

MARCHER APPLE NETWORK

NEWSLETTER No 6

Non-Members £1.00

Summer 2000

CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Greetings to all! What have we got that is newsworthy? Steps have been initiated towards the grand concept of mapping orchards across the United Kingdom. Emanating from University of Leeds Innovations Ltd (ULIS) and the Northern Fruit Group, this idea was discussed at a meeting held in Leominster, in February, hosted by the Parks and Countryside Service of the Herefordshire Council. It was attended by a reasonably wide range of interested bodies. A pilot study of a limited number of 'orchards', based on random grid references, has been undertaken by participating groups, with the aim of attracting funding for further work, following the formation of a formally constituted federate body. By undertaking this work it is hoped not only to retard the alarming rate of disappearance of traditional orchards countrywide but also to uncover the existence of lost varieties, many of purely local connotation.

MAN's involvement to date in this enterprise is reported on page 3. Suffice to say that the task in our area of interest, as compared to many parts of the country, is prodigious and quite beyond our capacity to cope without major funding input. Although much orcharding has been lost during the past few decades, apple trees (of some shade or description) still lie thick around us.

We have a great deal ongoing in our own areas of activity. The collections we have planted are, in general, making good progress, but repay regular surveillance. Before long there will be, we hope, produce arising from this planting activity, a proportion of which may need to be organised for sale through outlets such as Farmers' Markets, and the general public be made aware of the availability of numerous varieties of home-grown apples, by promotional activities. During the course of the year our services have been employed by the Herefordshire Parks and Countryside Service for training sessions - at the appropriate time - for people wishing to acquire the skills of budding and grafting, learn about regeneration pruning, or about apple identification and general pomological history. Similar courses will be held this Autumn and Winter and are outlined on page 23.

Probably the most significant thing we have undertaken is what amounts to a feasibility study of the options and costs for getting 'The Herefordshire Pomona' reprinted, such that we have had a sub-committee under Dr Peter Austerfield working on this for several months. This endeavour has only been made possible as a result of much spadework by Tony Malpas, whose experience is proving invaluable to us, plus the expertise in this field contributed by John Trevitt, formerly of Cambridge University Press and now owner of the Weobley Bookshop. As part of these discussions we are in consultation with the book's original publishers, the Woolhope Club, and H.P. Bulmer Limited, who possess much valuable original material. See Peter's report below on page 4.

Ray Boddington

BODENHAM REPORT

Last year's annual celebration of Apple Day, held at Bodenham, Herefordshire, was, as usual, a very interesting event although unfortunately, perhaps due to lack of co-ordination in publicity, visitor numbers were not as large as expected. It was preceded by an Annual Meeting at which the Chairman spoke of the last year's activities and the Treasurer reported a healthy financial position. Mike Porter and his team displayed 137 varieties of apples and several of the ladies, led by Chris Porter and Elizabeth Rowe, provided a delicious range of apple-based goodies for tea. A Brains Trust brought forth some interesting and varied questions, eliciting equally interesting and varied replies!

Ray Boddington and John Aldridge joined forces and gave talks to several local organisations around Hereford, which met with a good deal of interest. Sheila Leitch has talked to two W.I. meetings in the Wye Valley area, where information on local orchards was forthcoming and, at the invitation of John Gittins, who is Director of the Cheshire Landscape Trust, I recently went up to talk to the Cheshire Tree Wardens. If members in other areas wish to give talks, a small amount of material and slides could be made available. The speaker would receive mileage allowance from the recipient organisation and a donation to *MAN* funds would also normally be payable. Please contact Sheila for further details.

Tom Froggatt

MEETING HELD TO DEVELOP A METHODOLOGY FOR RECORDING ORCHARDS

In November, a day conference was held on 'Orchards in the Landscape', organised by PLACE Research Centre at the College of Ripon and York St John, in collaboration with the Northern Fruit Group and Common Ground. A number of interesting topics were discussed and at the end of the afternoon, an idea for mapping and recording old orchards was discussed by Dr Simon Clark and Malcolm Smith, of the Dept. of Botany, University of Leeds Innovations (ULIS). An application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, for a scheme along these lines, had already been submitted for Yorkshire by the Northern Fruit Group. At a meeting with HLF shortly after the York meeting, they stated that they were not interested in such a scheme at county level, but wanted a national one, for which ULIS should apply, provided that there was sufficient support from other orchard groups around the country. ULIS therefore arranged a meeting to be held, this time at Leominster, a reasonably central location, to sound out opinion on the formation of a national scheme. With a venue kindly arranged at short notice in February by Fiona Lickorish of the Herefordshire Partnership Team, the meeting was attended by about twelve of the groups who had been present at York.

