

The Windrow

Windrow NO 15 May 2020

Newsletter of The Scythe Association of Britain and Ireland



VIRTUAL SCYTHING COMPETITION SEE PAGE 20

CONTENTS

SABI News	2	The Austrian Scythe	
Scything Events	2	A useful tool in a hedge layer's armoury	9
Course Directory	3	Russian Jig Realised	11
Teaching Learning Making Helping - Year '019'	4	Eighth SABI winter meeting: Minutes	16
No Nuts	6	International Event Ryghsestra, Norway	19
Managing Bracken by Hand	7	Virtual Scything Competition	20

SABI NEWS



International Peening Day

International Peening Day this year was on Sunday 7th April.

This is an 'everywhere-event' — it aims to remind us all to prepare our scythes in advance of the mowing season and support each other by encouraging this shared activity.

A number of SABI members held virtual peening days and reported their efforts on the SABI mailing list...here's one such report.

A scyther preempted the day here!

Start my Peening Day this morn, 1st April, pictures to follow,

Job lists include:

Make Peening Ponies (some bits from hedge row, remainder from scrap)

Milk Paint Ponies

Peen all blades with beautifully polished jig!

Freehand Peen all blades.

Lightly oil all blades

A busy day I think



Peening jig for an English scythe!

SCYTHING EVENTS

The current Covid-19 situation within the UK has resulted in all the season's major scything events being cancelled along with their respective training courses. Events taking place after July may be reinstated but this will depend on government advice regarding social distancing.

The event organizers have advised that the following events are cancelled for this year.

The SABI AGM

The Green Fair at Mulcheny, Somerset

The Shropshire Hills event

The Eastern Counties Scythe Festival

Gairloch Highland Gathering

The following events have not yet been cancelled

The Northern Scythe & Meadows Fair

Saturday 4th to Sunday 5th July 2020

Forest of Bowland: Bell Sykes Farm, Slaidburn BB7 3AQ.

Bell Sykes Farm is special in having an wonderful collection of unimproved and restored flower-rich grasslands. These will be open to explore on Saturday as a National Meadows Day event. There will also be associated meadow and conservation themed stalls plus scythe demonstrations.

On Sunday there will be the 5th Northern Scythe competition. Competitors from all over the country are invited to enjoy mowing in this beautiful location and to experience what it's like to mow a flower rich upland hay meadow sward. It's a joy!

Tickets for this event available on the gate (no need to book).

See the web site [https://](https://www.meadowconnections.co.uk/)

www.meadowconnections.co.uk/ for more information

Scottish Scything Festival

Sat 25th July 2020

Blackhaugh Community Farm, Perthshire

For more information visit [https://](https://blackhaughcommunityfarm.weebly.com/scythe-festival.html)

blackhaughcommunityfarm.weebly.com/scythe-festival.html or contact Rob Brodie at

robmaculture@yahoo.co.uk

International Events:

Ryghsetra, Norway. Friday 3rd July to Sunday 5th July

See full page advertisement on back page.

COURSE DIRECTORY

Please note that due to the current Covid-19 pandemic all courses are subject to cancellation and you should check with the course provider regarding cancellation or revised dates.

Teachers marked with an asterisk usually have scythes for sale.

Northern England

Steve Tomlin*

stevetomlin8@gmail.com

SteveTomlinCrafts.wordpress.com/learn-to-scythe

Practical, fun courses covering all the skills to use and maintain your scythe. I am an internationally respected scythe expert, author of *Learn to Scythe* and sell scythe kits. I can travel to teach you or your group at your venue at £80/day. Subscribe to my newsletter for more dates.

Email stevetomlin8@gmail.com to book

Learn to Scythe 31st, May 2^{4th} July at Slaidburn, Lancashire

Learn to Scythe 22nd June near Derby book at <http://www.greenwooddays.co.uk/product/scything-22-june/>

16th August in North Wales book at <https://woodlandskillscentre.uk/product/scything-august-20/>

28th August at Sedburgh, Cumbria

Peening workshop tbc at Slaidburn, Lancashire

John Robson Grundy

Can be contacted at wildernesstamed@hotmail.co.uk.

www.wildernesstamed.com 07827 958361

John has been teaching and demonstrating scything for over 7 years across the North East as well as training volunteers and staff for National Trust, Borders Forest Trust and Wildlife Trusts nationally.

Please contact me directly to arrange your own one to one course or to ask about pre arranged courses as they are organised in 2020.

Jez Hastings*

Peak District jeremyhastings@me.com

Way of the Scythe Courses www.jeremyhastings.uk have been scything and land working since 1981.

Please check website for course information post lockdown.

Wales & Borders

David Kuegler*

Parry's Meadow, Orcop Hill, Hereford

david.kuegler@btinternet.com

Learn Scything, Sharpening & Peening, cutting meadows, mowing around trees. Steve Tomlin's 'Learn to Scythe book', is covered. Home cooked lunch on course (John Letts 'bread'). Will travel to teach in your Field or Orchard. 1:1 or up to 1:6.

Scything equipment provided, Scythe Kits to purchase; made to fit peening pony, meadow products & new personal handmade snaths.

Learn to Scythe @ Orcop Hill, Hereford, Course Dates: (from £60.00, including lunch)

May 23rd, July 25th, Scything, Sharpening & Peening

May - August drop-in-evening sessions, Wednesdays 5:30 - 7:30pm

August 1st Peening Day

August www.humberwoodland.co.uk; Please call or email for details.

Phillip Batten*

Dyfed Permaculture Farm Trust, Carmarthenshire scythecymru@yahoo.co.uk www.scythecymru.co.uk
Learn to scythe or improve your skills. Workshops give you lots of hands on experience; a chance to "try before you buy" or get your own scythe set up well; a visit to a smallholding where the scythe is integral to the management and is used year round in a variety of situations.

Scythe Cymru run scythe and peening courses on a smallholding in West Wales throughout the summer. For current availability see <https://scythecymru.co.uk/courses/> or contact Michelle on info@scythecymru.co.uk

Phillip Lewis*

Mold phljoinery@googlemail.com Instagram:

[smithy_farm_](https://www.instagram.com/smithy_farm_)

Available to teach individuals or groups in North Wales.

Simon Cooter

Stiperstones and Downton Gorge NNRs, Rigmoores, Pennerley, Minsterley, Shropshire SY5 0NE

Tel: 01743 792294: Mob:07967 693507:

Simon.Cooter@naturalengland.org.uk

Introduction to scything course – Saturday 25th July, 10am-3.30pm £50

Learn the joy of scything at this one day course run by Natural England site manager Simon Cooter. The course will include how to set up and use the scythe in different conditions, as well as the principles of haymaking and meadow management.

South West England

Kevin Austin*

Skyegrove, Herodsfoot, Cornwall/SW Devon.

07943653825

www.skyegrove.co.uk kevin@skyegrove.co.uk

Learn to scythe with a relaxed efficient style with an Austrian scythe, we can come and deliver to groups (6max) on your own land or attend courses below.

16th May and

10th July

15th August

Please check the website for more detail.

