SOUTH OF ENGLAND HEDGE LAYING SOCIETY

Reg Charity No.1046124

Promoting the craft of hedge laying, training, competitions and countryside management

December 2020

FROM THE EDITOR

The front cover shows Blackthorn blossom. There is a slight Blackthorn theme to this edition which is perhaps appropriate for these sharp and hard times. As I write this, the country has started a second COVID lockdown that will inevitably affect us all in one way or another. But there is cause for optimism – particularly this edition's wassailing, Christmas presents and sloe gin.

As ever, please do send me your letters, comments, and articles. The deadline for the April 2021 newsletter is 01/03/21 and my email address is Selous1961@gmail.com

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our season has got off to a good start. I am writing this on 20 October after the first training day and the Nationals Practice day. The committee has worked wonders to put together a programme for the 2020/2021 season and I am sure everyone is grateful to them. The committee has not been without its misfortunes with illness and accidents and I wish them all a speedy recovery and return to cutting and, of course, a very happy Christmas.
Good luck to you and yours this festive season.

Mike Parrott

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear members, it has been good to see the society come back to life, having completed two successful hedge laying days. Early birds on the first day would have noticed a frost on the ground at 7am. The next 2 Hedgelaying workdays were at the 2020 competition site, so there is the added bonus of looking at the regrowth. The pre-National day at Fletching Mill farm has now been fenced, leaving about a 10-foot gap to allow wildflowers and tussocky grass to grow. This will improve the wildlife diversity in the hedge that was laid, providing an enhanced wildlife area alongside the hedge you laid.

I look forward to seeing you at the next event. Please continue to book in with Frank Wright to reserve your section to lay. Kind regards.

Phil Hart

MY HEDGE LAYING STORY

By Kevin Jeffries

I suppose the story starts when my father bought an extremely rundown 300-year-old house in half an acre of ground in Croydon just after the war in 1947. The land was surrounded by a massively overgrown Hawthorn hedge and the rest of the garden was a jungle. So, my dad went to the local hardware store and bought half the contents as in two Yorkshires, two Staffordshires, a Sussex-style billhook, two slashers (one curved and one straight), two sickles, and even a scythe. I think he thought that, as well as clearing the land, if there was another war he could arm the Home Guard!

When he died in 1988 I inherited all his tools and I promptly put them in a drawer in the shed and forgot about them.

In 2015, 27 years later, my wife and I were at the Ardingly Country Fair and we came across Chris and SEHLS trailer which was displaying all the tools needed for hedge laying. I said to my wife ,"I've got that, I've got that" and in fact I didn't know it but I was lucky enough to be already equipped to have a go at learning the craft so I enrolled into the course and have loved every minute. The only drawback was that the tools that I thought were sharp were in fact quite blunt and with big shoulders. Someone who taught me looked at my pleaching and said, "A squirrel with false teeth could do better than that!"

It was then that I bought a set of Japanese water stones and spent hours on all the tools to get them up to standard. At least now my pleaching looks like it's been done by a squirrel with proper teeth.

Since then, I've attended all the events and continued to learn the techniques and tips from the senior cutters who have kindly donated their time and have had the patience to instruct us.

But, I realise that, like most crafts, you never stop learning. Every hedge throws up new problems and challenges. After each event I go home tired out - I can think of a better way of putting it, but can't use it here *[Editor: thank you]* - but with a great sense of satisfaction having seen the finished hedge. Indeed, when I showed a friend a before and after picture, he said, "Does a machine do that?" and was surprised when he found out it was just done with hand tools. This only goes to prove what an extraordinary transformation it is.

If anybody reads this that has never done hedge laying and perhaps would like to learn, I would highly recommend it. In March, I was lucky enough to come first in the Novice section of our annual competition which goes to show that progress can be made. I would like to thank the many of you who taught me and have given me advice. My Old Man would be proud and chuffed to bits knowing that his tools have finally been put to good use. My only regret is that I didn't do this years ago.