To save time on discussion, the NFG and ULIS had prepared and circulated a questionnaire in advance of the meeting and the day resulted in all the objectives being achieved. After a slow start, trying to define an 'orchard', a sampling scheme was agreed, together with a list of features to be recorded for each orchard. It was also agreed that a Pilot Survey should be carried out before the beginning of May to test the feasibility and effectiveness of the method in the field, and the completed sheets would be returned to Malcolm Smith at ULIS for entering into the data base which is being set up there.

By early June Dr Simon Clark sent out a report assessing this CORE Pilot Survey from which he drew up a provisional outline proposal as the basis for a re-application to the HLF for funds for a National Recording Scheme of Orchards. It was proposed that Stage A, the first objective, should be the production of an Atlas/web of orchard distribution, with all orchards located by 6 figure grid reference. Stage B should involve as representative a sample as possible of the orchards located in Stage A, from which more detailed information would be obtained, including varieties present. Stage C could be the adding of individualist observations from orchard groups.

Sheila Leitch

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND PROGRESS REPORT

At the meeting with the HLF in July, there was overall agreement as to the approach suggested as a result of the Pilot Survey. HLF would not fund stages A or B separately. They think that both stages are essential for the project, in that Stage A is an essential preliminary to Stage B. It was agreed that Stage A should be carried out by full-time professional help and Stage B by voluntary help. In the meantime, the HLF is informally assessing the provisional scheme, particularly regarding its cost, and will let ULIS know, by the end of August, whether a formal application should be submitted in the Autumn. The HLF will not consider such an application without definite offers of commitment from voluntary help within the orchard groups for Stage B.

Simon Clark and Malcolm Smith

MAN'S PART IN THE PILOT SCHEME OF THE NATIONAL ORCHARD SURVEY

Although members of MAN reside in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, USA, Canada and even one in Norway, the original area of the Network's interest was the counties on either side of Offa's Dyke, so it was from the 10km squares adjacent to the borders of Wales and England that one was drawn out of a hat. Two willing members within that area, west of Ludlow, were co-opted to undertake the listing of all the orchards in the square, then to survey the four nearest to the co-ordinates chosen by ULIS as random samples. The orchard plotting was aided by the use of the new 1:25000 Explorer Series of OS maps, Revised 1998, Printed 1999, which show orchards clearly. Over 40 were noted. Orchard owners were, in the main, most co-operative. The downside of the exercise would be an identification session for each of the surveyed sites - one of which was at an altitude of over 1000'. What exciting finds might be made! If you would like to be in on the act, please contact Tom Froggatt on 01584-831650 or Diggory Kempton on 01588-660392.

Would you like to be able to identify apples? If so, why not come along to one of our sessions, usually held at Glasbury? The intrepid team, with the aid of books and fortified by Sheila's coffee, then a good lunch at The Harp - Welsh Village Pub of the Year - and finishing with afternoon tea, (well, we must keep our strength up) will endeavour to pass on their knowledge. Please contact Sheila on 01497-847354, if you would like to sit in and learn how to do it. See also the training course run by Herefordshire Council, page 23.

Tom Froggatt

REPORT ON POMONA PUBLICATION SUB-COMMITTEE

The Marcher Apple Network has set up a small sub-committee with a view to developing a digital image archive of apple and pear literature. The starting point for this initiative will be 'The Herefordshire Pomona', an outstanding work with some 78 colour plates, line diagrams and a wealth of botanical detail, describing old varieties of apples and pears once grown, and some still surviving, particularly in the border counties of England and Wales.

The Pomona would form the basis of a phased development which could include a facsimile edition, an edited version, a CD Rom and material for a web site. Other archive material would follow.

The sub-committee has made progress in obtaining high quality digital images, with the use of facilities available from the University of Oxford, and has made contact with a number of printers to get an idea of reproduction costs. It has also made contact with potential funding bodies. In addition, a recent survey of a random sample of *MAN* members showed a good level of support for this initiative.

Although at an early stage, there are promising signs that the project may bear some fruit (no pun intended).

