



THE SUSSEX WOODCRAFT SOCIETY

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Hi everyone, here is your latest SWS newsletter.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

The two months break from club meetings is nearly over and I for one am looking forward to them resuming. It's lovely to see the days lengthening and the slightly milder weather allowing longer sessions in the cool workshop!

We have just returned from the New Forest and have witnessed some major woodland management taking place with removal of trees in their plantation blocks. The main species targeted were oak, beech and Douglas fir. Looking at the felled trunks along the ride edges we noticed some lovely grain running through them and you can't help but imagine what the grain would be like when it is run through the saw mill. Sadly, they were all far too big to carry back to my car!

It does make you feel that you want to get back to working with this very tactile material.

I look forward to seeing you all at our March club night. *Paul*

FEATURE ARTICLE

'Britain's oldest tree' is discovered in a Welsh churchyard - and it's more than FIVE THOUSAND years old

A tiny village is believed to be home to Britain's oldest tree - a yew that first took root more than 5,000 years ago.

The majestic yew that lives in in a Welsh churchyard was 3,000 years old when Jesus Christ was born, according to tree ageing experts.

Experts have run tests on the tree in the St Cynog's churchyard at Defynnog near Sennybridge, Powys, including DNA and ring-dating.

HOW ARE TREES AGED?

The process of ageing a tree is called dendrochronology.



There are now many different methods used - from physically measuring the circumference of a tree's trunk, to tree-ring measuring to DNA testing.

Trees rings are a result of new growth during the year, so the number of rings directly corresponds with the number of years a tree has been alive.

However, different species of tree have different growth rates.

There are hundreds of ancient yew trees dating back at least 600 years across Britain, but the 60-foot-wide giant at St Cynog's is believed to be the most ancient.

Tree ageing expert Janis Fry, 64, who has studied yews for more than 40 years, said: 'I'm convinced this is the oldest tree in Europe.

THIS MONTHS WOOD QUIZ

What tree is considered to be the most dangerous tree in the world?.....Answer on page 5

AMAZING TREES

TREE OF 40 FRUIT

The *Tree of 40 Fruit* is an ongoing series of hybridized fruit trees by contemporary artist Sam San van Aken.

Each unique *Tree of 40 Fruit* grows over forty different types of stone fruit including peaches, plums, apricots, nectarines, cherries, and almonds. Sculpted through the process of grafting, the *Tree of 40 Fruit* blossom in variegated tones of pink, crimson and white in spring, and in summer bear a multitude of fruit.

Primarily composed of native and antique varieties the *Tree of 40 Fruit* are a form of conservation, preserving heirloom stone fruit varieties that are not commercially produced or available.



AMAZING TREE FACTS

The world's sweetest tree is native to West Africa. It is the Serendipity Berry. It is 3000 times sweeter than sucrose.

THIS MONTHS JOKE SPOT

Everyone was seated round the table as the food was being served. When little Johnny received his plate of food, he started eating straight away.

“Johnny wait until we’ve said our prayers”. His mother reminded him.

“I don’t have to”, the little boy replied.

“Of course, you do. We always say a prayer before eating at our house”, His mother replied.

“That’s at our house Johnny replied. He then went on to say “But this is at grandmas **and she knows how to cook**”.

THE AMAZING WORLD OF WOOD



Amazing that both of these carvings have been done by Chainsaw carvers. I do admire their skills.

STARTING A NEW YEAR OF MEETINGS

Hi everyone, my how quick the winter shutdown has flown by. Your committee are looking forward to welcome you back and Robert Packer has got an interesting array of speakers lined up for this year. Thanks Rob. The weather is beginning to warm up at last so I hope to be able to get back out in my garage/workshop. It's been far too cold to work out there as my garage is just like a big deep freezer. I do envy those of you with heated workshops. May I also just take this opportunity to remind you all, subscriptions are now due and I will be ready to receive your money at our next meeting. Brian

AMAZING TREE FACTS

Stealing trees has got to be a hassle. Trees are quite large, and if they're not, then they're hardly worth stealing in the first place. You need resources to steal a tree, yet it's a surprisingly common crime for one reason: Wood is big money.

A report from 1996 showed that \$1 million worth of lumber was stolen each month in Washington State alone. More recently, thieves in Canada stole a massive, 800-year-old cedar tree in a heist that required heavy-duty logging equipment. This wasn't an isolated incident, and it's a big problem for US national parks.

Science, as usual, has provided a handy tool for catching these thieves. As living organisms, trees have DNA fingerprints the same way people do. Investigators in Indiana were able to match the DNA of a stump to logs at a lumber mill. Unfortunately, many land owners don't notice their trees have gone missing for a long time, so poachers are unlikely to be put off.

FUTURE SWS TALKS

2019

January and February **No Meetings**

March 13TH Christmas Show Resume

April 10TH Malcolm Knight – Tottington Woodlanders 01273 493316

May 8TH AGM, Clive Emsley - Bluebell Railway.

June 12TH Alan Alyward, Woodland Trust

July 10TH To be advised

August 14TH Mary Smith, Green Circle, Bedelands Farm.

September 11TH Weald and Downland Living Museum

October 9TH Lester Backshall, Guitar Maker

November To be advised

December To be advised

When you are out and about at wood shows or exhibitions, if you see any person you think might be a candidate to give us a talk, please do ask them or at least take a note of their details and pass it on to Robert Packer who has taken over from Wendy in organising our future talks or any of our committee member so we can maintain the great speakers we have had. We are always open to suggestions for new speakers and we do need your help and input to help with this.

Please also let me know of any shows or exhibitions you think may be of interest to our members so I can include them in the section below, especially events for this year as a lot of people haven't started posting their events as yet.

EVENTS FOR 2019

May

25th 26th 27th Wakehurst Place SWS Exhibition

JULY

27TH 28TH Wildwood Weekend, Wakehurst place

September

6th & 7th

Event: Yandles Autumn Woodworking Show

Location: Yandles & Son Ltd, Hurst Works, Martock, Somerset, TA12 6JU

Contact: Tel. 01935 822 207

Cost: FREE Entry, FREE parking

Hours: 10.00am to 5.00pm Friday, 10.00am to 4.00pm Saturday

One of the largest woodworking shows of the year. Charnwood's representatives will be there to demonstrate our range of bandsaws, table saws, planer thicknessers plus woodturning lathes and chucks.

NOVEMBER

29TH Setting up at Henfield Hall

30TH Our Annual Exhibition and Show

Please note - as it is possible some shows may be cancelled or have the dates changed. Please check with organisers before travelling

ANSWER TO THIS MONTHS WOOD QUIZ

Answer..... There's an official Guinness World Record for "World's Most Dangerous Tree," and it's held by the manchineel tree from the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. The manchineel's bark is covered in sap that causes skin to blister and can blind a person if it gets in their eyes. Even standing under the tree in the rain can cause blisters because the sap will drip onto skin.

The tree's fruit, known as the "beach apple" or "death apple," is slightly sweet but very painful to eat. Ulceration of the mouth and oesophagus will occur from just a small bite and consumption can be lethal. Smoke from burning manchineel wood can cause blindness, and the sap has historically been used to coat arrows for hunting. Today it's an endangered species in Florida.