

SOUTH OF ENGLAND HEDGE LAYING SOCIETY
Reg Charity No 1046124



April 2016



Bob Hunt receives the Distinguished Services Trophy from Martin Blake



Message from the Chairman

July Farm visit. Hedges & Leather.

A date has been set for a farm walk on the 23rd June. To include inspection of the Chairmans V Presidents hedge & the fund day hedge, a session on leather working and a Barbeque at Ed Lovejoy's Hope Farm. Start time to be decided Please let Phill Piddell know if you would like to attend so we know how many people to cater for.

Many thanks to Phill Piddell for his blog entries, this is to be found on the Societies web site, with excellent photos & even more photos on flicker.

Thank you to Bob Hunt, Tim Hughes, Gary Moore, David Dunk & Robert Graham, for transporting stakes & binders to the hedge laying venues this season. It was great to see a good turnout at the Annual competition with the visitors from the Netherlands enjoying themselves and doing well.

We now have the summer show season to look forward too, if you would like to attend & help on the Societies stand please can you let Chris Birchell-Collins know your availability, the dates for the shows we will be attending is in this news letter.

I look forward to seeing you at some of the Summer shows and in the Autumn when the active laying season starts again. If you are looking to improve your hedge laying, a good easy enjoyable was is to visit the hedge laying competitions at the Ploughing matches held in Sussex, they are held by the Laughton, West Grinstead & Hurstpierpoint Agricultural Societies, see the dates and venues listed. All the usual suspects will be in attendance with all the banter that makes a good day out. Expect an early start, the draw is usually 08 15am.

Have a good summer,

Phil

Membership Renewal

Yes it's that time of year again when I'm after your money!

We accept debit and credit cards along with paypal – please visit the website, this is the quickest way to re-join.

We do accept bank transfers HOWEVER you do need to let me know you have done it, and send the details from the membership form in this newsletter.

If you have already paid you should have your new membership card, so please don't pay again.

Phill Piddell

INTERVIEWS

At the Training day On 12. Dec 2015 I interviewed two promising looking trainees, whom I had not met before. They proved to have very different reasons for being there.



Lee Basset is a young man who has done hedge laying before in the Midland style. He completed an apprenticeship in ' Heritage Landscape Management ' in Norfolk, which included hedging, coppicing and scything. He had mainly been trained on standard double rows and the hedge at Crowborough may have provided a different aspect to our craft. He has recently moved to near Ashford and wanted to learn the local hedge laying style so he can add this to his country crafts business, which includes coppicing and hurdle making. Being under 28 years of age he has been nominated by the society as one of the young trainees to attend training at Highgrove as part of Prince Charles' push to get more young people involved in hedge laying.

David Lawrence is a recently retired architect who was on his third training day, each with a different trainer and was being looked after today, ever so gently, by Gary Moore. He has enjoyed all three days and feels he has learnt a different aspect of hedge laying each time. His wife bought him the training course as a birthday present.

INTERVIEWS cont

He wants to learn hedge laying as 'a skill that should be hung on to'. He has an interest in conservation and put this into practice during his time as an architect, ensuring that wildlife was considered as part of his projects and encouraging the planting of native tree species in the landscaping. He hails from south London but also had a country cottage and spent four years managing a neglected hedge in the garden. He has an interesting old billhook, with 'England' stamped on it, which he used to use for splitting firewood before realising its potential. Having attended the sharpening course, he has found out that the sharpening methods required for splitting and for hedge laying were somewhat different and has spent many happy hours getting the hook right.



Tools of the trade 1: Billhooks

Hedge laying folk often like to talk about their old billhooks, demonstrating a love and affinity for the old tools which you rarely come across for, say, an old chainsaw.

Warring Billhooks

Dick Morley has sent me copies of couple of articles he wrote some time ago, one appeared in the SOEHS newsletter when he was editor and some may remember it. (He also mentioned that in those days the newsletter consisted of a page of A4 with type on both sides.) The other appeared in the Ditchling Dialogue some twenty years ago. He talks in both about his grandfather's billhook. His grandfather, born in 1840, had bequeathed him a gnarled old billhook. A little cleaning up revealed the stamp IC WALDRON GREEN as well as a lion rampant. Dick's research revealed that there were three forges in Waldron at that time. One was the Rampant Lion forge and living there was one who went by the name of John Carey (apparently in those days a capital J was often stamped as I). Co-incidentally Dick bought a French billhook (serpe or couporet) some years later. As billhooks were frequently forged from old swords in those days Dick amused himself by wondering if the steel from his two old billhooks could have been utilised on opposite dies during the battle of Waterloo (1815). cont..