Richard Brown*

richardjbrown556@gmail.com

Practical scything & grassland management. Tuesday 16th June 2020. near Bath BA1 8AJ. An opportunity to learn to scythe on Emorsgate's wild flower farm on the edge of the Cotswolds. Mow our restored flower rich grasslands, surrounded by a patchwork of small fields, orchard, woodland and hedgerows. For details and to book online go here <https://wildseed.co.uk/articles/2020/01/08/scythe-and-grassland-courses-and-events-2020>

Andi Rickard*

andirickard@me.com 07581 239453

Somerset

UK Scything Champion 2019, Ladies Champion for 9 years. Eight years experience teaching scythe skills throughout the South West.

Course dates and venues booked by arrangement, one-to-one sessions or group bookings.

Please go to www.somersetscytheschool.com for more details and how to apply.

Chris Riley*

(North Dorset) chris@pratensis.net 07719 691312
www.pratensis.net
 Available for scythe training in the Wessex area, and beyond.
 For the following beginners' courses, see the relevant web sites for info and to book. Scythes available for purchase.
 Lords of the Manor Hotel, Gloucestershire. Sunday 26th July 2020 www.cotswoldsruralskills.org.uk
 Lords of the Manor Hotel, Gloucestershire. Sunday 16th August 2020 www.cotswoldsruralskills.org.uk
 Lords of the Manor Hotel, Gloucestershire. Tuesday 8th September 2020 www.cotswoldsruralskills.org.uk
 Langford Lakes, Wiltshire. Thursday 10th September 2020. <https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/Event/scything-course1>

Adrian Thomas

North Devon Scythe Tutor
 Contact: adrianthomas59@gmail.com

South East England**Stephan Gehrels**

Brighton admin@brightonpermaculture.org.uk
 Scything Workshop, Stanmer Park, Brighton BN1 9PZ, 23 May, 10:00-17:00, £56-£175 (depending on income).
 A practical and theoretical workshop covering the history, use and maintenance of the scythe, enabling the participant to use a scythe competently. (There is also an option to volunteer the following day.) For full details and bookings: brightonpermaculture.org.uk/scything-workshop/

Claire White

clairewhitegardens@gmail.com Mobile: 07899 843 061
 I offer demonstrations, individual and group training in Essex and the south east for beginners and improvers.
 Essex Scythe Weekend 2020 Scythe practice, meadow management and peening, camping available. Booking and more info: chesmcgee@gmail.com

Nicole Clough*

Oxfordshire. good_clean_mud@icloud.com
 I provide training in the use, maintenance and joy of the Austrian scythe. I run one day courses in Oxfordshire and surrounding counties and also offer tailor made sessions.
 Sun 21st July 2019 – Cogges Manor Farm, Witney, Oxfordshire www.cogges.org.uk
 Sat 17th Aug 2019 – Ragmans Farm, Lydbrook, Gloucestershire www.ragmans.co.uk/home/
 Sun 8th Sep 2019 – Cogges Manor Farm, Witney, Oxfordshire www.cogges.org.uk/
 Places on the above courses are £60 per person, with an additional cost of £20 if equipment hire is required. To discuss your requirements or make a booking, please get in touch.

Jez Hastings*

jeremyhastings@me.com
 Way of the Scythe Course and traditional haymaking www.jeremyhastings.uk I have been scything and land working since 1981. Teachers course 2010. All tools/scythes supplied for course and for sale.
 Way of the Scythe and Orchard haymaking 1-7 September Bumblebee Trust Kent

Ida Fabrizio*

London ifabrizio@hotmail.com
 I have been teaching scything with an Austrian Scythe for individuals and community groups in many diverse interesting spaces and projects across the capital. I show how to set up, maintain and move your body to use the scythe.

East Anglia**Richard Brown***

Kings Lynn, Norfolk. richardjbrown556@gmail.com
 Botanist, ecologist and seedsman offers scythe courses and tuition.
 Can tailor courses for individuals or groups to include practical scythe instruction plus wildflower meadow and grassland management.
 Visit Emorsgate Seeds website <https://wildseed.co.uk/> articles/events or email the address above for more details.
 Introduction to scything & meadow management. Wed 26th June 2019, Norfolk
 Introduction to scything and orchard management. Wed 3rd July 2019, Norfolk
 Each course is £60

Scotland**Steve Tomlin***

stevetomlin8@gmail.com
SteveTomlinCrafts.wordpress.com
 Steve has taught several courses in Scotland, as far north as Caithness. Email to book a group workshop at your own venue and Steve will travel to you which is much more economical. Read about my scythe course near Ellen, Aberdeenshire. <https://stevetomlincrafts.wordpress.com/2013/08/19/scythe-course-in-ne-scotland/>

Rob Brodie

Fife, robmaculture@yahoo.co.uk,
 Beginners scything workshops suitable for anyone interested in using a scythe to manage green spaces.
 Please email to arrange a workshop and for more information.
 Saturday May 25th, 9am till 1pm – Beginners Workshop at Lochiehead Farm, North East Fife. £30 per person. To book a place contact Rob – robmaculture@yahoo.co.uk
 Sunday 16th June, 9am till 1pm – Beginners Workshop at Murton Farm Trust, Angus. Contact sophie@murtontrust.org.uk to book a place.

Ireland**Chris Hayes***

Wexford, Ireland, chris@badgershillforestry.ie
 Learn to use a scythe in the wonderful environment of the Irish National Heritage Park in Ferrycarrig, Wexford. See <http://www.irishheritage.ie/> for details about booking, payment and all our wonderful courses!
 An Introduction to the Austrian Scythe Saturday May 11th and Saturday June 1st 75 Euro per class
 Book Here:- <http://www.irishheritage.ie/product-category/courses-2019/scything-with-chris-hayes/>
 Scythes available to buy all year round and private tuition available at The Irish National Heritage Park www.irishheritage.ie

National

If you have a group of friends and your own grass, the

following teachers can be booked to come and teach at your own location.

Steve Tomlin*

Cumbria stevetomlin8@gmail.com
stevetomlincrafts.wordpress.com/learn-to-scythe
 Courses across the UK for beginners and improvers, run by an internationally respected mower and tutor. I have been teaching since 2010 and am the author of the Learn to Scythe book, the first practical instruction manual for the Austrian scythe.

Jez Hastings*

Peak District jeremyhastings@me.com
www.jeremyhastings.uk

Way of the Scythe Courses, traditional haymaking, tree planting and meadow restoration www.jeremyhastings.uk
 I have been scything and land working since 1981.
 Teachers course 2010.
 All tools/scythes supplied for course and for sale.

Chris Riley*

chris@pratensis.net 07719 691312
 Experienced scythe trainer based in North Dorset. I mainly deliver beginners' courses in the Wessex area, but sometimes it can be feasible to go further afield. Austrian scythes available for purchase. See web site for more information www.pratensis.net

Teaching Learning Making Helping - Year '019'

Anon

Ok this is probably the same for most of us. Firstly I don't consider myself a good scyther, I'm still very much learning, Sadly for me I'm a very slow learner. The funniest part is the more I teach the more I learn. Or put it another way the more you get involved the more you get back. But then also the more you teach the more you have to do, and then afterwards you are wrecked and totally exhausted.