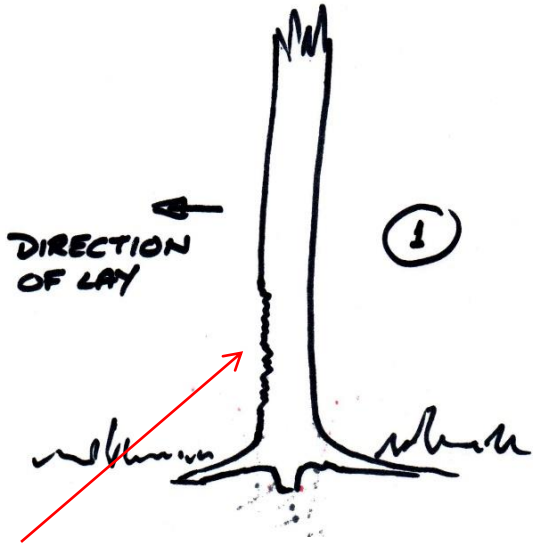
Editor: Kevin walking off site having won the Novice section of the 36th Annual Hedge Laying Competition on 14/03/20.

ROOT-LAYING

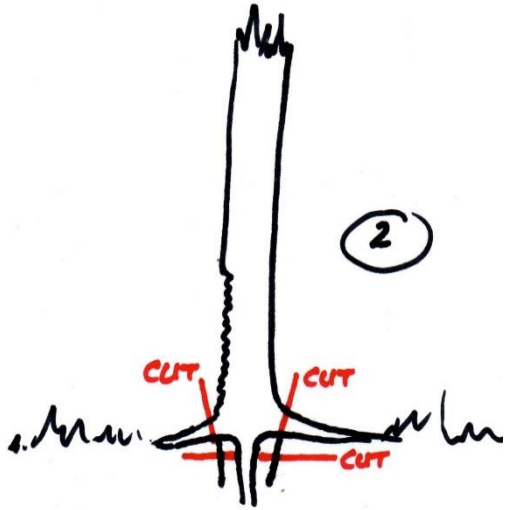
By Frank Wright

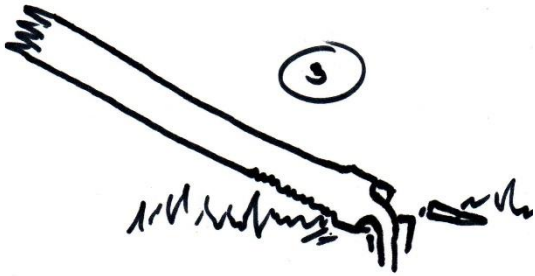
Root laying refers to the practice of cutting through the stem but leaving it attached to the root system rather than doing a conventional pleach. As the business of root-laying takes significantly longer than pleaching and carries a much higher risk of blunting or damaging blade tools and chains it should only be used where the situation dictates its use. Such situations would be where the tree has been damaged by animals gnawing the bark (or rot or other similar damage) in the area that would be required for the hinge part of the pleach. Also if you are aware that the stems are brittle, either through age or species this would be another reason – you may well have lost a couple before you come to this decision.

The process is to dig down around the stem to expose the root system. It is important to do this bit thoroughly otherwise your chain/axe/billhook might get damaged by hidden stones. A trowel is probably suitable for smaller trees, but larger ones will require a spade or trenching tool or similar. You are looking for a substantial root at right angles to the direction of lay. You then cut through the other roots and cut right through the stem underneath your selected root. This leaves the stem attached to terra firma only by the selected root. This allows the tree to rotate and lie in the hedge line. If the root is particularly substantial you may need to pleach the root. New growth should sprout from the now coppiced stump.



Damaged stem





As luck would have it, shortly after agreeing to write this short article I was presented with a genuine opportunity for root laying a small holly – see below. The selected root is on the far side of the second photo, which is showing the reason for the root-lay.

Damage to stem

In the illustration above, the damage shown is on the side of the stem, but it eats in so deeply that it would inevitably cause the failure of a conventional pleach.