...cont The fondness for an old tool may have its roots in previous times when a hedge layer could commission the local blacksmith to forge a hook to his own specifications of size, balance and weight. This went on at least until the late 1920s when Dick recalls Jack Holman (of North End Farm Ditchling) mentioning that he was taken as a child to a smithy in Crowborough where his father had commissioned three billhooks and several axes. One of the prizes for the nationals supreme champion is

Warring Billhooks?

a tool made to the winner's specification, so it's clear that some blacksmiths today would be prepared to do this, for a price, but would the steel be suitable for sharpening in the field?

Good billhooks are forged from steel with a medium amount of carbon. The more carbon that is incorporated into the steel the harder it is but too much hardness means that the thing needs a power tool or at least a file, instead of a sharpening stone. A good old billhook is relatively soft. I get the impression that most but not all modern billhooks are made of harder steel, keeping their edge longer but making sharpening in the field difficult. Morris tools may be an exception to this:

<http://woodsmithexperience.co.uk/blog/post/thect-billhook/>

In Medieval times the bill or billhook was often used as a weapon and was attached to a long pole as a pike. According to Wikipedia “The English in particular were known for using massed billmen rather than pikes or halberds in the Renaissance period, notably at the Battle of Flodden in 1513, when the Scottish king James IV was felled by an arrow and Bill.” The billhook was issued to the military for brush clearing and digging in (rather than a weapon) up to and during the 2nd World War.

Many folk remember the two Ronnies' Four Candles sketch but not everyone gets the last joke. <https://www.youtue-perfbe.com/watch?v=oaGpaj2nHIo>

South of England Hedge Laying Society

Reg. Charity N0 1046124

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



Training in Hedge Laying

Training Fee for Hedge Laying is £150 for four training days, or £60 for one "taster" day. You also need to be a member of the society for insurance purposes. All training must be pre-booked.

The following training days for Coppicing & Hedge Laying are planned.

	Subject	Date	Location	Cost
	Tool Sharpening			£10
	Coppicing			£150 for all four days
Day 1	Hedge Laying			
Day 2	Hedge Laying			
	Coppicing			
Day 3	Hedge Laying			£60 for one day
	Coppicing			
Day 4	Hedge Laying Improvers Day			

Note that dates and locations may be subject to change

Coppicing days are FREE to all Members

In the event of a cancellation a re-booking fee will apply as follows

Over 1 week – no fee

Between 2 days and 1 week - £10

Less than 2 days – £20

No show / the night before / on the day - £30

Note also that you must also be a member of the society, so if your training is over multiple years you will need to re-join.

Experienced current members

A section of hedge will be allocated for experienced current members wishing to lay hedge, please contact Phill Piddell book your place.

Other events

- The 'Presidents verses Chairman' Competition
- Our Annual Competition is
- The Hedge Laying Fun Day will be

Please note to take part in any of these events you need to join the society so you are covered by the Society's insurance. Membership is £15 per annum. Please bring your membership cards to events.

To get booking information for these events, send a completed membership application form to Phill Piddell.

The Membership Secretary, Phill Piddell.

1 Hope House Farm Cottage, Crouch Lane, Sandhurst, Cranbrook, TN18 5PD 01580 850768 phill.piddell@bt.com

South of England Hedge-Laying Society



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (or RENEWAL) April 2016 to March 2017

PRESIDENT:

Peter Tunks
The Coach House
Waltersville Way
Horley
RH6 9EP

Tel: 01293 784826 / 07836 757570

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:

Phill Piddell
1 Hope House Farm Cottage
Crouch Lane
Sandhurst
Cranbrook
Kent TN18 5PD

Tel: 01580 850768

Annual membership of the Society	£15 per person	
Lapel Badge	£5 per badge	
Total		
Please treat my membership as a Gift Aid donation (YES / NO)		

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for the current tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for the current tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I have given.