Focusing so much on getting people to understand and being able to sharpen their blades and know why it is sharp and not sharp. And getting so anal that one puts magic marker on the edge (both sides) to be able to understand.

Teaching all ages is fun: my range this year is 4 to 70+, with an eight year old doing amazingly well with any scythe he could get his hands on. Of course you don't let the 4 year old have free range, but he does get to feel how good it is to swoooooosh with the scythe. Being assertive with people has been another big lesson.

But funnily enough teaching is a funny term because really one is trying to get the 'new-scyther' to teach themselves, after all you want them to have ownership of what they are learning. Steve's book is extremely helpful in facilitating this process: . Everyone I teach has a 'Learn to Scythe' to refer to after the course. Therefore there is no need for photos or notes to be taken during the day.

Last course October this year was scything bracken up Snowdon (ok in Snowdonia). Well the interesting thing about bracken is everyone loves to do it, it's that destructive gene we all have and it produces instant results, with a huge change in landscape. But, it easily produces hackers or bad scythers or non-scythers. You may as well have a bloody machete instead. So one has to stay



off the bracken for as long as possible and then come back to grass afterwards; and the great part of a scythe with bracken is you can go straight to the bottom of it and create a windrow. Lunch time was sitting outside a boat shed looking over to Barmouth with sun and a beautiful horizontal oak tree above. Good craic too.

Learning from teaching is always interesting, people are all different and learn so so differently, including the teacher. How to feel the burr on the back of the blade and to tell how its gone, and is more sensitive than using your fingers. Better (burr feely) nerves in your palm but it is dangerous.

So now one is looking at all aspects of scything to see what can better understood: As we get older our bodies don't compensate so easily, and we are not so agile either. But having watched and learnt from someone like Martin Kibblewhite who is still scything in his 90s (has 2 scythe-medals) one can always learn a few tricks from if not just plain simple enjoyment of scything: He has been a great inspiration to many in Hereford and beyond. and prides himself that he got arrested at Greenham Common all those years ago. So none of us have an excuse not to regularly pick up our scythe and just go for a hack, ok an extra slice or two and begin to meditate once into the swing.

Probably my last sale of '019 a Birthday Scythe Kit was to the partner of an unsuspecting to be scyther, He turned up in his recent purchase, one of those sparkling electric jobbies, announcing he just gone green, so the challenge was in 2 hours to see if he could leave even greener. So we took him thru' the normal course rapidly setting up his scythe and getting him onto some grass as quickly as possible, finishing with some peening and re-peening his blade. No time to re-test the blade! The following day he made his own peening pony with some

'anger' mowing to follow, very happy with his new birthday present (that's the scything one, not the elect' bells and whistles one). and of course he can fall back on Steve's book to remind him of all the bits that didn't sink in. I hope he does a re-fresher course thought so bad habits can be ironed out.

As a woodworker there are lots of 'scraps' that never can never be parted with, so some re-use in peening ponies.

New Products in the pipeline: More Snaths, Good Peening ponies, Whet-Stone Holders(Wooden), Yes I had a brief conversation with Steve T, at Stockport Railway Station (between trains) recently and I told him about my idea of holding the stones, ie more than one cause we really need two or 3 stones with water. Funnily this is coming about for me because they pull my trousers down and I'm fed up with it. His solution was use Alder or another 'wet' type wood. and I want a belt holder too not those hooks you see. So I have to get cracking and test it which means oiling it and getting dry so the oil does not leech back into the water/stone.

I made my first laminated Scythe in 2012 and have finally made myself a new stiffer laminated ash/carbon scythe, it's

lighter(only because I tuned it by shaving some wood off to tune/balance), it is noticeably stiffer especially in the swing action, which is taking a bit of getting used too and develop new muscle memory, at least the handles won't be wobbling about like my '012 one. and now recently we will be able to use laminate woven flax with plant based glues, which will so much better.

2019 has been a wonderful learning, making and helping year, I feel privileged to be one of many who get pleasure being able to find a niche and pass on a craft and get better at doing it. Some of the processes are life long and some are only in the last decade but they all add-up. It doesn't stop here, I first learnt a bit on Tai Chi, with Phil Batten in Wales, I use this on my courses, some agree some don't. One has to look after their health and some bits of our bodies as we get older we need a bit of extra help. so exercises to help strengthen and to keep more mobile, as our bodies want the opposite. The fun part of this in 1/2hour morning routine is that breakfast tastes so so much better!!

I'm looking forward to the 2020 season. Who knows what new

No Nuts by *Adrian Thomas*

Here's a tip for demonstrators and trainers
What is more frustrating than losing an M6 bolt in cut grass or mislaying your spanner, whilst adjusting the snath handles? Especially when you have a gaggle of trainees hovering around you, or a queue of eager "must have go" people itching to knock scything off their bucket lists?

I'm sure I'm not the only tutor to find themselves in this situation. To save carrying spares, a spanner and some time, here are two very simple modifications I have adopted and wish to share with the SABI community.

For my demonstration set up and training kits, I have swapped the handle fixing nut and bolt for a wing nut and a wing bolt. If a pupil has purchased a kit then I leave the handles as they come.

First a note of caution. The length of wing bolt required for the bottom handle of my older snath is around 50mm, however the bottom handles I purchased this year require a bolt of around 55mm.



No matter what bottom handles you have, check the bolt length required for each handle before ordering wing bolts or modifying the handles.

M6 wing nuts are easily available – for example, Toolstation sell a pack of 10 for £1.48. Toolstation quality is not the best but their delivery cost (free for orders over £10) and speed is unrivalled.

M6 wing bolts of 50mm length are easy to source from UK suppliers – around 50p each from eBay.



The 55mm wing bolts are either comparatively expensive or have to be imported (China) at around 80p each. The 60mm wing bolts are available from the UK, with stainless steel ones coming in at £1.40 each (ouch!).

I imported a pack of 8 at 60p each in plain steel.

If the wing bolts are over length for your snath then you have two choices, either use a hacksaw to shorten them or use a 6mm spur bit to drill out a few



millimetres from the handle. A tip for cutting to length is to run an M6 plain nut on to the bolt, cut the bolt to length and then use a fine file to cut a lead into the thread and then remove the nut which will remove any burrs/filings from the thread.

I have used both methods but drilling out a few millimetres of wood is much quicker if you have a number of handles to modify. I cannot see this modification seriously compromising the strength of the handle.

IF YOU DO MODIFY A HANDLE IN THIS WAY THEN IT HAS TO BE AT YOUR OWN RISK.

Managing Bracken by hand *by* *Mark Allery*

If you've been managing bracken by hand in recent years it's likely been a lonely occupation. Chemical control using the herbicide formulation Asulox has seemed to be the first resort for most rather than a last resort.

in lowland areas and nature reserves. Why allow aerial spraying and not manual application? You tell me? Managing bracken by hand might not be so lonely this year? Though as I write it does look as if with the pandemic coming - perhaps it will continue to be a



The herbicide was banned by the European Union in 2011 but has been used every year since in the UK under an annual Emergency Authorisation. This year the authorisation continues to permit aerial spraying but no longer permits the manual application of the herbicide routinely used by those controlling bracken

solitary occupation, albeit with more of us working on our own?

