



"Putting Life into your Landscape"

January 2007

If You Were Down in the Woods

A lot happened in Crab Wood on Sunday 18th February. The HCCG Coppice Day was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by group members, families and a gaggle of teddy bears. It didn't actually rain on us, although it was dull and rather cold later.

Jo Baker kindly got a fire going for us, so Jon Rau was able to cook some potatoes in the fire, assisted by his daughter. Jonathan Howe and some friends cut a few coppice stools and sorted the product to give the less experienced some idea of what is produced and acceptable for the different grades. We didn't let Alan Waters loose on it, or he would no doubt have found other products like coat hooks and other odd bits. Pete Lane made a hurdle, with most of the splitting being done by Alan, and assisted by Pete (the charcoal) Jameson. Simon demonstrated the staking and binding of a layed hedge (without the hedge).

Bows and arrows were made by a number of children who came. Jo informs me that the coppard hazel stools are used to mark the boundaries of the coups, not poor cutting. Our thanks to Jo Baker and her merry men for having us on site, and to all who organised the day. Huw Edwards took a lot of photographs to give a superb record of the day; some of these with more of the stories are dotted about in the following pages...



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The Chairman Fights our Corner

Following a broadcast comment disparaging hazel fencing panels Jonathan Howe wrote the following letter to the BBC. With a GQT garden at Sparsholt we hope that the team will encourage listeners to support local craftsmen using local sustainable materials.

Dear Sir,

I am writing to complain about comments made on Radio 4 Gardener's Question Time broadcast on Sunday 25th March 2007.

The comments concerning a hazel hurdle fence put up to hide an oil tank for central heating were most misleading to your listeners. Saying that the product the panellist used was of limited duration is detrimental to our woodland industry. Hazel hurdles last 15 years when they are treated with preservative like other fencing panels. Environmentally friendly preservatives are widely available.

Members of the Hampshire Coppice Craftsmen's Group had orders cancelled on the strength of that one comment alone.

I would ask Gardeners Question time to please make their listeners aware that they should insist on hurdles of English manufacture and not be tempted by cheaper, poorer imitation, imported foreign panels.

J R Howe
Chairman (01264 810434)
Hampshire Coppice Craftsmen's Group
www.hampshirecoppice.org.uk

Subscriptions

Subscriptions for the year 2006/7 are now overdue. The cost is £10 per member. The Membership Secretary reports that there are 35 names on The Teller mailing list for which he has not yet received renewal subscriptions.

If you are one of these and you wish to remain on the mailing list for the New Look Teller, please send your subscription, cheque payable to the Hampshire Coppice Craftsmen's Group, to the Membership Secretary;

**Phil Allen,
19 Bull Farm, KingsWorthy,
Winchester SO21 1AQ**

Coppice available for Cutting 2007/8

Christopher Pease, who has several acres of hazel coppice at various stages of maturity on land he owns south of Whitchurch, Hants, that is very accessible just off the A 34, invites HCCG members who need coppice for cutting over the next year to contact him to discuss terms etc. His email address is:

c.pease@upperwoodcott.co.uk

Dorset Coppice Group - A Grand Opening

Supported by Leader+ funding, the Dorset Coppice Group have used locally grown timber, felled and milled by members to build the "Living Classroom", a focus for coppice craft educational activities in Bonsley Wood, their home base in Blandford Forest. On 4th April HRH the Princess Royal visited Bonsley Wood to formally open the Living Classroom. To mark the occasion the Dorset Coppice Group held an Open Day, laying on a great range of displays; thatching, hurdle-making, charcoal burning, horse-drawn timber extraction, walking sticks, tree climbing, and more. Accompanied by group chairman Peter Moors, Princess Anne spent an hour touring the displays and meeting many of the Dorset group members and taking a lively interest in the activities on display.

The pictures show the Living Classroom awaiting the arrival of HRH; Dave Partridge talking hurdles; Peter Jameson and Jim Bettle expound the economics of Charcoal making; and the Opening moment.



Tytherley Woods Project - More on the Subject

The Butterfly Conservation Tytherley Woods Project described by Dr Dan Hoare at the 2006 AGM (see the Teller January 2007) offers opportunities for local woodsmen and coppice craft workers to be involved in the activities that should arise from this initiative. The following extract from the project brief describes the extent of the woodlands and related landscape involved.

"The Tytherley Woods Project Area lies between Salisbury and the Test Valley straddling the border of Wiltshire and Hampshire. This rural landscape comprises a mosaic of semi-natural habitats including ancient broadleaf woodland, unimproved chalk downland and the meadows of the Test Valley, and is dotted with small villages. Arable farming has shaped much of the open character of the area, but it is punctuated by extensive patches of woodland, the remnants of a much larger forest. At its heart lies Bentley Wood, a 665ha SSSI notified for its exceptionally rich butterfly and moth fauna.