PLEASE USE CLEAR BLOCK CAPITALS

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Emergency Contact (Name and Number) _____

Email: _____

Age (if under 18): _____ Occupation: _____

It is your responsibility to ensure that the Society is informed of any changes in your communication details.

Please return the completed form to Phill Piddell You will receive a Membership Card in the post. Alternatively please email the above details to phill.piddell@bt.com and transfer the money directly to our bank account: SORT CODE **20-49-76** Account **90867381** (South of England Hedge Laying Soc)

Renew on online - www.sehls.co.uk

NOTICES

Keeping You Informed.

Everyone gets regular newsletters which are packed full of useful information, please do let us know if you are happy to receive them by email (you get them about a week earlier than the post!), however things change. It's really useful for the society to update you with event information during the year by email – it's fast and free. We will never sell your email, and will not junk-mail you with adverts. So if you do have an email please let me know, it's a great way to get the latest information.

If you really don't have email but want to be kept up-to-date please let me know your mobile phone number and I will send you details by text.

We also have a website www.sehls.co.uk which has a blog (a sort of on-line diary) which contains event reports, and pictures, along with useful information. You can access this by using the computers at the local library, and you don't need to sign up to anything.

Phill Piddell



Chainsaw Training

I have negotiated a significant discount for formal Chainsaw training (NPTC certified) for society members.

The basic "maintenance and crosscutting" course and certification will be around £250 per person. This will require us filling a whole course (4 people) and each person paying in advance. If you are interested please let me know and I will contact you over the coming months.

The training is 2 days where you learn to maintain your saw and perform some basic cuts. This is followed by a day of assessment. Subject to meeting the required standard you will be awarded the qualification. I have just completed the course and it was great value for money. Everyone on the course had already been using saws yet we all learnt a huge amount, especially around chain identification and sharpening.

I am currently working on a discounted felling course.

For the avoidance of doubt if you do not have a formal qualification (LANTRA or NPTC) you will not be allowed to use a chainsaw at ANY society events.

You are of course welcome to use hand-tools and call on the chainsaw steward for assistance.

Phill Piddell



Lost & Found

A pair of green gauntlet gloves, & small hand rake, were left over at the fun day on the 19th March at Hope Farm. For recovery, please contact Phil Hart, 0771 705 4172.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event
14 th May	Plumpton Open day. BN7 3AE
28 th May	Heathfield Show Broad Oak, Heathfield, Sussex
9,10, 11 th June	South of England Agricultural Show, Ardingly
14 th July	Connect with the countryside, Ardingly
29/08/16	Tool Sharpening
10 th Sept	Laughton and District Competition
17 th Sept	West Grinstead competition, Aglands Farm, Cowfold, W Sussex
23,24,25 th Sept	Bentley Woodfair
17 th Sept.	Coppicing, Sandhurst
1 st Oct	Hurstpierpoint Comp. Bowders Farm, Balcombe RH17 9QJ
8, 9 th Oct	Autumn Countryside show, Singleton
17 th Oct	Hedge Laying 1
14 th Nov	Hedge Laying 2
28 th Nov	Coppicing
12 th Dec.	Hedge Laying 3
2 nd Jan '17	Coppicing
9 th Jan	Hedge Laying Improvers Day 4
23 rd Jan	President's verses Chairman
20 th Jan	Coppicing day
24 th Feb	AGM, Plumpton College

Trainers wanted



Mind Fingers

Are you willing to help the Society train the next generation of hedge layers? We are looking for volunteers who can come along to the training days and pass on your skills? If you can help with one event per season it would make a big difference. Please let Phill Piddell know which event(s) you can help with.

Raffle at SEHLS annual competition

After the hedge laying we all made our way to the Brown Trout pub for some grub, the raffle and prize giving.

Every year the society holds a raffle at the meal after the competition, the draw is held in aid of Chailey Heritage Foundation & Grove Park School. This year the society managed to secure a good selection of prizes, for which we are very grateful to the all the donors (some are listed below). As a result we managed to raise £164 in total.