Woodland Crafts in Britain by Herbert L. Edlin

'Neglected hedges, overgrown or patched up with bits of barbed wire or old iron bedsteads, are too common to require comment' but the well-ordered work of a true craftsman is a joy to behold. The reason for the scarcity of such men to-day is summed up in the rhyme that may yet prove to be the epitaph of their whole art:

> Here lies Giles Thorn, honest hedger and ditcher,
>
> Who was born poor and never grew richer.'

Editor: This is an extract from Herbert Edlin's book, published in 1949. The book is a good read, but copies are scarce. One's best bet is probably www.abebooks.co.uk

HEDGE LAYING HEROES # 1- ALAN ASHBY

By Alan Ashby talking to Matthew Beard on 13/10/20

Q1- When and how did you take up hedge laying?

I was always interested in the countryside and Brian Mills, gave me the idea of Welsh style of hedge laying.

Q2- Who was your greatest influence as you were learning?

In the early days, Nelson Russell at SEHLS (*Editor: Nelson is on YouTube and is a real SEHLS character)* and then Tony Carter and Mick Haynes.

Q3- What was your first competition and how did you get on?

A SEHLS Novice competition at Halford Pitches place – I came 2nd

Q4- Can you remember the first competition you won?

West Grinstead Ploughing match the following season to coming 2nd in the Novices.

Q5- When and where was your first National competition? How did you get on?

At Gayden and I came third. It was at Gayden where I was blown away by Midland style, which seemed to me to be far more accurate and precise than SOE style.

Q6- You were a supreme champion at the Nationals: can you describe the event and how things went for you?

It was in 2016 in Cheshire. I thought I might have a chance of winning the class but was surprised to be announced as Supreme Champion.

Q7- You are now an exponent of Midland style – tell me what interested in you doing that style?

As mentioned, I think Midland is a far more precise and accurate form of hedge laying to SOE style. I stopped doing SOE style after winning the Nationals SOE Open in 2000. Interestingly, I always did better at hedgelaying after I had been laying stonework and worse if doing brickwork. Laying stones definitely helped my hedge laying with similar hand-eye co-ordination.

Q8- what words of advice would you give a budding hedge layer?

Have sharp tools! Don't stand round looking at your hedge too long, when deciding to cut out or leave, just get on with it. Practise, practise, practice – the more you do the better you will get.

Q9- You have laid hedges abroad – tell us a bit about that.

Yes, I did some hedge laying demonstrations in a National Park in the Netherlands, as part of a conservation project to save the European hamster.

Q10- How do you see the future of hedge laying in the 21st century?

Clearly the membership of SEHLS is changing, with more office workers than manual ones. The level of work intensity with office workers is not the same as manual ones.

Through hedge laying I have visited some lovely places and met some lovely people.

RANDOM AXE OF KINDNESS

By Matthew Beard

Training Day 1 on 10 October 2020, was a magical day, with benign weather, a manageable hedge, in a prominent position and a very hospitable landowner; well organised event and a pleasing end-result. Above all I experienced 3 random acts of kindness, which to me typifies, the values of the Society:

1. Alan Ashby, found my silky saw which I had stupidly put down and despite my own searching, could not find. Alan sought it out without fuss and just put it in a position where I could not miss it.
2. After lunch, I was running out of energy and asked Kevin Jeffries if he had any sweets or chocolate; without hesitation Kevin reached into his bag and gave me his last Bounty bar, which saved my day. Without that I do not think I could have finished the hedge.
3. As I started to drive away, Alan Miller knocked on my car door and wished me well for my forthcoming interview for my own job at work. It was a great act of thoughtfulness.

Given the difficult times we live in, these random acts of kindness are what will keep us going.

Editor: I endorse what Matthew says (but not his awful pun). On the same day, Kevin, Natasha, and Terry all offered me help to complete my cant.

Wassailing

By Chris Burchell Collins

What is the connection between hedge laying and wassailing? Like hedge laying, the traditions of wassailing - the growing of apples and the production of real cider - are an important part of countryside history which need preserving, promoting and continuing. Also, after a day's hedge laying, a glass of real cider is very welcome!