The good news is that although bracken has a reputation as a persistent invader it can be beaten and the rhizome (root) is actually quite sensitive. The only thing you need to be is more persistent than the bracken!

Over many centuries bracken was harvested as a crop, mainly as bedding and then after using as bedding as a compost which probably kept it under control. It's also been used for thatching and burnt in summer for the ash, rich in potassium, to use in medieval glass and for soaps and lyes.

No longer harvested and with grazing on marginal land ended and as farming intensifies the bracken has

It's very pleasant to mow, and in all the years I've been mowing it I have yet to be bitten by a tick - probably because the scythe keeps the plants at a good distance. It mows easiest when under half grown, below 1 metre (or 3 foot). Mowing early in the season will not have a great impact but it does help to keep the plant from growing too tall too soon.

Mowing when half grown, typically as the third frond unfurls is often thought to be of most impact. Even

then you may see regrowth of more fronds than you cut, particularly if the weather is damp, but don't despair - the rhizome is shooting from all the remaining buds and cutting these after a few weeks will have most impact upon the next years growth. In future years the growth will be lower and sparser. Even easier to mow!

Happy mowing!



proliferated in recent decades. Nowadays bracken is gaining in popularity again for making compost and with a lot less effort it makes an excellent mulch.

If you can't harvest it as a crop then just about anything you choose to do to it will have some effect. You can pull it, whack it, stamp on it, cut it, roll it, drive over it and cattle will often graze the tender young fronds as well as poach it. Driving a tank over it is very effective I hear. But if you don't have a herd of tanks, or even cattle, then mowing large areas with the scythe, as has been done for centuries works well.



The Austrian Scythe

A useful tool in a hedge layer's armoury

by
Adrian Thomas

My scythe proved a very useful ally on a recent hedge laying job (known locally as steeping in sunny Devon). Usually the hedges my colleague and I are asked to tackle are either regularly flailed to leave a line of gappy "lollipops" or overstood, with all the hedge species looking for light amongst mature trees.

This job was different in that it had been flailed to such an extent as to be virtually non-existent. There were some large gaps between dead or damaged, short stemmed hedge species, each with a typical top knot of ragged growth caused by the flail.



This is a picture of the hedge after we had cleared the rank herbage and cut out the dead and diseased stems of the hedge species we wish to encourage. This hedge will now be allowed to grow on ready for laying next autumn/winter, with casting up and gapping up to follow.

The bank could have been cleared and replanted however the owners already had grants in place when we were asked for our assessment. Fortunately they had called us in early so that we could plan work over the two and a half(ish) winter seasons of the grant period. We could see hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn, interspersed with a few rotting oaks stumps putting out some courageous regrowth, however a lot of it was being shaded out by a heavy infestation of bracken, bramble and dog rose.

Using a 65cm Styria ditch bale with a Silicar whetstone providing a coarse edge angle, I cleared the lower bank and a strip at the base to give access. It was difficult to tell exactly how much useful material was available for laying before the bank was cleared of the invasive weeds. Therefore to lose potentially useful saplings to indiscriminate clearing with a brush cutter would have been wasteful. The scythe allowed me to be very selective in what was cut. I cleared around each

sapling so that they could either be laid into the hedge or relocated ready for gapping up once the hedge is laid and cast up.



First I mowed a swath along the base of the bank to remove the rank grass climbing into the bank.



Next to be tackled were the brambles and bracken. A tip for dealing with bramble given to me by Andi Rickard: slice through a small section of bramble about a foot from the ground and then slice through at the base. This helps deal with the tangled mess without putting too much strain on your snaith. Tackle a small section and clear away as you go. To reduce impact on the blade larger and older bramble stems should always be cut at an angle rather than straight across. I haven't broken a snaith using this technique – yet. Thank you Andi.

If I had wanted to remove the blackthorn saplings as

well then a bush blade would have been the better option. For this job the versatile Styria blade was ideal.



A sapling is just about visible amongst the grass and pennywort, which I was able to save thanks to careful use of the scythe.



These green bramble stems have been cut through at the base but could not be cleared with the scythe as they had grown into hedge on top of the bank. Time for the slasher and stout gloves!

First you shall cut your hay, when grasses stand
In flower, but running not to seed,
But even here rehearse the farmer's creed:
'Tis farmer, not the date, that calls the tune;
Better dry August hay than wet in June.
Have your folks working in the fields by dawn,
Your team of horses doubly spanned;
Leave the cut swath all day; and air by rake
Next morning, and, if weather still be set,
Gather to cocks for carting, but should wet
Flatten the cocks, then you shall tedd and shake
Again when sun returns. Now you shall build
Your rick in yard or field, as suits you best,
Choosing your stacker for a good man skilled,
Building on brushwood, sides both true and straight,
That when hay settles lines may still be plumb;
And let each forkful to its place be pressed

Another advantage of the scythe is that your bare hands are well away from the thorns when you reach in to "snick out" growth from under the blackthorn.



The scythe has done its job. I use the blunt tip of the slasher to dig/cut out the swollen base of the brambles and dog roses from which the new, pink shoots emerge.

Old News

Luddites against Scythes

"Machinery was not the only object of the rural Luddites' wrath. The sickle was being replaced by a scythe to which was fixed a wooden frame known as a cradle. Farmers could now employ one man with a scythe to do the work of six men with reaping hooks. Angry spalpeens in Kilkenny and Tipperary broke scythes and cradles as a protest against their use."

From
Irish Peasants, Violence and Political Unrest, 1780-1914
Edited by Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly, Jr.
Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 2003
(quoted from page 317)

Compliments of Steve Leppard

Summer - Haysel

And truly bound, by stacker's treading weight;
Widen your eaving-course; let roof be steep,
Bents sloping outwards, so to keep
Rain from the heart until the thatcher come.
Then you may leave your rick with easy mind;
Fodder for sweet-breathed cattle shall be sweet;
And whether nights be harsh or days be kind
Your hay shall neither moulder, rot, nor heat;
You shall not wake to hear your cowman shout,
As calving heifer calls him from his rest;
You shall not stare to see in fear and doubt
A blood-red feather flaming on the west,
And rousing all your people as you run,
Hasten too late towards your labour's pyre,
And see your reckoned trusses, hardly-won,
Blaze to the wanton merriment of fire.
An extract from *The Land* by V. Sackville-West

Russian Jig Realised

by
Colin Close

In the last Window I did an engineering study of a Russian peening jig which seemed to indicate that it could be an effective tool. I had hoped to be able to construct one of these in time for the winter meeting but it turned out that the electric drive which I had bought from eBay did not arrive so I was somewhat demotivated. After going through all the eBay rigmarole I finally discovered that it had been delivered to my old address in Sussex (They use your credit card address by default and I hadn't changed it at that time). I managed to contact the new owners via the estate agents but by the time I had been around the houses it was too late and they had thrown away the delivery slip so I had no way of tracing it.