Peter Austerfield

THE YEAR'S EVENTS ON THE WELSH SIDE OF THE BORDER

MAN again shared a stand with Paul Davis at the Smallholders Weekend, held on the weekend of 10/11th June, at the Royal Welsh Showground, near Builth Wells. We were both asked advice on varieties which could be grown with some success at high altitudes. I always note fruit trees in upland farms and gardens in Powys, and have obtained graftwood from an old Tom Putt tree surviving in a remnant orchard at 1000' in Radnorshire. Paul now has this hardy strain in his Nursery. He has written on this subject on page 10. Last August, I represented *MAN* at The Brecon Beacons National Park Farming Festival, held at the Mountain Centre, Libanus, alongside Colin Gardiner's eye catching display of fruit and single variety farm-bottled apple juices. At the end of the day, I went to look at a farm, high on the Brecon Beacons, belonging to one of the visitors to the stand, who offered a choice of two small areas as an experimental site for trialling some varieties. Both were windswept and at an altitude of about 1000', so conditions were such that crops would only succeed some years. We will need to pay another visit before making any decision.

In Newsletter No. 4, page 6, we reported on a visit to an interesting old orchard at Parc-y-Ffrier, near St. Dogmaels, Llandudoch, now in the renamed county of Ceredigion, formerly Cardiganshire, where the owner, Merfyn Phillips introduced us to three hardy old Welsh varieties which struck easily from cuttings. Paul Davis has recently sent me a Welsh article, found by Trinity College Carmarthen, in 'Y Gambo', dated 1986, entitled 'Ble aeth y "pomme"?' (Where did the apple go?) by Dewi M. Lloyd. It is about a project, undertaken by the schoolchildren of Llandudoch, and lists names for the local apples, as passed down from previous generations. It mentions the three apples we had already been acquainted with by Merfyn, known as *Piq y 'Deryn* or *Aderyn*, (Bird's Bill) or *Afal Coch*, (Red Apple),

Afal Pren Glas (Green/blue Wood Apple) and *Afal Pen Caled* (Hard-headed Apple). It provides additional names of apples remembered by the older people in that locality. Merfyn believes *Pen Caled* is a cider apple and was grown in the mother monastery of Thironne, in Normandy. The monks from there may have introduced it to the monastery at Llandudoch in the Middle Ages, but there is no evidence except that these varieties are only found growing locally. There were other monasteries in the vicinity of Llandudoch, eg Neuadd Wilym. The monks may have returned to Brittany. Mr Lloyd was from Denbighshire and had never heard these names in that area. We had grafted the three, which Merfyn Phillips showed us, but several others need to be searched for and graftwood collected, if located. Any information from readers would be most welcome. Names, spelt as in article, but with suggested spelling corrections and translations, where possible, include:-

Afal Shino (? Sheino) - ?Shining Apple

Afal Biam (?Buan) - ?Early Apple

Afal Côt Liedr - *Leathercoat Apple*. This could be one of several russet apples.

Afal Tan Coed - Below the Wood Apple

Afal Bysedd y Forwyn - Maiden's Fingers Apple

Afal Melys - Sweet Apple

Afal Gwyn a'i (eu) brenin oll - ?White Apple King of them All

Afal Pren Glas - Green/blue Wood Apple. (The children's favourite).

Sheila Leitch

ORCHARDS IN THE BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK

A letter has just come in from Ruth Brown, Park Plan Officer, informing me that one of the objectives of the new National Park Management Plan is to identify and protect traditional orchards, the value of which, with their landscape features, wildlife sites, historical records, source of local produce etc, is now coming to be recognised. She asks whether there is a register of orchards anywhere, from which those in the National Park could be abstracted. Apart from our own records, and a vegetation survey of the Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons National Park carried out for a Ph.D thesis in 1953 by David Guile, there is, as yet, no such register, but I have sent a copy of her letter to ULIS. Perhaps such requests from National Parks will be helpful to them in their application for Heritage Lottery Funding.

Sheila Leitch

ORCHARD GLEANINGS

Different sorts of *Underleaf* apples were discussed in 'Orchard Gleanings' last year, as an apple with that name had cropped up in a wonderful old farm-orchard near Llanarth in Monmouthshire. Our guide on that occasion in 1998, an uncle of the farmer, commented that the *Underleaf* was also known locally as *Landore* or *Ledore*. Colin and Daphne Gardiner, who had told us about the orchard, later visited the guide's sister, Mrs Morris, who had also been brought up on the farm. She referred to the apple in question as '*Ledore*' and told them that the variety had usually been reserved for home consumption whereas the bulk of the crop was taken to Abergavenny market by horse and trap. It was unclear whether that was because the apple had been a particular family favourite or because there was little demand for it among their customers. The name *Landore* 'rang a bell'. Several

years ago a friend from Herefordshire had asked me about the variety, because one or two local farmers said that it had been grown in the area in former times.