Like hedge laying, there appear to be various "styles and traditions" throughout the country, but the main aim of the whole thing, apart from drinking cider, is to promote a good crop of apples in the coming year and thereby ensuring a good quantity of cider. Many years ago, the farmer would give his workers cider and his reputation as a good employer was impacted by the quality of the cider.

Wassailing is reckoned to be an Anglo-Saxon tradition, with the modern word derived from the Anglo-Saxon toast of "waes hael", which means 'be well'.

New Year wassailing celebrations used to take place on now what is Twelfth Night (5th January or 17th January, pre-Gregorian calendar introduction). Revellers would have a drink from the Wassail bowl, the drink made from warmed ale, wine or cider depending what was available. This was mixed with spices and honey and perhaps egg. The Lord of the Manor (the host in Anglo-Saxon times) would greet the revellers with "waes hael" and they respond with "drink hael" or 'drink well'. As the bowl was passed around, everyone would say the Wassail greeting to one and another.

This evolved into two traditions of Wassailing, whereby revellers went from house-to-house with the Wassail bowl, passing good wishes on and singing traditional songs. This is perhaps the origins of modern day carol singing. The other tradition of

Wassailing fruit trees is something practised in the countryside, especially in fruit-growing areas. As mentioned above, across the regions where Wassailing happens in the orchards, there are many variations on a theme, so I will explain the Wassailing I have attended in Sussex.

The Wassail I have been to several times was in Maplehurst, West Sussex, with the start at the White Horse pub, a quirky real ale pub with many awards from Camra. The evening kicks off with Morris dancing in the pub car park, the local group called Broadwood Morris and the ladies' group called Magog. After some dancing, the Broadwood Morris lead a torch-light procession up the road, with music to accompany the revellers. On arrival at the orchard, the first stop is the barn to sample some of the all-important cider. The apples from the orchard are used to produce JB Cider - only available to the local area or at the National Cider & Perry collection at Middle Farm, Firle near Lewes.

Following some cider-drinking, the revellers move onto the 'practice tree' so that everyone can find their voice and refresh their memory of how to go about Wassailing the apple trees. The first thing is to bash the tree with the Morris sticks (normally made from ash) to drive off the nasty spirits. This is followed by some cider being poured onto the roots as a kind of offering. It is the next element which is sure to raise a laugh as it requires a piece of toast soaked in cider to be put into the branches of the tree, to feed the robins who will help to keep out the evil spirits. The reason for laughter is the "Butler" (the MC or compere for the evening) asks for a virgin among the ladies to step forward! Then all the revellers are asked to make as much noise as possible to ward off the evil spirts - you can bang or shake something, let off party poppers or shout and holler. Some let off shotguns and I have even been to one where an old air raid siren was used.

Finally, the revellers sing a toast to the tree, and Wassailing. As with many countryside traditions, there are many versions but the following rhyme is very similar to the one used at JB Cider's orchard:

Here's to thee, old apple tree

May'st thou bud, may'st thou blow

Hats full, caps full, bushel, bushel bags full

And my pockets full, too

Here stands a good old apple tree

Stand fast, root; bear well, top

Every twig, apples big

Every bough, apples enou'

Hats full, caps full, four and twenty sacks full!

After this, the revellers moved from the practice tree to the main event which is a bigger tree (likely one the oldest in the orchard) and go through the same routine. Having successfully wassailed the apple trees, the revellers returned to the pub, via the cider barn for some more tasting, and for an evening of singing and music provided by the Morris men.

In today's fast paced world, I think it is very important that these traditions are documented, carried on and hopefully expanded.

As I have mentioned earlier, there are many variations of a Wassail and I could have filled a newsletter about them which could be a bit boring, but I hope this gives you an insight into an interesting and fun tradition.

The links below are for the pub, Morris group and the National Cider & Perry Collection at Middle Farm.

https://www.whitehorsemaplehurst.co.uk/

http://www.broadwoodmorris.info/

https://www.middlefarm.com/cider-barn/

The next link is when BBC South Today went Wassailing at Maplehurst. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssO_ldTnUvg

The last one is an interesting short film on Wassailing.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFwKFseL8WQ

A photo from the Facebook page of Broadwood Morris of the Wassailing

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING LIST
By Phil Hart

Here are 2 items that I would not be disappointed if they were in my Christmas stocking.