Thankyou to the donors for their prizes and members who bought the tickets.

List of the main donors and prizes:-

Pair of Eurostar tickets – Tanya Collins

1 hour flight simulator experience, CAE, Burgess Hill. www.cae.com.

Set of Stihl Loppers – ATS Machinery, Lower Beeding. www.ats-machinery.co.uk

Voucher for a pair of Ripeur Gloves plus discount on selected items- Lamberhurst Engineering, Lamberhurst. www.lameng.com

Chris Burchell-Collins



Save the SOEHS Money

We would like to encourage members to receive this newsletter by e mail, please let Phil Piddell know if you would prefer this: phil.piddell@bt.com



Tucking in at the President vs Chairman competition at Wittersham. Food was great apparently.

Was chicken on the menu?

Distinguished Services Trophy

Following the sad passing of John Blake, the family have left the society an ornament which is hedge laying related. The committee have decided that it should be awarded to someone within the society who have achieved a considerable amount to promote hedge laying in the South of England.

The trophy may be awarded on an annual basis, or at longer intervals, depending on the committee's opinion of the suitability of any nominations. Due to the fragile nature of the trophy it will be held in the trophy cabinet at Plumpton College and the successful person will be presented with the award at the AGM.

It was decided at the AGM that the first recipient should be Bob Hunt. A very worthy winner indeed.

Bob always has a smile and his dry sense of humour always cheers you up. He was a founder member of the society and has relentlessly delivered stakes & binders to numerous hedge laying events around the South of England over the last 20 years. Plus delivering, returning and staffing the winter and show caravans. Well done Bob.



BOB HUNT

Always amongst the stakes and binders.

Future nominations for the award to Chris Burchell-Collins via e-mail thesouthofenglandhedgelayers@googlemail.com
Or contact him on 01273 495026

Caption Competition



The previous competition was won by Phil Hart (mainly because no else had a go) with “it’s the winning and the taking part” that counts.



POINTS TROPHY

	Laughton		H.pierpoint		W. Grinstead		SEHLS		Total Pos	
	pos	pts	pos	pts	pos	pts	pos	pts		
Bob Whittaker	1	10	4	7	3	8	3	8	33	2
Gary Moore	2	9	1	10	1	10		0	29	3
Darren Hulbert	6	5	7	4		0	6	5	14	
Mike Bentley	4	7	2	9		0	1	10	26	
Frank Wright	5	6	6	5	5	6	5	6	23	
Mark Moore	6	5	5	6	4	7	3	8	26	
Paul Matthews	3	8	3	8	2	9	2	9	34	1

This years Points winner is Paul Matthew.



ANNUAL COMPETITION

**32nd Annual Hedge Laying Competition. Sunday 21st February 2015, Scotney Castle, Lamberhurst Kent
For results see next two pages**

A big thank you to Gary Moore for giving up his cant at this year's annual competition to accommodate a team from the Netherlands. We all benefited from this as he then helped out with the stewarding & ensured everyone finished on time. A great job done.