After the winter meeting I was re-enthused and decided to have another go. I was unable to find the same model of electric cutter at a reasonable price but I found a similar one which duly arrived. My next problem was to obtain steel channel in small quantities..by chance a neighbour was doing some work on his workshop roof and had just taken delivery of some steel corrugated sheet. He called me over and said that I should meet his friend who turned out to be a director of the local steel supplier who assured me that small quantities of steel were no problem. So this was duly ordered.

Having picked up the steel sections ready cut to length it was time to find the steel for the anvil itself. Hunting through my scrapyards steel collection I found a single piece of tool steel, carbon steel which can be hardened, but unfortunately it was not long enough for the job. I found another piece of softer steel of similar section so I decided to sandwich the hard steel with two softer pieces to make up the length.

This meant welding; I have a stick welder..I know the principles.....weld three pieces of flat steel together...how hard can it be. 3 hours later and two coarse angle grinder disks later I had my steel sandwich. Did I know anything more about welding....not a lot! But I sure do know how to get the best out of an angle grinder. Next I shaped up the piece that was to carry the anvil this involved welding in a stud to carry the compression spring; some progress with the welding...I seemed to have graduated from Wren poo size blobs to something more akin to seagull droppings and almost as messy but at least the two parts were unlikely to separate.

Next came welding on the anvil to its swinging carrier. Unfortunately I had made an error in calculating the overall length of the anvil part (don't ask 'cus I don't know how I managed to get something so simple so completely wrong) fortunately it wasn't a complete disaster just requiring careful positioning of the anvil before welding. This went a little better as access was easier and there were areas where the welding was almost tidy other areas alas required the

use of a file as well as the trusty angle grinder. Finally the two pivot holes needed drilling luckily my drill was long enough to enable me to drill from one side to the other which made sure that the holes were in line. Here is a picture of the finished item which constituted a full days work.



Next was the anvil mount; this was relatively simple only requiring two pieces of steel channel to be welded together and drilling six 10mm holes; four holes to allow mounting to the base plate and two for the cross screw which supports the swinging anvil. The latter required very accurate marking out so that the holes were in line since I did not have a drill that was long enough to drill from one side to the other. All the holes were drilled with a cordless pistol drill.



Likewise the baseplate was straightforward only requiring five holes. Did I go to sleep while doing this?..had the virus got a grip on me? For some reason one of the holes in the group of four was in the wrong place, half a hole out..how that happened I do not know there must have been a mark that looked like a mark but wasn't? I had no choice but to weld up the

hole and redrill it (it's the one at the top right in the picture.) As can be seen from the picture the fifth hole ended up as a slot due to my guessing that it's position would be on the centreline of the group of four holes; WRONG! As I discovered later down the line.

Now it was time to fit the two items together..H'mm no chance this was going to work..an hours filing and



fettling later I was finally able to mate the two parts. Lesson learned don't mark out holes with a blunt pencil!

The "special stop" mentioned in the text had to be manufactured this would have been easy if I had access to a machine shop but by this time we had been in lockdown for ten days (we started a week earlier than others being in the "at risk" group). Once again the trusty angle grinder came to the rescue. With a slim cutting disk I was able to cut two 'V' shaped chunks out to start the deep slot the remainder being taken out with a file. The shallower slot was cut with a file.

With this part made all I had to do was to make the striker. I carved this out of a piece of the same tool steel as I used for the anvil it needed a 5mm hole through it so I had to purchase a carbide tipped drill to be able to drill through this very hard material. This completed all the original parts in the drawing.

While writing the previous article I had noted that the positioning of "special stop" was critical to the proper operation of the jig and that it would be an advantage if it's location could be made adjustable. I looked into this and worked out a simple clamp and testing it out by securing it with a 'G' cramp showed that the stop

was very securely held and that this was a viable



solution. Here's a picture of the clamp and one of it mounted on the swinging anvil. Looks ok doesn't it, you'll note the securing bolt and and adjuster (which you might recognise!)



I'm writing this article a week after I had reached the stage above having worked on the beast for every day of that week bar one! It all went very badly wrong and



I almost gave up. The clamp worked fine but I couldn't



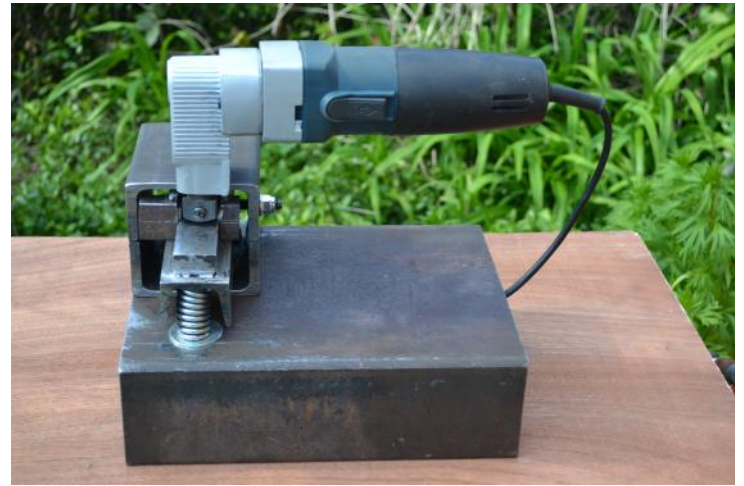
position the anvil because the head of the massive screw that held the electric cutter onto the jig was directly in line with the centre of the stop. Initially I thought I could clear it by cutting out a V shaped groove in the back of the swinging anvil and it all looked fine but when I came to offer up the electric cutter it became apparent that the striker would have to be shortened. That job was duly done and I put the thing together and fitted the striker which is bolted to a moving piston with a 5mm screw and square backing nut. When I tried to move the striker up and down it appeared to be jammed. Mortified I was, what now? The backing nut was interfering with the top of the 'special stop' which was becoming increasingly less special in my perception! If I cut enough of the 'not so special stop' away to clear the nut there would be virtually no metal left and the two sides of the stop would not remain properly in relation to each other. At this point I went and had several cups of tea in order to recover my composure.



Then it came to me why don't I just weld the stop to the clamp and once welded cut the middle out. This worked really well but I wasn't through the woods yet as there was insufficient adjustment on the clamp. After some more filing I was able at least to position the stop so that the edge of the blade could be peened though I couldn't adjust it to peen further in from the edge of the blade it looked though that some material from the face of the stop would bring it into position. That is for another day. Here's a pic of the finished item... and a close up of the business end of the device.



The stop adjuster; you may recognise the source of this part!



I suppose you all want to know whether it works?



Well there were some teething troubles. The first was that the striker kept working loose on the cutting tool. This was due to the end of the striker not being quite square to it's mounting causing excess loading on the retaining screw and loosening it. Some careful work with a diamond file corrected this and the addition of a "nylock" anti-vibration nut provided belt and braces.



Initial tests showed that the very edge of the blade was being curled up slightly. This warranted an inspection which showed that the striker had made an indentation in the anvil and that was curling the edge. I had hoped that the anvil had been hardened by the all the welding but clearly it wasn't so. I ground out the indentation and then built a small muffle forge to contain the piece so it could be raised to a high enough temperature for hardening unfortunately I didn't get it hot enough so although it was harder the depression still formed in the anvil. In use I discovered that the range of adjustment of the stop clamp was inadequate so I resolved this filing off front of the stop as it was not possible to make the adjustment slot longer in that direction.