Landore is not described, or even mentioned, as far as I know, in any of the catalogues or handbooks of the old pomologists such as Hogg, Scott or Bunyard, nor is it referred to by modern authorities like Bultitude or Joan Morgan. However Landor (synonym Landore) is listed in 'The Apple Register' by Muriel Smith (1971), but no information is given except that the variety had been exhibited from Herefordshire in 1934. The Apple Register also lists two sorts of Landon. Landon 1 is, or was, a brightly coloured American apple; Landon 2 is recorded as a Herefordshire apple, still in existence in 1946. The brief description is probably taken from 'Apples of England' by H.V. Taylor, 3rd. edition (1946), where it is described as "A rather irregular oblong apple with a puckered nose. Skin green with a faint brown flush. Eye closed in a puckered basin. Stem long in a russeted cavity. A Herefordshire apple, ripening November-December." This description does not quite match the Llanarth apple.

Last Autumn, Graham Sprackling, head of our intelligence-gathering operation in West Herefordshire, showed us a Landore tree in a farm orchard in the parish of Ewyas Harold. This tree, a gift from a neighbour, Bill Morris, who had presumably grafted it himself, had been planted near the farmhouse about 1948. Last year the tree bore only a couple of mis-shapen fruits, but they seemed to be different from the Llanarth 'Ledore' and Taylor's description of Landon 2. Another local farmer, John Addis, remembered a Landore tree which, several years earlier, had grown in an orchard in the village. He recalled that it had produced yellowish, dual-purpose fruit which kept well. In November 1999, whilst attempting a spot of apple-identification at Berrington Hall, a couple of visitors told us of yet another Landore, growing near their home at Craswall, on the eastern flank of the Black Mountains, no more than eight miles from Ewyas Harold, as the crow flies.

The earliest reference to Landore, encountered so far, is in the Diary of Rev. Francis Kilvert, Curate of Clyro, in Radnorshire. He records that, at the end of a visit to Clyro Mill on 26th February, 1872, Mr Minton, the miller, "...brought me out three 'Landore' apples, an old-fashioned keeping apple, very good."

The picture that has emerged so far is that Landore is an old local apple variety still known to some of the older inhabitants of West Herefordshire and Monmouthshire - an area coinciding more or less with the former kingdom of Irlching or Archenfield. It is claimed that old trees of Landore survive in this area. Their fruit consists of medium-sized, dual purpose apples which are yellow when ripe and keep well into the Spring. Is there more than one sort of apple sheltering under this name, or is Landore a synonym for another better-known variety? Is the variety known further afield? We will try to propagate any Landore trees that come to light to establish a clearer definition of this variety and answer some of those questions.

Mike Porter

NEWS OF OUR ORCHARDS

TREDOMEN COURT, Llanfillo, Breconshire

We have had some problems with sheep getting into this orchard. Roger Williams removed the fence which divided the planted area of the 3 acre meadow

from the grazed area, and replaced it with an electric fence, to enable us to add a further two rows of 34 trees which were planted during the recent winter, bringing the total number of trees up to nearly 150. Unfortunately, due to the slope of the ground at the far end, some sheep gained access and damaged a number of the recently planted young trees. Remedial pruning and reshaping has been carried out and, apart from a couple which were badly damaged, the rest are looking healthy. Earlier this season we arranged for strimming to be done around the edge of each phormisol mulch mat, to prevent the small trees being overtopped by the meadow vegetation. In August, Roger cut hay from between the six rows and another strimming round each tree was carried out. A further session cutting across the rows, using the strimmer or our recently acquired old Mayfield, now repaired and in working order, should tidy it up. We look forward to comparing fruit on some of the uncertain varieties with trees obtained from Brogdale.

We now have the opportunity to extend this orchard over the rest of the 3 acre meadow, as Roger has been provisionally accepted on the Tir Gofal Scheme, under which traditional orchards are eligible for grant aid. He expects to be signing up by the end of September. In future, trees will be spaced at 10 x 10m to comply with the Tir Gofal requirements. While numbers will be reduced, this will allow for easier mowing.

Sheila Leitch

CROFT PENDARREN, Llangynidr, Breconshire

Another half dozen trees were planted on this site during the winter.

Mike Porter

WESTHOPE, near Canon Pyon, Herefordshire

All the fifteen full standard trees are growing well and developing a good shape. The 'phormisol', used as ground cover and mulch, is proving effective in making maintenance easy.

