

**Green Gym**



**Sonning Common**

# "THE LOPPER"

**full of little cuttings.**

*May 2021*

## Absent Friend



This edition is rightly dedicated to Robin, a much loved member of the SCGG family. Never one to want us to be sad let's instead celebrate his legacy:

How many of us are fitter of body and mind...  
How many folks pursued a career in conservation....  
How many sites are now bastions for nature...  
How many sites are enjoyed by young and old...  
... thanks to Robin

*martin b*

## Robin



I knew Robin from primary school days as he hosted Peppard Church Youth Group and was a leading figure in the Peppard Carol Singing every Friday before Christmas. As a university student I joined SCGG outings during holidays from 1999-2002 and Robin was a leader on a great many tasks upon which I learnt valuable practical skills which helped me secure a career in countryside management.

Fast forward to 2017 and I found myself hosting SCGG at Aston Rowant with none other than Robin as the task leader who I instantly recognised after a 15 year gap! After taking up my current role at Greys Court I was delighted to yet again work with familiar faces and to catch up on local life with Robin.

He was always such a calm and gentle character and a positive influence on all who spent time with him. His contribution to SCGG and the wider community will be sorely missed but his legacy lives on.

*Leo Jennings*



Robin was in so many ways a typical English gentleman - polite, very efficient, measured and multi-talented.

In the Green Gym sessions that I attended, his upbeat manner, even when it was pouring down with rain, set an example to everybody else! In fact at my very first session he was so welcoming and encouraging that I felt inspired to return next time! He had a great sense of humour and I remember having many interesting conversations with him about cricket, music and current affairs.

He was truly a leading figure in the Green Gym group, a Colossus, and he will be sorely missed by everyone who knew him. He will be looking down at us in future from the top of that old oak tree and watching our progress completing all sorts of different tasks.

Nick Odell

I was really sad to read about Robin, I always enjoyed working and chatting together on his visits to Cleeve Water Meadow, he made nearly every one, I also appreciated all the support and advice that Robin gave when I first contacted the Green Gym about sessions at Cleeve Water Meadow.

Charlotte Turner



Robin will be remembered as the longest serving Secretary of the Sonning Common Green Gym. A great support to

me as Chairman, he was always available for advice, suggestions and comments. Robin always had a sense of fun and was always efficient at coping with the challenges that come with running any organisation. Modest man that he was, he would have been amazed at all the richly deserved tributes coming from so many people.

John Hasler



## Once more, dear friends, let's go a Rhody-bashing

So strange that this woody plant its name deriving from the Greek 'rhodos' rose and 'dendron' tree ('fraid my keyboard doesn't do Greek letters!) seems to be a genus of 1,024 species. Amazing! National flower of Nepal, state flower of Washington and West Virginia in the USA, state tree of Sikkim etc etc. More amazing!

But enough of that.

Saturday morning. Here we are back again at Home Farm for another session of rhody-bashing and I love it. Lots of signs of our previous clearing efforts though admittedly new shoots out of old stumps springing up everywhere. But plenty left, great branches, enormous trunks thicker than my waist ( that thick!), towering canopies. Where to start?

Just the six of us but loppers and bow saws at the ready and it all cuts and clips very easily though with a 'banana' split from time to time when a limb comes crashing down.

Rhody-bashing is sooooo satisfying.....you can see what has to be done and when you have done it you can see the difference you have made. What you might call achieving 'closure'. Great stuff.

**Mike S**



Rhody bashing at Home Farm Binfield Heath Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April



## Bluebells at Tartary Woods

Many thanks to Susan and Jessie for these lovely photos taken while out on walks though Tartary Woods. As Susan observed "The bluebells look wonderful, it is good to see how much difference GG has made and know that there is still plenty left for us to do!"



## No Mow May

Just a reminder we are now in "No Mow May" when we are encouraged not to mow our lawns to promote a pollinator-friendly habitat early in the growing season. This simple action can provide enough nectar for ten times the amount of bees and other pollinators than a regularly cut lawn.

If you are really keen you can go further by:

- Giving your lawn an early spring trim
- Add a mix of wildflower seeds to general-purpose lawn seed for a spring sowing
- Allow your lawn to self-seed and your wildflower mix to bloom
- Only cutting the areas you need to keep short
- Try cutting a trail or maze into your longer grass



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