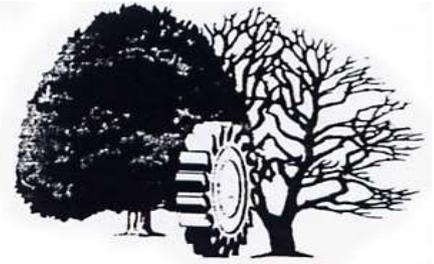


*Friends of Coed Y Felin
Cyfeillion Coed y Felin*



Traditional skills learnt in Coed-y-felin

Unfortunately our planned work and instruction on the traditional art of hedge laying due to take place in January was postponed because of snow and heavy frosts which, apart from making the work very uncomfortable, would have damaged the hedge we were to lay. So, two months later, a small group of volunteers lead by Cardiff Ranger Raj Chettri made a start.

Hedge laying goes back many centuries and is a way of controlling, enhancing and making stronger an old overgrown and “gappy” hedge to make them stock proof. There are about 42 different styles of hedge laying dependant on which part of the country you are in and what you want the hedge to protect/stop. Very often a county will have its own style such as Brecon and Glamorgan. We have constructed a simple hybrid!

When planning to lay a hedge, you must look at the lye of the land as you always lay uphill and thin out any undergrowth such as bramble so you can see clearly what is there. Trimming back any wide spreading branches you then select the main stems that you are going to lay down to form the hedge. These are called “pleachers”. To lay these pleachers the first step is to use the axe or billhook, to chop part of the way through the base of the trunk. The trick here is to cut precisely, just far enough into the tree to allow it to be laid horizontally, but to leave the bark, some cambium (the layer immediately beneath the bark) and a little sapwood (the living cells that surround the heartwood) so that the horizontal part of the tree will survive the process. Then the tree is gently pushed down to the line of the hedge. It is surprising how little of the trunk needs to remain in order for it to survive. Once a number of these pleachers have been cut, stakes are put in at regular intervals which the pleachers are woven around at an angle to give the hedge shape and support. If there are any noticeable gaps, these can be filled in with either pushed in dead wood or young saplings that will grow into the hedge.

By cutting and trimming the old hedge in this way it invigorates new growth which will appear both at the base where cut and also at the ends of the branches.

We haven't had time to finish the work this season as it can only be done outside the nesting and roosting period, so we plan to do the rest in the autumn. If you fancy a go, keep an eye out for our notices around the wood or here in the Link.

But if you can't wait till then to give us a hand, then this month's work day is on Sunday 19th May when we will continuing our work on repairing our muddy paths. Lots of help required please. We will meet at our usual time of 2.00pm at the Heol Cefn Onn entrance, working till about 4.00pm. See you then.

Jonathan Singleton

**David Jones (Chairman), 36 Heol Cefn Onn, Lisvane.
Tel : 21328572**

or

**Tony Cousins (Secretary), 32 Ridgeway, Lisvane.
Tel : 20764871**

Diary Dates

Friends of Coed-y-Felin

**Sunday 19th May : Working Party, meet 2.00pm, Heol Cefn Onn Entrance.
Path maintenance and repair**

**Sunday 16th June : Working Party, meet 2.00pm, Heol Cefn Onn Entrance.
Our annual painting of fences and gates**