Peter Austerfield

DONNINGTON, near Ledbury, Herefordshire.

In our last Newsletter, John Aldridge gave a detailed account of the varieties of American origin which form a special feature of the collection at Donnington. Suffice to say that Phase 2 of the intended planting was carried out at the end of January this year, and that the young trees seem to be thriving. There is now room for only about 10 more trees in the area yet to be occupied. We intend planting Pitmaston Russet Nonpareil, Newland Sack and Brabant Belle Fleur this Autumn, and will plant the remaining trees which were budded this Summer, by the end of 2001. An Information Sheet will be available when planting is completed.

Ray Boddington

MISTLETOE

With the slow decline of the old standard apple orchards, we are also losing the most common host for the mistletoe - a strange parasitic plant, cut with a golden knife by druids in ancient times from oak trees. Not that it was scarce, as it grows on most native hardwood trees, but finding it on an oak was rare. Only eleven sightings on oak are known at present in Britain.

The round flat seed has two roots, one on each side. If successfully planted, it will send up one or more shoots an inch long, with two leaves and two shoot buds and will continue to grow like this each year, up to 3 inches in a good year.

There are both male and female plants, the male being much paler in colour and more plentiful, but without berries. The plants flower in March, the flower being cup-shaped, and the pollen is air-borne. By April, the male flower pods have dropped to the ground, while on the female flowers, always in threes, berries have started to grow, which are not fully ripe until the following Spring.

Many of the berries are eaten by Wood Pigeons and Thrushes and are spread from tree to tree. I have seen Blue Tits and Great Tits eating the seed dropped on tree stakes. It is possible, with a little care, to grow your own mistletoe plants on a tree in the garden, but remember, it takes at least five years to berry, if a female plant. For details of how to grow your own mistletoe, please send a SAE to me at New House Farm, Hereford Lane, Kingsland, HR6 9QD.

John Tedstone

IDENTIFICATIONS

As regular readers of *MAN's* Newsletters will know, we are very keen to have positive identifications established before naming some of the interesting varieties which are turning up. Costard-type apples, Underleaf-type, possible Sykehouse Russet and Golden Russet are all under close observation at our orchards. It was, therefore, very pleasing to read, in the Northern Fruit Group's Newsletter, No.11, July 2000, an article on the Sykehouse Russet apple, by Charles Rusling, in which he gives details of the three trees from separate locations, scions of which were sent to Brogdale. Brogdale say they will be "unable to supply any graftwood until positive identification has taken place - hopefully in two years time". Charles goes on to say "This statement from Brogdale emphasises a most important point in the search for this or any other ancient cultivar. It is essential that we keep an open mind, carefully label and meticulously record any propagation that we do and only name the resultant trees when the cultivar has been properly identified". This sentence expresses *MAN's* attitude exactly, so, with permission, I quote it here.

May we again remind members who wish to have apples identified that we require some information on season, whether eater or cooker, approximate age of tree, under/over 50 years, and the address. We ask for three typical specimens of a variety, which must be in good condition. Identification sessions involve our 'team' members travelling up to 50 miles to gather round the table, so a charge of £1 per variety for members, and £3 for non-members is made.

The first of this season's packages of apples for identification has just arrived in the post. After opening the padded bag, I read the details from one of our printed forms, and learned that the early dessert apples were from a very old tree in Newport, Pembrokeshire. As I went to extract the wrapped samples from the bottom of the bag, I was greeted by a lusty half inch long specimen of a codling moth grub, with pinkish body and dark head, speeding out from its confinement in the bag. More of those I do not need! The six small apples were all affected by this pest, and I think the tree would benefit, next year, from a pheromone trap. The apples, looking

like small and stunted *Tom Putt*, may well be specimens of *Pig Aderyn*, which have been past their best when seen later in the season in previous years.

Sheila Leitch

EARLY REFERENCES TO TREE-FRUIT IN WELSH LITERATURE

The following references were mostly collected while studying for other purposes, and as such may be rather eclectic. There is strong evidence to show that apples held a place in the laws, poetry, and medicine of Wales before the Norman period. The sources generally date from the C11th to C13th centuries – a time when Wales remained fairly independent of Norman rule, and the Cistercian monasteries in particular were very actively recording much older verbal traditions – often under the patronage of Welsh lords and princes. Many authors have traced signs of earlier oral verse forms or events in these texts, together with knowledge of classical teachings that were probably present in Western Britain independently of the Saxons or Normans. Most C19th and C20th writers assume that the Romans introduced the propagation and cultivation of tree fruit into this country. Some have also assumed that this ended soon after their departure, and was only eventually revived under incoming Norman or late-Saxon influences. The examples listed here may throw more light on this subject.

