

Green Gym®



Sonning Common

"THE LOPPER"

full of little cuttings.

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Rokeby Rec.

"We visited Rokeby Rec Ground and undertook a range of tasks to smarten up the area. As well as replanting tree saplings that had failed to survive the winter, we cleared some brambles and reopened up the second pathway connecting the recreation area with the orchard area. This involved exposing a fallen tree that blocked the path and over which assorted vegetation had scrambled. We cleared the vegetation by the end of the session. That same afternoon after our departure, a chainsaw was used to remove the fallen tree and complete the work.

Meanwhile, Tony Chandler led a small team to undertake some hedgelaying on the side next to the golf course.

This is a slow and painstaking task, and Tony returned over the next 2-3 weeks to complete it.



As this photographs show, it is a real work of art. .

Martin R



Spud Bake 2024

December 2024 Greys Court

We exert leverage at Greys Court

Do you remember doing all that 'principle of levers' at school? I think it was called 'mechanics' then or even, with dignity, 'applied maths'. Well same thing at Greys Court in the top wood where a huge tree has fallen across the footpath. We arrive-eventually, all 17 of us, as it is a bit of a trek to the site. Leo has already split the main trunk and whilst most of us are on holly bashing or bramble bashing, he is chain sawing the smaller branches. Luckily all our kit and tools go up in the NT pickup truck (well, including three of us squashed in for a hair raising lift along narrow paths Buddy Leo's dog is very accommodating sharing the back seat)

Now we have to clear the main sections of the fallen trunk away from the path so 'principle of levers' get a fulcrum and you can move a mountain.

First, attach a good working strength chain to the trunk.

Next, loop the attached cable round a convenient tree and link this to the patent level gear.....

.....then wiggle the lever (vigorously) back and forth to take up the slack ...and slowly a huge section moves but not quite in the right direction....

So, fix the cable to a loose pulley further up on a trunk section and your leverage works at a sort of right angle and mirabile dictu the section moves quietly off the path and out of the way.

Job over ! Well done Green Gymers (and Leo).

Michael S



Tartary

The light filtering through the trees on both sides of the path through Tartary makes it a pleasant site for our bramble extraction task.

Bluebell leaves were already beginning to poke through in January, despite the freezing temperature, and the thought of the bluebells to come drives us onwards. Walter de la Mare's poem entitled Tartary had similar thoughts of future delights, reflecting the escapist tendencies of the Edwardian era when it was written. People then as well as now sought refuge in fantasies and exotic lands to cope with the complexities of modern life, though our Green Gym efforts are more down to earth. This is the last verse:

Julia

*Lord of the fruits of Tartary.
Her rivers silver-pale!
Lord of the hills of Tartary.
Glen, thicket, wood, and dale!
Her flashing stars, her scented breeze,
Her trembling lakes, like foamless seas,
Her bird-delighting citron-trees,
In every purple vale!*



Whitchurch Churchyard

A thin layer of snow on the ground greeted us for the first of two January sessions in the churchyard at Whitchurch Hill. Luckily the task of clearing away a massive patch of brambles soon warmed us up, as well as the friendly welcome from church members. The entire patch was cut down by the end of the second session and many graves were uncovered in the process. All the arisings were burned in the bonfire, leaving a level area which will be easier for the church to manage.

Julia



When you forget to bring the coffee tables you have to improvise. Thank goodness we brought the wheelbarrow to carry our tools on our first visit to **Old Copse** in Sonning Common in January.

From its very beginnings SCGG has cleared holly here, but in the section owned by the Parish Council. The adjoining section, which is under Woodland Trust stewardship, is thick with holly under the ancient beeches, so our task is to help bring in more light by creating glades.



Strip the Willow-Ewelme style

Well, as we know, this is an excellent ceilidh dance involving couples moving up and down the figure, great fun if a bit energetic. Here at Ewelme Watercress Beds we are stripping the new growth from two rows of trees.



Part of a row clean cut, loppers at the ready, very satisfying.....



.....two rows ready for the dance



Strips sorted by size and tied in bundles for later use.



And wow! Carol's Victoria sponge to follow in the warm comfort of the Visitor Centre plus mulled wine and mince pies (first of the season) kindly provided by the host volunteers.

Michael S



**JOB WELL
DONE @ GREYS**

**Cherry Laurel
Removal**

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