With these issues corrected I ran a test on an 80cm Falci blade which needed it's edge peened. You can see the result in the pictures below. The blade had previously been hand peened on a bar anvil by my inexpert self and so the endge was somewhat uneven which shows up immediately after being run through the machine. You can see this at the right hand side of the picture where the edge has not been peened, also the edge seems slightly curled in this view and at other locations on the blade.



There is also a geometrical issue where the hooked end

of the blade causes the edge to not intersect with the striker which means it's not peened. The unequal size of each side of the stop was probably designed to compensate for this so it's likely that Russian blades in use at the time when the jig was designed had a different curvature. The following pictures illustrate the problem. This picture shows the stop close to blade tip.



Here the blade is shown further down from the tip.



Finally a view close to the centre of the blade



These pictures illustrate an issue with blade curvature; if the blade has a constant curvature then the jig works well providing the edge is set up properly under the striker.

As soon as the blade curvature increases there's a possibility that the blade edge can move away from the striker to such an extent that it is not peened at all. The jig design tries to compensate this by arranging for one side of the location stop to be wider than the other. The stop would have been optimised for the blades that were available in Russia at the time of the jigs design. Some experimentation with making the narrower part of the stop thinner or radiusing it may help solve the issue for blades now in common use. I experimented with adjusting the stop so that peening started further in from the edge of the blade to check

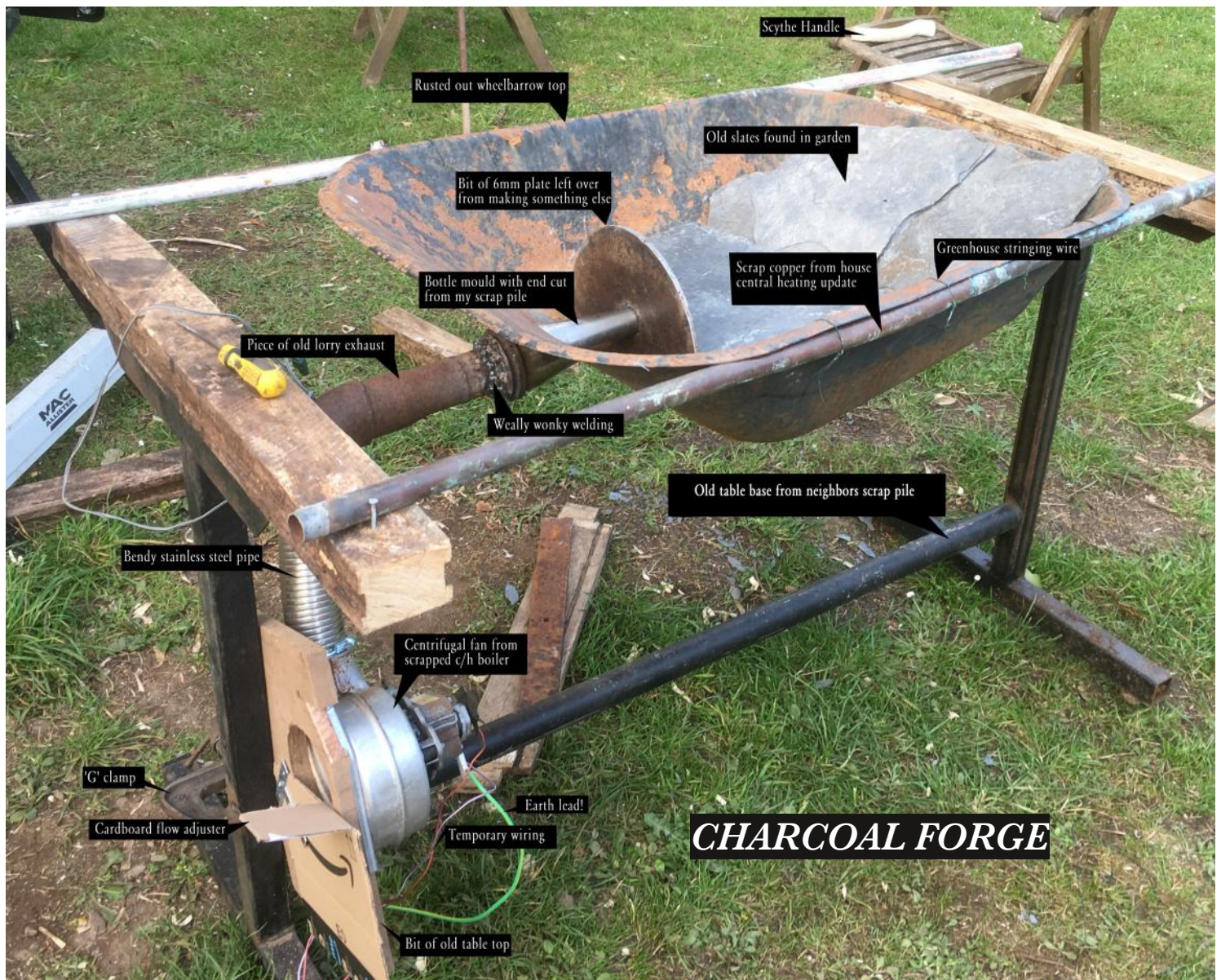
whether the jig had sufficient power to extend the blade edge. The result was inconclusive due to edge 'curling'. Time to fix this issue properly; I dismantled the device again and as anticipated the groove had reformed at the point where the striker hit the anvil. Tapping into my junk pile I cobbled up a charcoal forge. With this I heated the anvil up to cherry red heat and quenched it so now the steel is as hard as it can get. It's amazing what can be done with a pile of junk!

After a few uses it's become clear that the jig does work but needs "tuning up". The problem of the groove forming in the anvil is actually not a problem as long as the striker does not hit the anvil but only hits the blade material. I should have realised this from the outset. The height of the anvil can be adjusted such that the striker just kisses the anvil. The blade can easily be inserted in the gap between striker and anvil. In this mode only the blade ever gets hit by the striker. Unfortunately this introduces another issue in that the force applied to the edge becomes dependent on the thickness of the blade. However thinking this through it equates to a steady reduction of force as the blade gets thinner which is probably what is needed as striking a thin edge very hard may well crack it. There remains the major issue that the jig does not seem to have sufficient power to stretch the edge of the blade to any great extent. A

stronger coil spring made little difference. An issue with the design is that adjusting the spring moves the anvil away from the striker and this limits the range of adjustment. I fitted a stronger spring and added spacers to increase the spring pressure. This made no difference; perplexed I turned the machine over manually it then became obvious what was happening. The whole base of the assembly was bending under the load despite the heavy material it was made from. The drawings for the jig do actually show some extra parts which would act as bracing. I had not fitted them because I thought they were just provided for fixing it to a cart or barrow for transportation. That's what you get for being a smartass! I'll add these and perhaps some extra and see whether this solves the problem. Fixing the stop geometry to be suitable for the current European blade shapes should not be too hard.

If these two issues can be resolved this jig could prove a useful tool where many blades need peening as it takes less than 30 seconds to peen the edge of an 80cm blade and once done, a single lick with a stone will give a functional edge.