Scores		Competitor	Class	Scores							Total	Position	Steward	Judge
Cant				Pleachers	Stockproof	Height	Stakes	Binders	Gnrl	Apperance				
				25	25	15	10	15	10	100				
21	Phill Piddell	Novice		18	23	15	9	10	6	81				
24	Mike Mason	Novice		16	20	15	8	12	8	79				
23	David Droscher	Novice		18	24	15	8	14	10	89	1			
19	Stephen Thorns	Novice		16	22	15	8	12	7	80				
20	David Dunk	Novice		18	21	15	9	14	9	86	2			
22	Piet Hopman	Novice		18	21	15	9	14	8	85	3			
25	Lee Bassett	Novice		17	24	15	7	12	8	83	4			
	Marc de Wit & Arjan													
26	van der Zee	Novice Pair		16	20	15	7	14	10	82	2			
	Martijn & Luke													
34	Schippers	Novice Pair		18	20	15	9	12	9	83	1			
	Alan Miller & Nigel													
15	Colyer	Novice Pair		13	21	15	7	12	6	74	5			
	Mireille Oonk &													
17	Marcel Vermeulen	Novice Pair		14	21	15	8	12	7	77	3			
	Bob Lewis & Matthew													
16	Beard	Novice Pair		14	20	15	8	11	8	76	4			
8	Roger Taylor	Veteran		19	21	15	7	14	7	83	2			
3	Frank Wright	Veteran		16	20	15	9	9	8	77	3			
10	Clive Gilligan	Veteran		21	22	15	8	14	9	89	1			
5	David Crouch	Veteran		16	15	14	6	9	7	67				
9	Tim Hughes	Veteran		18	18	13	6	10	6	71				
1	Mick Friend	Veteran		16	20	15	6	10	8	75				
7	John French	Veteran		18	18	15	7	12	6	76	4			
2	Ian Runcie	Veteran		12	16	10	6	8	4	56				
4	Ian Johnson	Veteran		14	17	13	8	10	7	69				
6	Bob Taylor	Veteran		15	16	14	7	11	6	69				
12	Darren Hulbert	Senior		16	18	12	6	9	7	68				
11	Hans Taylor	Senior		21	19	12	7	8	7	74	3			
14	Phil Hart	Senior		17	22	10	7	7	6	69	4			
13	Terry Standen	Senior		18	23	13	8	11	8	81	1			
35	Joseph Mouland	Senior		18	24	12	8	10	8	80	2			
27	Mike Bentley	Champion		18	20	15	10	15	9	87	1			
33	Tony Gallow	Champion		19	22	15	8	14	8	86	2			
32	Nigel Adams	Champion		18	21	15	8	14	6	82	4			
31	Mark Moore	Champion		19	19	15	7	14	6	80	7			
28	Geoffrey Pitt	Champion		17	23	14	8	14	7	83	3			
30	Paul Matthews	Champion		20	19	12	9	15	7	82	4			
29	Bob Whittaker	Champion		19	20	13	9	14	6	81	6			

Roger Ferrend	Neale Sands
Roger Ferrend	Alan Ashby
Roger Ferrend	Dave Sands
Chris Burchell-Collins	Peter Tunks

Prizes

Class	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	
Champion	The Society Cup +	£40	£25	£15	£10
	Mike Bentley	Tony Gallow	Geoffrey Pui	Paul Matthews (was 2nd, decided on "pleachers")	
Senior	Westward Plaque +	£40	£25	£15	£10
	Terry Sparden	Joseph Moulard	Hans Taylor	Phil Hart	
Novice	Westward Plaque +	£40	£25	£15	£10
	David Droscher	David Durk	Piet Heppman	Lee Bassett	
Novice Pairs	Martin & Luke Shippers	£30			
	The Society Trophy +	£40	£25	£15	£10
Veteran A (60 - 69 yrs)	Cive Gilgan	Roger Taylor	Frank Wright	John French	
	The Society Shield +	£40	£25	£15	£10
Veteran B (70 yrs+)	The Wharfedale Shield +	£25	£15	£10	
	Steve Moxford	Phil Hart	David Droscher	Tim Higgins	
Best 1st Year re-growth	The Fred Moulard Memorial Trophy				
Best Veteran re-growth	President's Prize - kindly donated by the Society President				
Best length of bindings (Novices only)	The Bill Turgan Memorial Trophy			David Droscher	
Most improved Novice	The Joan Street Memorial Shield			David Durk	
Best work on a poor length	The Jim Yarrasael Tanland			Meck Friend	
Best staking & binding				Mike Bentley	
Best work with hand tools - Novice				David durk	
Best work with hand tools - Novice Pairs				Martin & Luke Shippers	
Best work with hand tools - Veteran				Cive Gilgan	
Best work with hand tools - Senior				Hans Taylor	
Best work with hand tools - Champion				Mike Bentley (best overall)	
Points Trophy	Paul Matthews	Bob Whitaker	Gary Moore		

A Good Day Out Autumn 2015

After such a wet August, the fine weather at the end of September has been more than welcome. On the last Saturday of the month I had a wonderful day out at the Regional Ploughing Match held near Hailsham. This was the event where the class winners from the local matches compete to go for the Championship at the National Competition.