Straineite Knipex wire cutters. A small set of wire cutters, that easily fit into the long thin pocket on your chainsaw trousers (we all know how much chainsaws love eating barbed wire for breakfast, dinner & tea...). They are then always handy to deal with unexpected surprises that might be lurking in the hedge. Length 8 inches. I have found these very effective at cutting barbed wire & sheep netting. Available from R G H Supplies, Rudhewick Sussex. 01403 822744
Aprox £40

Stihl chains saw sharper. This item lowers the depth gauges on the chain as you sharpen the chain, thus saving you a job that potentially gets missed / not attended to regularly. Available to suit a variety of chain sizes from FR Jones. 020 8676 3010
Aprox £40

SLOE GIN

By Mark Schofield

Blackthorn sloes are used to make wine, preserves, and Sloe gin which is a liqueur. Vodka can also be infused with sloes. Sloes are traditionally harvested in October or November and are best picked after the first few days of autumn frost when they become less tart. (This effect can be reproduced by freezing sloes that are harvested early.)

This is Mary Cadogan's recipe on the BBC's Goodfood website:

Ingredients

500g ripe sloes

250g Golden Caster Sugar

1 Litre Gin

Method

1. Wash and dry the sloes. Use a fork or cocktail stick to prick the sloes. Put the sloes into a 2-litre glass jar or into two smaller jars.
2. Add the sugar and gin. Seal the jar. Shake it well. Once a day for seven days, give the jar a good shake. Store the jar in a cool, dark place and leave for two to three months.
3. Strain the sloe gin into a bowl*. Decant into clean dry bottles. Seal and label. The sloe gin is ready to drink but it will improve and mature over time. If possible, make it in one year to drink in the next.

*The strained gin-soaked sloes can be eaten neat or processed: pitted sloes could be mixed into melted chocolate that is then allowed to set.

NATURE NOTES

By Reg Lanaway

I suggested last month that unusual birds turn up unexpectedly at this time of year. They need not be rare to be interesting and a close-up view is always special. Just outside of my kitchen window I have open-topped water butts that are filled from the roof of the outhouse when it rains. A Grey Wagtail has taken to feeding along the rims of them picking off small midges and floating insects. If ever birds are poorly described this must be one of them. By its name one would expect a drab plain bird but that is by no means the case.

Grey Wagtails are the most slender and elegant of the three species regularly seen in this country. True, they do have a grey back, but the underparts are the most beautiful sulphur yellow, the tail is long with white outer feathers and it is constantly wagging. In the breeding season the males have a very distinctive black “bib”. Grey Wagtails can be found breeding locally, usually near running streams and in the autumn, many arrive from the north of the country and from across the North Sea. They are the ones you often see with Dippers when television nature programmes show splashing rivers in the Lake District or the Pennines.

The more widespread is the Pied Wagtail, often seen running across lawns in pursuit of flying insects. They are their name quite rightly suggests, black and white but to the experienced birder, differences in the field can be identified. Males have black backs and the females, grey. Birds hatched this year will retain buff-yellow faces through until the end of winter. They nest locally and often close to human habitation. I have found them in Ivy on walls, in garden sheds, re-lining the old nest of a Blackbird, and

even on the ground amongst a bed of Wallflowers. They have been known to be the unwelcome host to a Cuckoo. These are the wagtails that form large roosts, the most impressive locally being at the Princess Royal Hospital, where many drop into the bushes between the wards, well away from bad weather. Some from the north of the country spend the winter in the southern counties, so partial migrants. The Continental race has less black and appears quite silver. These are known as White Wagtails and may be found on this side of the Channel, particularly in spring. They are quite distinctive and as one wise old birder told me, “if you are unsure if it is a White Wagtail or not, it isn’t”.