If anyone has any ideas on how to improve this jig then I'm all ears and would be happy to test them out just write to the SABI mailing list.



CHARCOAL FORGE

Eighth SABI Winter Meeting

Minutes of the Winter Gathering of the Scythe Association of Britain and Ireland held at The Threshold Centre, Gillingham, Dorset, SP8 5JQ on Saturday 25th January 2020

The Winter Gathering (scythe sleepover) was again held at the Threshold Centre, Gillingham and hosted brilliantly by Chris, Jen and the residents of the Threshold Centre – to whom we are extremely grateful for making us feel so welcome, keeping us warm and feeding us a great meal. Thank you!

The meeting part of the gathering on Saturday afternoon was timed to start at 2pm and finish by 7pm, in time for a winter gathering meal – provided by the Threshold Centre residents.

Those present: - Colin Close, Gill Barron, Andi Rickard, Simon Fairlie, Beth Tilston, Phil Batten, Kevin Austen, Richard Brown, Adrian Thomas, Mary Ellis, Chris Riley, Jim McVittie, David Keugler & Mark Allery (takes the blame for these minutes).

The SABI meeting followed the usual agenda circulated in advance by Richard Brown. By mutual agreement extra time was allocated to discussion of Scythe teaching, courses and safety with particular reference to the Green Scythe Fair (GSF). Issues relating to the detailed organisation and planning of the GSF (which fall outside of the brief of SABI) however were deferred to the GSF Scythe working group for separate consideration. A GSF Scythe meeting took place the following morning chaired by Mary Ellis.

- (1) **Apologies for Absence** - Jez Hastings, Steve Tomlin, Simon Damant, Peter Blackwell

Gill explained that Jez Hastings could not attend because their daughter Morwenna, who suffered from a long-term illness, had sadly taken her own life very recently. For all of us at the meeting this was tragic news and Jez, Tink and their family were in all our thoughts. Monkton Wyld will be planting a fruit tree in the walled garden in memory of Morwenna and offered to let SABI take part in this memorial – the offer was gratefully accepted by the meeting.

- (2) **Minutes of the last gathering and matters arising** - The minutes of the last winter meeting were accepted unanimously. There were no matters arising.

- (3) **Membership and Treasurer's Update**

Treasurers Update - Chris presented both a summary of accounts for 2019 and also a useful overview of the last six years of accounts. Membership subscriptions are slightly up on last year. Expenditure, primarily upon the website and the wintermeet is also slightly up. Total assets at the end of 2019 were £35070.35 with a small surplus over the year of £194.23. Some purchases from the GSF remain to be reimbursed (catering equipment, team trophy). In principle SABI should reimburse members for agreed expenditure, then if members wish to make a donation, they are free to do so. The level of Unity Trust Bank charges was raised (AR). In discussion it was agreed that while it is always worth looking to reduce them the level seems in line with other banks, there are not many options for small associations and Unity Trust Bank specialises in the not for profit sector.

Membership update - Chris has been amazing in keeping so many different roles and activities going. But it's not sustainable and he has been keen to divest a number of the hats he wears, particularly for the membership activities which can be divided up to make things easier for others to take on.

Beth agreed to take on the monitoring of the Website and the Googlegroups.

Chris suggested that promoting membership should be discussed. There was a constructive discussion and the topic deserves to be addressed in future meetings.

Gill circulated copies of the slips that she inserts along with scythe shop shipments and encouraged everyone to do the same at meetings, courses and events as well as when supplying scythes.

Gill requested that SABI have a table in or alongside the scythe marquee during the GSF because people ask about membership and renewals.

Action: GSF crew to help organise

Mary asked about the difference between members and non-members which seems to be rather diffuse. The discussion agreed that membership primarily provides the ability to participate and/or contribute for those wanting to become involved in scything and associated activities. Richard reminded us that we are aiming to foster/facilitate scything rather than organise scything. Colin observed that promoting to new members is healthy and different from renewals.

GDPR is ongoing – though greatly simplified by the streamlined membership approach. The main remaining item is to prune out any remaining old contacts from the database.

Chris then passed this hat onto Mary who has kindly offered, and has now become, the new membership secretary – after some discussion of the best style of hat to be worn!

(4) Annual review of Core aims and Objectives

Communications

Windrow – There can only be a Windrow if there is content to fill it. Everyone was reminded to provide short articles on topics such as

How I started scything

Gear and Equipment

History

Interesting people and events (Simon F agreed to write a short article on the late Mike Zair)

Regional Coordinators – After a short discussion the meeting decided to take down the regional coordinators page on the website. A move towards using those who provide courses and do demonstrations or organise events as contacts was discussed. It was suggested there is still a need for a list of contacts (Andi). Though GDPR does place constraints upon the ability to do this without making the membership process more difficult (Jim).

Media - Facebook Group – keeps on rolling and adding members. Facebook is not for everyone in the scythe community, but those that do use it find it useful and it is open to both members and non-members which does help to bring people onboard.

Broadcast Media – GQT (Gardeners Question Time – Radio 4) often mentions scythes. This should be encouraged and perhaps GQT could be invited to an event, such as the GSF – though it's not strictly gardening (Mary). Simon had already contacted GQT about the GSF.

Action: Mary send Simon list of GQT presenters, and follow up invitation to GSF

Website – is currently maintained by Steve (courses), Richard and Chris. Chris will hand over the Membership page to Mary and take over the Events page instead. Colin will be added to allow posting and editing of content. Suggestion that Chris might act as go between the SABI and GSF websites to help keep the same info on both (Mary).

Demonstrations at events – Providing demonstrations at events has proved to be an effective way of engaging newcomers to scything and raising awareness. Kevin (Cornwall), Andi (Somerset), Richard/Jim (Norfolk) and Mark (Sussex) have all found demonstrations at events and locations to be very popular, particularly when combined with some element of 'Having-a-go'.

Events 2020

Green Scythe Fair	Thorney Lakes	14th June
Eastern Counties	Wimpole	20/21st June
Northern Scythe Fair	Forest of Bowland	4th/5th July
Shropshire	Nr Craven Arms	11th July
Scotland	Dunkeld	24th/25th July

* Also not to be forgotten – the Gairloch Gathering – last weekend in June, which includes a scythe competition

Banner/Flags for Events – the SABI banner/flag/sails have been very effective at providing a focus and location for SABI activities at events. The logistics of passing them from one event to the next is complicated. It was decided that at least 4 more sails should be bought (Gill offered to get a quote) and subject to the price being acceptable one each should be made available to the main event organisers and also to those who regularly run demonstrations at events.

Action: Gill & Committee – now completed.

Equipment – or Much Ado about a Jig! For anyone who is not up to speed on this subject, the recent change of supplier of peening jigs has proven controversial to some. The steel anvil has proven to be too soft and is readily marked by the cap in use resulting in a marked ridge on the anvil. There remains some disagreement over just how much this matters. Some felt that those using the cheaper (and softer) jigs may not be peening to the same high standard as those using the Fux (expensive) jigs and may be happy with the lesser result given the lower price. Others felt that the worse result from the cheaper jig doesn't help the users to get better at peening. The option to restart importing the Slovakian jigs to be finished by David Keugler to his superb standard exists. Action: David and Simon will investigate.