The venue was a large farm on a slight rise overlooking the Pevensey Levels with two fields of short wheat stubble on which the match was held. In the lower field were the smaller tractors with mounted or trailer ploughs, horticultural cultivators and both single and double horse ploughs. The variety of old tractors made a wonderful sight as they worked the land. To many of us this brought back memories of when in our more youthful days we had regularly used them and at that time they were the modern technology of the day. The care and upkeep of these aged tractors was an obvious passion of their owners in just the same way as do the enthusiastic owners of vintage cars. At the end of this field, spaced top and bottom, were two traction engines that in turn pulled a four-furrowed plough on a cable between them as would have been the practice about the time of World War 1.

The soil was a sandy-loam that became a seed bed almost as soon as it was turned, looking very fertile and easily worked the dream of any gardener. This section held about forty competitors and the smell of freshly turned soil, to a country person is one of the delights of the open spaces at this time of year. The other field was for the more modern reversible ploughs that are in general use around the county now, pulled by some very powerful and expensive tractors. There were about a dozen of these and whether it was slightly different soil in this field or the larger equipment, the furrows were turned with the soil holding in shiny slices, not falling into an immediate tilth as in the lower one. It was a fine spectacle and as the allotted three hours drew to a close so the land became darker as the land changed from the light straw colour of the stubble to bare soil. Work finished as each person ploughing, perfected their work as it joined the neighbouring plot to give a complete area of dark soil. One lasting memory for me was of a young mother and her two children exploring the creatures, worms and beetles, in the freshly turned soil. How good it is to see youngsters not afraid to get their hands dirty and getting close to nature. It is so important that they realise where and how our food is produced. On such a beautiful sunny day with the colour and activity all around I hope it gave a good and lasting impression of how important the countryside is in supporting us all.

Each class was then judged for the quality of the work completed on time. The experienced judges looked for straight level furrows with the stubble trash turned right under so that it could break down under the soil. Not only does this look attractive but good quality ploughing is the basis of the success of next year's crop. There was also a Domestic Section in the barn where cookery, flowers and handicraft competitions were held. Cups were later awarded accordingly in the different classes and winners progressed to the next round of competition to be held in a more central part of the country.

We met many folk from years gone by and as it is with all such gatherings the meeting of people from the past makes the day so memorable. Such greetings as "Good to see you I didn't realise you were still about" and "Do you remember.....?" were often heard. We met a local young man with his girlfriend who came from South London and had never experienced such an event. She was astounded by the expanse of land without buildings. I wonder what she thought of the folk of rural Sussex compared with the snappy dressers of the Capital.

With only a handful of local trade-stands, displaying machinery, seeds and equipment, it was hardly over-commercialised. There was of course a bar at the end of the barn, a refreshment van supplying toasted bacon rolls and hot or cold drinks and a stall selling local apples and juice.

Considering it was a last minute decision for me to go, it was a very good one. A splendid day was had by all but what a difference the weather makes for such an occasion. At least one local Ploughing Match had been cancelled after heavy rain. Not only are the conditions for the actual ploughing effected but car parking is always on a field but here it was on well drained land, well organised and for only four pounds admission no one could moan.

Committee and Officers:

President	Peter Tunks 01293 784826
Vice President. and Assistant Training	Gary Moore 07767 894 961
Chairman & Training Officer:	Phil Hart 0771 705 4172
Vice Chairman	Frank Wright 01273 493309
Secretary	Chris Burchall-Collins 01273 495026
Treasurer	Mike Parrott 01273410292
Assistant Secretary:	Vacant
Membership Secretary: and Competition Secretary	Phill Pidell 01580 850768
Newsletter Editor	Ian Runcie 01273 567278
Awards Officer:	vacant
Coppicing Officer and committee member	Tim Hughes 01444892742
Show Officer:	Chris Burchall-Collins 01273 495026
Transport Manager:	Bob Hunt Tel: 01273 400898
Hedge Manager:	Frank Wright 01273493309
National Reps	Phil Hart 0771 705 4172 & John French 01424 772371

Committee dates: 5th May, 14th July, 15th Sept, 17 Nov, 12th Jan 2017 & 24th Feb.

Items for next Newsletter to Ian by mid August please

Editor: Ian Runcie, Windrush, Cuilfail, Lewes, BN7 2BE
hedger@mail.com