sure there are spare copies available if you have not seen it.

Meanwhile I am applying for my "Excused Leading Tree Felling Sessions" chit. My nerves are not up to it. There are Leader and Co-leader vacancies available. Please hurry up and apply. Put your diplomatic and sprinting skills to the test.....

**Remember you don't have to be mad to become a Green Gym Leader but in my case it has certainly helped!**

**Robert (who else but).**

**PENNY POND**  
Backs were broken and much mud moved on what was a beautiful July day. We left a dry mud site and a week later the rains came and it all filled up.....most satisfactory!



Scene;- the water meadows on a hot summers day; the workers raking hay and wearing a varied assortment of headgear  
Comment overheard- "Very Hardy-esque"

**STOP PRESS-** Recently Mike Mac & Gill V spent an exhausting hour on a lovely day at Ewelme posing for a professional photographer for a photo to grace English Heritage's Annual Report. Mike has now received his copy of THE photo. His comments were fairly unrepeatable! It was felt that it was unflattering, both of him, Gill and the beautiful setting.

**FIRST AID**  
In compliance with Health and Safety, the contents of the First Aid Box are limited.  
Green Gym members are free to use the contents but it must be pointed out that anything used is your personal responsibility regarding reactions to the contents.  
**FINAL NOTE...**  
Please remember to have any personal medication with you at all times.

**Ewelme. A Day to Remember.**

