

Green Gym®



Sonning Common

# "THE LOPPER"

full of little cuttings.

Lockdown Issue 7

**Welcome**



Welcome to this 7th Issue of the Lockdown Lopper, a big thank you to everyone who sent in photos and words - it is amazing! Let's hope that there won't need to be many more Lockdown issues and we will be able to start looking after the place we all love and care for. In the meantime please continue to send in material for future issues.

--martin b--

## Peppard Common

I have recently been enjoying exploring familiar places in bright, sunny weather.

Peppard Common (right) has come alive in the last few days, bursting with promise of what's to come.

Many will remember labouring last autumn to rescue areas of heather from bracken and bramble ('and the rest!') Happily the heather now appears to be thriving.

Many will also recall those days (long ago it now seems) when Robert took the lead in the steps needed to get the heather

properly re-established on the Common. I remember the key word was '*scraping*'. Robert made sure those new heather plants brought to Peppard Common were not imports but were carefully selected from neighbouring areas.

Despite signs of the bracken making a bit of a fight back, the heather should win the show and make for a splendid sight later in the summer!



With all good wishes

--Robin--

## Susan's Australian Adventures Part 5:

Off to Queensland for the next part of our adventure. This was mostly unplanned so that we could visit whatever took our fancy. After a rather bumpy landing in a very windswept Brisbane airport, we collected our hire car and headed north. David was hoping to get as far as Noosa but the car collection took longer than envisaged and I reminded him half way there that he had hoped to see the Glass House Mountains. Hope being the important word as the weather, although hot, was very wet and humid with plenty of low clouds.

We had seen these mountains in the far distance in 2010 from the top of Mt Coot-Tha, just outside Brisbane, and put them on the list and here he was forgetting! This was definitely not the area to just pass through even with the rain. A large room was found for two nights in a motel near Beerwah and the following morning we set off to explore. The weather was very cloudy but in the end we managed to get some fantastic views and some lovely walks despite the mosquitoes! A detour to a small village pharmacy for some "Bushman" solved that problem.

The Glass House Mountains are volcanic plugs of magma formed about 26 million years ago. After erosion of softer rock these unusual shaped rock spires remained. James Cook named these mountains after the shape of the glass kilns back in the north of England, having first seen them on 17th May 1770. Twenty nine years later Matthew Flinders came ashore with a small party of men and climbed one called Mt Beerburum.

This area and these mountains were the lands of the Jinbara and Gubbi Gubbi people. These peoples have created a story about the strange shaped plugs which they considered sacred. The mother was Mount Beerwah (Top Right) and the father Mt. Tibrogargan (Bottom Right). The rest of the mountains were sons and daughters, the eldest being Coonowrin (Left).

One day Tibrogargan was by the shore when he noticed the sea rising. He called Coonowrin to help his mother who was pregnant and to gather up the younger children and lead them all to safety. Sadly

Coonowrin ran away which made Tobrogargan very angry. When he finally caught him, he struck a mighty blow which left Coonowrin's neck dislocated. Coonowrin asked for forgiveness from his family but they all wept with shame. This is said to explain why there are so many small streams in the area flowing to the sea.

Too wet to sit on the grass for lunch, we parked beside an interesting "orchard" and wondered what the strange fruits could be. It appears they were custard apples (Right), *Annona reticulata*, and was found in Timor about 1000 years ago. Ripe ones are brown or yellow so just as well we didn't pinch one to try. We will have to taste one another time!

The other orchard trees which we kept seeing proved to be macadamia nut trees. There were plenty of eucalyptus trees on the lower slopes and approaches to the volcanic plugs with one of my favourites, Scribbly Gum (Left), *Eucalyptus rossii*. The brown scribbly markings are caused by insect larvae.

The following morning we continued our explorations heading northwards for Noosa, leaving Beerwah in pouring rain. This proved to be our wettest ever visit to Australia but it was only on our last day in Queensland that we couldn't actually see anything at all from lunchtime onwards!



--Susan--

### Answer to Jill's question

In the last issue Jill asked a question about an open space on Kingwood Common. Tony was able to provide some insight...

*"Several years ago while walking on Kingwood Common I met a delightful couple who informed me that their mother had been at the Kingwood Camp and they had buried her ashes there. They showed me the place and the flagpole base. They were also able to tell me that the flat area JK refers to was the fuel dump. Hence it has little soil and no major tree growth. I cannot confirm this but it makes sense.*

*In 2015, Sue Nickson of Stoke Row Road published a book on the history of the commons, 1939-2014, entitled "In Common View". I naturally have a copy. It deals primarily with people who lived there post WW2 such as Patrick and subsequent actions including those of the Green Gym."*

Jill has added

*"I think it might well be that this area was the petrol dump, it is at one edge of the American camp that was there in the wartime and the soil could well have got contaminated which answers why this area has very different soil from the common in general.*

*The ladies he refers to might perhaps be Sheila Walker and her mother, who are a fund of knowledge of the Common. Mum is now 105 I believe!"*



Archive photo of the Green Gym working at Kingwood Common

Thanks to Tony for these wonderful photos



Caterpillar of the Buff Tip Moth



Caterpillar of the Elephant Hawk Moth



Caterpillar of the Alder Moth



Pyramid Orchid

## THE WALLED GARDEN AT PARMOOR

It's a pleasure to see the walled garden at St. Katharine's, Parmoor is looking splendid in the photos (below) taken by Ken Float on a recent visit. The house and gardens are currently closed to the public of course, but we can remember the days when from 2010 to 2013 SCGG helped to restore the derelict kitchen garden into a fit state for growing fruit and vegetables.

The area was firstly treated for weeds by Robert using full PPE, little knowing how apposite that would look in 2020. (We could restart Green Gym right now if we all geared up the same ..... what?). We then dug out the beds, which had disappeared beneath turf, and sheared back the box hedges which had become incredibly shaggy. There were also self-seeded trees to remove from the perimeter, and eventually



we had to re-dig the beds all over again. We all put our backs into making the gradual transformation, so our warm-down exercises included the gardeners' stretch against the south wall (in case you were wondering from the photo if slackers would be punished).

The walled garden now provides fruit and vegetables for the kitchen in the main house,



which is run by the Sue Ryder Prayer Fellowship mainly as a retreat. The house has an interesting history, having belonged to the Cripps family, one of whom was Sir Stafford Cripps, post-war Chancellor of the Exchequer. During the war the house was let to exiled King Zog of Albania, where he entertained royalty and heads of state. Afterwards it was occupied for 51 years by high-Anglican nuns of the Community of St. Katharine of Alexandria before being passed to the Fellowship by the last surviving nun, Mother Christine, in 1995. It is satisfying to think that the walled garden is now fulfilling its original purpose, and that SCGG's input is part of the site's colourful history.

--Julia--

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