Surrounding this core site is a network of smaller woodlands in conservation or private ownership which have the potential through restoration to form a more connected wooded landscape in which co-ordinated management enables wildlife to thrive within productive, sustainable woodlands.

To the west of Bentley Wood lie the woods of Clarendon Park, formerly a royal hunting lodge from Saxon times, and to the east of the project area lies the Mottisfont Estate, managed by the National Trust, which is a SSSI and SAC designated for the nationally rare Barbastelle Bat. Mottisfont contains a mix of woodland types including hazel coppice with standards, broadleaved plantation and coniferous plantation which the bats use for breeding, roosting, commuting and feeding.

A key part of the project will involve integrating suitable management for bat roosting and foraging areas into woodland management plans that enhance the rich moth fauna upon which they depend, as well as benefiting butterflies and other wildlife. The project will seek to reconnect these two major woodland blocks with the Bentley Wood complex by restoring intervening private woods and enhancing habitat quality in the arable countryside."

Funding decisions are expected in June 2007 and it is hoped that the project will start in September 2007. There is not enough space available in this issue of the Teller to include Dr Hoare's complete paper. If any Group members would like more information on this project please contact Tony Hales 01264 810565.

A Very Busy Day in Crab Wood

Early in the morning Joe Baker got the campfire going. Jon Rau set the lunchtime potatoes to bake. You can see they re-used an old fire site. We do this as often as possible to minimise the damage to wild plant roots waiting for Spring and their chance to grow again into the space left by the cut coppice. Beyond the fire you can see the coppard stool, cut ragged to mark the edge of this year's coup.



One element of our LHI project highlights a less well known aspect of the coppice industry's involvement with gunpowder. We all know that Hampshire charcoal was an important ingredient of gunpowder, but how did the gunpowder get from the mills to the guns? Nowadays wooden barrels are finished with metal hoops, and the skills of making barrel



hoops from hazel rods seems to be lost. Phil Allen is on a mission to rediscover the art of hoop making using our very own coppice. He has acquired the shaving brake for the job, but it needs some fine tuning to be comfortable in use, and early results leave plenty of room for improvement!



Simon Farndon demonstrated the principle of staking a laid hedge. It started as a lone task but as work progressed there was a steady stream of spectators to discuss the finer points. Ian Curtis brought a selection of walking sticks, much admired by all; and we see chairman Jonathan Howe hefting a fine specimen, while Sean Garnett takes a break

from barbecuing pork chops. Eventually lunchtime came; the spuds were much appreciated. You can see one of Sean's barbecue stands in the background. ... And the teddy bears got their picnic.



To see more of Huw's photos please visit the HCCG website www.hampshirecoppice.org.uk.

All photos on this page are

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In Crab Wood on the 18th...

Phil Allen brought along one of the new banners with woodwork to demonstrate the spec for exhibition materials that was circulated to members earlier in February this year. Alongside is a photograph of the model showing how four banners can interlock to form the centre piece of an impressive show stand when used with the canvas shelters we all know from past Wood Fair displays. The objective of this part of the LHI project is to have a versatile HCCG show stand made completely of natural materials from sustainable sources.



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Hurdle-making Master Class

Two of our professional members, Alan Coles on the left and Pete Lane to the right, demonstrated some energy saving and back conservation techniques while making a hurdle from rods cut earlier in the week. A general comment on hazel cut this winter is that it won't last too many years without an environment-friendly wood preservative; the moisture content is too high - we have our own indicators of climate change! The finished hurdle is one of several to be made as an HCCG contribution to the Viking Longhouse project at the Ancient Technology Centre, Cranborne. If you want to see these hurdles before they become part of a wattle and daub structure then join us on June 30th - see "Dates for your Diary"



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The Living Craft Project

Helen Healey has written to HCCG to inform us of the web-based Living Craft Project which aims to raise the profile, through professional, high quality images and educational resources, of our 'traditional heritage' craftspeople and their industries. Although started only in January this year the LCP already has worked with Reedcutters, Millwrights, and a team of Thatchers and would like to invite HCCG members to take part.

Professional photographers Helen Healey and Geoff Bishop hope to achieve a high quality set of images the copyright of which remains with the LCP, and which will be shown in a free-to-view public gallery and possibly be used commercially.

In return they offer participating craftspeople the use of the images for their own publicity or marketing, a Forum that they hope will grow into 'the' place to be if you're in a craft industry, have any interest in crafts whatsoever or are shopping for a craft service or product. They have a 'Marketplace' to which, as another thank you, they could post your business details. Having your own Message Board on the LCP Forum could also help your business as more and more people get to know your name.