The third species is the truly migratory one, the Yellow Wagtail. Sadly, nothing like as common as half a century ago. They breed on the ground, using a depression In the ground covered by herbage, in low-lying grass fields and marshland. There are records of them nesting in field-scale vegetable production. In the 1950’s, I can remember many of the bright yellow males claiming their territories in the low water meadows at Amberley in West Sussex and I found a nest on the Pevensey Levels while I was doing my National Service. The females, because they need to be camouflaged, are darker on the upper parts but no less attractive. As late as the 80’s a few bred beside the River Ouse below Lewes at Southease. Now, we are most likely to see them in April as they return, or late August and September as the depart. They are often found around cattle where they find insects, either on the animals or disturbed by their feet. By the time you read this they will be on the plains of Africa among more exotic beasts!

Each of these Wagtails will have at least two breeding attempts in a season, laying from four to six eggs. Grey and Pied Wagtails still have healthy populations in this country, but the Yellow Wagtail, because of loss of suitable places to breed and its migratory challenges, is in quite a serious decline.

LIVING ON THE HEDGE

By Mark Schofield

The Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)

Family & Scientific Name

The Blackthorn belongs to the rose family and is native to Europe, western Asia and locally in northwest Africa. It has also become locally naturalised in New Zealand, Tasmania, and eastern North America. Its scientific name *Prunus spinosa* is derived from the Latin words for plum-tree (*prunus*) and blackthorn (*spinus*).

Vernacular & Folklore

The common name for the fruit is 'sloe', a word that comes from Old English. Other names include Slones, Bellums, and Slags. In Hampshire, they are called 'Hedge-peg', 'Hedge-pick', or 'Kex', and in Sussex 'Winter-kecksies'. Blackthorn was long associated with witchcraft and it was said that witches' wands and staffs were made using Blackthorn wood.

History

Early human use of sloes as food is evidenced by the 5,300-year-old human mummy discovered in the Otzal Alps along the Austrian-Italian border in 1991: a sloe was discovered near the body and evidently the man intended to eat it before he died. Blackthorn, with its savage thorns, has been traditionally used in Britain and other parts of Northern Europe to make cattle-proof hedges. In Sandwich, Kent, each incoming mayor of the town is presented with a Blackthorn stick, a custom mentioned by town clerk Adam Champneys in his *The Customal of Sandwich* written in 1301. The Sandwich Guildhall Museum has three such sticks in its collection.

Plant Description

The Blackthorn is a large deciduous shrub, abundant in hedges, scrub, copses, and open woodland throughout Britain. It thrives in full sunlight and grows best in moist, well-drained soil. The Blackthorn usually grows as a bush, but it can become a tree reaching 23 feet (7m) and living for up to 100 years. Blackthorn has the habit of producing patches of sucker growth: many neglected hedges spread out to become several yards wide. When cleared, these patches leave many sharp stubs and stumps, sharp and hard enough to puncture a tyre.

Blackthorn bark is smooth and dark-brown and is much darker than that of the Hawthorn. Its branches are dense and stiff. The black-purple twigs form straight side-shoots which develop into long, sharp thorns which are well known for causing infections. The small narrow leaves are oval, tooth-edged and pointed at the tip. They are more than twice as long (up to 1,8") as they are broad (up to 0.8"). The Black and Brown Hairstreak butterflies lay their eggs on Blackthorn: the tiny eggs can be seen throughout the winter as white dots in the fork between the thorn and shoot. Blackthorn leaves are also the foodplant for many species of moth such as the Lackey, the Magpie, and the Swallow Tailed. By contrast, the Concealer Moth caterpillar eats dead Blackthorn wood.

Blackthorn produce clouds of snow-white flowers in early Spring. The Blackthorn produces its flowers before its leaves, unlike the Hawthorn whose flowers appear in May after its leaves. The Blackthorn often flowers during a bitterly cold spell of weather, usually after a 'false spring', and that cold spell used to be called a 'Blackthorn winter'. The white flowers, with five petals and a diameter of about ½", emerge either singularly or in pairs along the length of the thorns. This also distinguishes the Blackthorn from the Hawthorn whose flowers emerge from the

same point as the thorn. The Blackthorn is hermaphrodite, meaning both male and female reproductive parts are found in one flower. It is insect pollinated and because of its early flowering, it is a valuable source of nectar and pollen for bees in spring.