Courses and Training - The discussion primarily revolved around the provision of courses at the Green Scythe Fair and feedback on these courses. This is necessarily a summary of the discussion to avoid any conflict with the notes of the following meeting on the organisation and planning of the scythe events and courses at the GSF. It is planned that the Landworkers' Alliance will be putting on a skills-based event during the setup of the GSF. Security on the Saturday, and possibly the Friday will be improved in order to manage the increasing numbers of people attending different events during the setup of the GSF.

Last year a lot of effort had been put into the planning and organisation of the scythe events at the GSF by the scythe crew. It was generally agreed that this had benefitted the event and everyone noticed the improvements in planning and reduction in levels of stress aimed at allowing more people to take on roles and help reduce the load on just a few people. This should also make it easier to work successfully with the LWA and others (Craft workers) during the setup and continue to improve the inter-working with the GSF crew and committee at the same time.

2019 was the last year that Christiane would be teaching at the GSF. The end of an era! There is an opportunity to review the planning and organisation of the scythe courses at the GSF for 2020 as well as take on the feedback from the courses.

Unlike the great majority of courses, where course providers are responsible for all aspects of their courses the GSF has multiple courses running on multiple days with tutors having differing approaches and most of all a very wide range of student experience and capability, particularly for the 2-day improvers course. This is a complicated equation as the Improvers' course can struggle to attract enough participants to make it viable but in opening it up to keep the numbers viable the range of ability and experience can be too great to allow all participants a satisfactory experience.

There will be detailed discussions of how best to improve this between the tutors and Simon (sponsor for want of a better term) and fed into the overall planning of the event with the GSF scythe crew.

Safety - The scythe events at the GSF have happened with only the occasional injury over many years – including the incident with the hay-rack a few years ago and a few accidents with blades. Which is impressive given the number of sharp tools being wielded and the number of people enjoying themselves! But things can always be improved and it's important that improvements actually do benefit the event and its organisation not just make things more difficult. In 2019 a couple of incidents occurred within the arena, one involving putting on a red blade guard – which can happen to anyone anywhere – and learning from them will help to improve future events.

With the increase in numbers attending during the setting up period we may need to introduce a simple system of signing into the scythe arena on the event day, to help to instil ground rules for a basic level of safety, particularly around the heats and scythe racks. At the same time this should help to reinforce the need to keep all scythes and sharp tools inside the arena – and additional signage should be placed in the scythe marquee to this effect where we can help to ensure that those buying scythes on the day are aware of the rules.

[5] AOB - Bracken Management (Mark) –

For some years the chemical Asulam, in the formation Asulox and used to spray bracken, has been banned by Europe. Its use on bracken has been permitted annually under a derogation by the UK government. For 2020 this derogation will only apply to Asulam sprayed by helicopter (yes, really! Go figure!) and not to any other method of applying. As many wildlife trusts and other organisations have been using chemicals to manage bracken – we may well see a lot more interest in managing bracken by hand. The scythe is an excellent tool for managing bracken, and has been used for centuries to harvest bracken as a crop, so get ready to enjoy cutting bracken as well as grass! (and yes I did agree to write an article for the windrow on this).

[6] DONM - The Tenth AGM of the Scythe Association of Britain and Ireland will be held in the Scythe Tent at the Green Scythe Fair on Saturday 13th June 2020.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to Chris (and the Threshold Centre residents) for hosting the Winter Gathering and – after the GSF discussions – was followed by an excellent vegetarian meal provided by residents of the Threshold Centre.



Foto: Solveig Bakken

Course of Traditional Mowing Techniques at Ryghsetra in Norway

Course in Biodiversity Conservation and Traditions Related to The Cultural Landscape

Nedre Eiker Bygdekvinnevalg and the land-owners at Ryghsetra invite to a mowing course at Ryghsetra at Hagatjern in Drammen municipality. The mowing course takes place for the 27th time. Solsetra campsite is neighboring property with meadow meadow, and here there is accommodation and dining. There will also be time for swimming in Hagatjern.

The course aims to strengthen the knowledge of the practical management of biologically valuable cultural landscape. Emphasis is placed on meadow management, with specialization in geology, plants and insects. For all activities, the 30-acre herb-rich meadow is a school room and practice field.

It will be introduced to the scythe as tools, grinding and turned as key topics. The grass should also be dried to high, so putting up and hanging on racks is part of the course.

Another theme is deciduous trees. We carry out the rigging of a tree and make a notch for animal feed.

Saturday night is everybody invited to a mowing party /Slåttefest. Local traditional food is served throughout the course and we bake bread in the stone oven in the middle of the meadow.

The course is a meeting place for people with an interest in the cultural landscape where practical knowledge is as important as theory.

Course fee and registration

Adults

NOK 2,000 (accommodation and meals)

Children under 15 years

NOK 600 (accommodation and meals).

2-4 person per bedroom, bedlinen must be brought.

Participants only Friday or Saturday

NOK 600 meals (lunch and dinner) and course

Slåtteenga is located about 15 km from Drammen.
Train and bus to Mjøndalen station.

For more information about the course

Contact owner of the farm Ryghsetra:

Aud Harstad Bakken

Mobil: 913 19 612 E-mail: ahabakken@gmail.com



DRAMMEN
KOMMUNE

[Facebook.com/ryghsetra](https://www.facebook.com/ryghsetra)

VIRTUAL SCYTHING COMPETITION

No Events! No Competitions! No Problem!

Just enter the SABI virtual scything competition
and
meet and compete with other scythers.

How to enter.

All you need to do is produce a short video,
the only requirement for content is that it must feature working with a scythe.

The video must have been produced during the 2020 mowing season and should be submitted before midnight on 14th July

All videos will be collected together at a single location and released simultaneously to a YouTube channel for voting.

Voting will end on the 31st August at which time the votes and viewing statistics will be collated and examined by three adjudicators and the winners announced.

The winning video will be featured on the Scything Association website and links will be added to the second and third places winners which will link back to YouTube.

You will need to create a Google account (if you do not already have one) before you can upload your video. This will associate your file with your details. All videos should be uploaded to this location. You must have an account before you can upload files.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tS1gE6HJnfE7Xp-6mBDFocwgbVtb7UZr?usp=sharing>

If you have any difficulties uploading your file or you would like to become a member of SABI you can reach us on our website <http://scytheassociation.org/#contact>
Alternatively you can email us info@scytheassociation.org

Although there is no limit on how long the video should last you should bear in mind that the adjudicators will look at the viewing statistics of the videos. If your video is too long it may be at a disadvantage as people may not watch it all the way through.

Just to get you started here are some possibilities.

- 5 x 5 metre plot mowing sprint
- Mowing with ease and style
- Mowing in Context-featuring a location or functional context
- Most evocative film of scything
- Most educational film
- Best novice film- Just a film using a phone; no fancy stuff
- Best Socially distanced scything
- Best High Jinks video
- Most unlikely place to scythe
- Mowing with a homemade snath made during lockdown
- Anything else as long as it features a scythe