To find out more please visit the LCP website www.livingcraftproject.org.uk or ring Helen on 01264 782631, or email us at enquiries@livingcraftproject.org.uk

A Rural Skills Directory

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust have created a website www.rural-skills.org.uk to support and assist those involved in traditional and rural skills in The New Forest and Isle of Wight. This project has been part-financed by the European Community New Forest & Isle of Wight Leader + Programme. The home page blurb says:

"Looking to employ traditional craftsmen and rural practitioners in the New Forest and Isle of Wight.....this website is your first port of call!!"

Have you ever wanted to find a tree surgeon, a hedge layer, find someone to write a Farm Environmental Plan, contact a local landscaper? Having trouble in trying to get contacts to support the work you do? Well.... look no further, you have reached the website that will help you!

The website will enable those working in the Rural Skills Industry to advertise their skills to as wide an audience as possible. It is designed to be simple to use and will inform you of local contact details of a wide range of rural skills. By creating this website and database, we aim to support and promote the local rural economy of these areas in Hampshire.

Advertising on this site is, and will continue to be, free of charge. If you would like to add your details then please complete the [online questionnaire >>](#)"

Two of our group members are listed. Is anyone else interested?

Management Council 2007

Jonathan Howe, 01264 810434 Chairman

Simon Farndon, 01252 661226
Vice-chairman

Jon Rau, 01962 845995 Secretary

Huw Edwards, Treasurer 07773 453226

Christine Westcott, Member 02392 596720
(The Teller co-editor)

Tony Hales, Member 01264 810565
(The Teller co-editor)

Melvin Miles, Member 01256 770701

Peter Jameson, Member 01202 603202 (Charcoal)

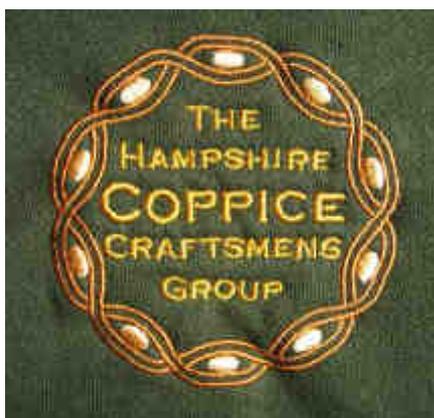
Peter Lane, Member 01425 654413

John Westcott, Member 02392 596720

At the council meeting on 17 April Huw Edwards took on the role of Treasurer; thanks also to Steve Reed who offered to help.

We still seek a Press Officer to work with the Management Council to feed information to newspapers and local radio and television stations. Anyone who may be willing to offer to take on this role please contact the Chairman.

HCCG Logo Clothing



Size	To fit chest	Polo	Sweat Shirt	Body Warmer
XS	34"	£9.99	£12.50	N/a
S	36"	£9.99	12.50	£14.95
M	38"	£9.99	12.50	£14.95
L	40 - 42"	£9.99	12.50	£14.95
XL	44"	£9.99	12.50	£14.95
1XL	46"	£9.99	12.50	£14.95
2XL	Special	£9.99	12.50	£14.95

If you would like clothing with the HCCG logo, it is available from Les Brannon. Cheques should be made out to the HCCG and sent with the order to Les at 1 Burnett Road, Gosport, Hants PO12 3AH.

There will be a delay while a group of cheques is accumulated to make a viable order quantity. The group treasurer will be making out the final cheque to the clothing company.

Training/Funding News

Lantra, the Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land based Sectors have produced National Occupational Standards for the Green Wood Trades and Coppicing industry. You can view the standards at www.ukstandards.org/

Preliminary talks are under way between the Greenwood Centre (Telford) and the Sustainability Centre (East Meon) with regard to running a Week in the Woods Event at the Sustainability Centre in the autumn. Last year this was run at Westonbirt Arboretum attracting around 30 participants to a week of structured training in coppicing and greenwood trades. It is hoped that members of the coppice group with suitable skills and experience will be employed as trainers during this week. The event was used as part of the selection process for a coppice apprenticeship that is facilitated by the Greenwood Centre. Apprentices are funded to work with a craftsman or range of crafts people for over a three year period. The Green wood Centre also hopes to develop a 1 year apprenticeship.

The recent changes to the Government Agencies involved with supporting rural development have left some uncertainty with regard to funding streams. The new England Rural Development Programme (replacing the old ERDP) is due to start later this year and a significant proportion of rural community funds will be distributed through the LEADER model. This approach will deliver a range of approved activities through groups of delivery partners. This is all that is known at the moment, but Jon Rau is attending a Conference at Sparsholt in March that is launching this new funding mechanism in Hampshire.