After pollination, the flowers develop into sloes. These black fruits have a purple-blue waxy bloom and ripen in autumn. They measure 1cm across and have a strongly tart and astringent flavour when fresh. They are thin-fleshed and have a little, roundish stone that is nearly iron-hard.

Plant Uses

Blackthorn is a hard wood that is hardwearing and tough. The timber is light yellow with a brown heartwood and takes a fine polish. Traditionally, it is used to make tool parts and riding and walking sticks. 'Corkscrew' walking sticks of Blackthorn are highly prized because they are rarely found, unlike soft-stemmed trees and shrubs like sallow and birch which are more readily deformed by twining honeysuckles. Blackthorn is also the traditional wood for Irish shillelaghs (a thick stick used traditionally as a weapon - once described as 'an ancient Hibernian tranquilliser') and Blackthorn sticks are carried by commissioned officers of the Royal Irish Regiment.

Blackthorn makes good firewood, burning well with a good heat and little smoke.

Traditionally Blackthorn bark, flowers and fruit were used in tonics and syrups to aid digestive complaints and ease rheumatism. Sloes can be made into jam and chutney, but their best-know use is in making sloe gin. Commercial sloe gin, made by Gordons in Britain, uses east European fruit.

Sloe juice dyes linen a reddish colour that washes out to a durable pale blue.

ASK A HEDGELAYER

I have noticed a tendency for soe style hedges (especially in competitions) to look semi-midland, with loads of showy pleachers not covered by brash. Is soe style being redefined? Confused

> Gary Moore always told me in no uncertain terms, that hedges mist be shockproof and all pleachers properly covered up to prevent re- growth being accessible to grazing animals. In practice, showing off the pleachers in competition hedges is completely the wrong way to do it. Timothy Hughes
>
> *Editor: Isn't it a matter of judges enforcing standards?*

Sailing club looking to plant hedge behind chain link fence right behind sea wall. Obviously needs to be hardy enough to survive weather. Non prickly preferred. Wildlife shelter for lizards and slow worms a help. Any suggestions? Alan Hardy

> *Editor: Could one plant wild bushes and trees that are growing in the locality? Alternatively, if a windbreak or barrier to stop sand drifting is needed, would a dead hedge be practicable? Page 27 has a photo of the Moroccan solution.*

In which circumstances would root laying be used and any advice in doing so? Kevin Jeffries

> *Editor: Frank Wright's excellent article on page six addresses this question.*

PHOTO CAPTIONS

Editor: Any suggestions?

OBITUARY

Holford Pitcher

6th October 1941-13thAugust 2020

It is with regret and sadness we report the death of Holford Pitcher at the age of 78. Holford was a farmer, latterly at Churchill Hill Farm, Sedlescombe, East Sussex. Holford joined the South of England Hedge Laying Society in the early nineties and almost immediately offered a hedge on the farm for the annual competition. This was followed by a second event in the 2000's and by the John French International Competition in 2012.

Holford was a true Sussex gentleman who could trace back his ancestors, one of whom was a blacksmith, to the village of Hellingly.

Our condolences go to his wife Elizabeth and family.

John French

FOR YOUR DIARY

Training Day 3	5th Dec 2020	Chelwood Gate
Coppicing Day 3	2nd Jan 2021	
Improvers Day	9th Jan 2021	Fletching
Coppicing Day 4	16th Jan 2021	
President v Chairman	23rd Jan 2021	Magham Down
Annual Comp	21st Feb 2021	Norton Farm, Alton.
Charity / Fun Day	13th March 2021	Pullborough
Midland Day	27th March 2021	To be decided.

A dead hedge in Morocco: masses of spruce pine brash laid out along a beach to stop sand dunes being blown away. Russell Woodham says he walked 3 kilometres and the 'hedging' still stretched out as far as one could see.

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Assistant Training Officer	Graham West
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