Sean's e-shop at

www.snakecatchercharcoal.com

We produce high quality charcoal from native hardwoods in the New Forest. Seasoned English Oak produces a lighter charcoal that lights more easily, burns longer and hotter and leaves less ash than poor quality charcoal. This charcoal is used to make our own brand of disposable barbecues. We also produce a unique wire frame holder for disposable barbecues that keeps your barbecue off the ground. This prevents those little black rectangles from appearing in your garden, on your picnic table, boat pontoon, festival ground and all those other places people admit having little accidents with. We would prefer to make charcoal in the New Forest and not you.

I also have an e-shop so if anyone wants to investigate selling things on the Internet without the hassle of learning all about computers, let me know or look at: www.snakecatchercharcoal.com. I'll need pictures of any articles to go in (electronic format nice but I can scan them if necessary) plus a description, price, dimensions and weight.

For those who were at Crab Wood, I'm Bob Johnsons apprentice (although apprentices are supposed to be paid!) and I had the barbecue with the pork chops on. (See pics on page 3-Ed)

Sean Garnett (email realale@waitrose.com)

Demonstration/Sales Opportunities

THE HAMPSHIRE GREEN FAIR, Sunday May 13th 10am - 4pm at The Sustainability Centre, Droxford Road, East Meon. A fun and green day that everyone can enjoy! Kids Crafts, Local Food, Renewable Energies, Woodland Products & Live Music.

"Farmers' Week" at Birdworld, Farnham, 29th May to 1st June, invite Group members to demonstrate their craft/sell their products. (No appearance money but free tea/refreshments and a family ticket for future use) Anyone interested in demonstrating at this event please contact Les Brannon 02392 504869

Queen Elizabeth Country Fair, July 7th-8th. Anyone interested please contact Chris Westcott. 02392 596270

Gilbert White Day, 22nd July. An open day at the Gilbert White Museum in Selborne; an opportunity to demonstrate our crafts in a superb landscape setting.

Anyone interested in attending please contact Tony Hales 01264 810565.

New Forest Show, 24th 25th 26th July 2007. We have an option on a pitch on the "Village Green" area of the show-ground, visited by a large number of the general public. We would need a number of HCCG members to share the three days of the show. Anyone interested please contact Peter Jameson 01202 603202 or Tony Hales 01264 810565.

'Little Woodham' wood weekend in August. Anyone interested in demonstrating at the 17th century village at Gosport please contact Chris Westcott.

Bursledon Brickworks (home of the Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust) have two events at which HCCG members are welcome to demonstrate their craft and offer products for sale.

10th June: Keen 2B Green

16th September: Building Conservation & Restoration

Anyone interested in demonstrating at these events please contact Les Brannon 02392 504869.

The Surrey and Sussex Coppice Group

Invite

Hampshire and Dorset Coppice Group members to a

"Hands On" day on Saturday 2nd June 2007

At Alan Waters charcoal camp

West Dean Estate

Starting from 9.00 am until dark

Bring some expertise to hand on or Tools to trade
Or just bring yourselves and have a go at learning a new skill.

Dates for your Diary

April 22nd Visit to coppice woods in Upham

A visit to Sladford's Copse, Austin's Copse and Rowhay Wood, Upham - one of the premier coppice woods in southern Hampshire

June 2nd Surrey & Sussex Coppice Group "Hands On" Day

See invitation below.

June 30th A visit to the Ancient Technology Centre, Cranborne

July 14th Group Barbecue

at Big Northdown Farm, courtesy of Melvin and Ruth. Book this date. It was a great occasion last year.

2nd October AGM

This will be held in Micheldever Station Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Future Committee Meetings

Planned dates are 17th July, and 18th September, all at 7.30 pm at Big Northdown Farm. All group members are welcome to attend. Ring a committee member if you wish to attend.



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Tenax Deer Fencing is available to HCCG members at £76.70 a roll carriage paid.

Contact Jon Rau 01962 845995 for more details.

Editor's Corner

Your Editors, Chris Westcott and Tony Hales are always ready to welcome feedback and contributions, letters, articles, wanted ads, for sale ads, from you the readers. If you have ideas and want help with words or pictures, please contact one of us:

Chris Westcott 02392 596720; Tony Hales 01264 810565 or e-mail us at editors@hampshirecoppice.org.uk

Copy deadline for the next issue of The Teller is 21st June 2007.

Postal address for anything that won't email is: 289 London Road, Horndean, Waterlooville, PO8 0JE