Joan Morgan outlines possible references to young fruit trees known as 'imps' in the Laws of Hywel Dda. These were composed in about 930 (although written down much later), and contain references to both 'sweet' and 'sour' apples. The 'sour' apples could easily be native crabs, but the reference to 'sweet' apples, and the monetary value placed on these 'imps', strongly suggests the cultivation of seedlings from choice fruit, and quite possibly the propagation of graft wood from such trees.

There are references to apples and the attractiveness of apple blossom to be found in early Welsh poetry. The most substantial and beautiful of these is undoubtedly the *Afallennau* (Merlin's Apple Trees), included in the 'Black Book of Carmarthen' – a place name which means, literally, Merlin's Tower. This was transcribed in about 1250, but events mentioned in the text are much earlier (possibly from as far back as the late C6th), and it is generally considered to be a collection of much earlier oral works. In the *Afallennau* a tree (or series of trees) is praised at the start of each verse, before launching into prophecies. Merlin seems to be seeking protection amongst the trees, and perhaps to need their assistance in inspiring his foresights:

"Sweet apple-tree with branches sweet,
fruit-bearing, much valued, famed...
...Sweet apple-tree, luxuriant green, with laden branches...
...Sweet apple-tree that grows on the river bank -
...no steward can reach its glistening fruit...
Sweet apple-tree with flowers foxglove pink."

The sweet apples which Merlin admires do seem probably to be wild, although they are obviously tasty, and therefore of value to the household. Perhaps they are the wilding remnants of former orchards. Whatever the cultivated status of the

trees, they are certainly very powerfully linked with magic and prophesy in this important piece.

The most reliable of the sources relating to the Physicians of Myddfai, contained in the 'Red Book of Hergest', from the late C12th or early C13th, is accredited to the personal doctors of an influential Welsh prince in Carmarthenshire. It is largely a very practical collection of herbal remedies, yet one of the three references to apples shows them being used in a charm or invocation. Charms and invocations were common elsewhere in medical writings of the pre-Norman period, such as the Anglo-Saxon Leechbook of Bald. However, in the Book of Hergest this is the only example – underlining the special magical status of apples to the Celts, as seen in the *Afallennau*. For the record, the fruits are recommended for cooling drinks; are used to remove the taste of a complicated potion for curing fevers (and therefore, in both cases, are 'sweet' apples); and the charm itself is to combat 'all sorts of agues'.

Turning briefly to pears, we have so far come across no firm reference that is definitely from pre-Norman times. Perhaps the earliest is in another medical document, Havod 16, but the date cannot be established with any confidence.

The most enigmatic reference to tree-fruit in this early period is in 'The History and Topography of Ireland', written in 1185, by Gerald of Wales, working for the Norman court. The text is unashamedly sensationalist and propagandist, but has nevertheless provided careful scholars with some important information. The quite lengthy description of the miraculous 'fruit of St Kevin' bears a tantalizing resemblance to *Pyrus salicifolia* - the *Willow-Leaved Pear*. If any Irish connections have thoughts on this I would be delighted to hear from them.

Finally, folk tradition, supported by some documentary evidence, suggests that Wales may be able to boast a kind of patron Saint of apples.

According to the archives of Llandaff Cathedral, St Teilo (one of the three most influential Welsh saints) travelled from Wales to visit St Samson in Brittany during the early 500s. Together, they are said to have planted extensive orchards between Dol and Cai, known as the groves of Teilo and Samson. There are several links to churches in Brittany, including Landeleau, which he founded, and which today is in an important cider-growing area. A Breton custom related to the Saint uses the alignment of pips in an apple to predict the fruitfulness of the following year's crop.

Of course, the true antiquity of the connection between Teilo and fruit trees is very difficult to establish, but the links to Brittany and apples were well known in Wales in the C17th when the keeper of his relics predicted that a vast bearing of fruit would mark the return of his skull to the Cathedral. The supposed skull was eventually reinstated in 1994, and it would be interesting to see any crop records from South Wales for 1994 and 1995.

There has always been something of a rivalry between Llandaff and Llandeilo in Carmarthenshire, where Teilo retired. I have sought in vain for ancient carvings or other evidence relating to fruit at either location, and would be grateful for any information on the subject. Fruit trees do not grow at either of these religious sites

today, but it should be observed that Carmarthenshire has yielded a number of 'unknown' indigenous varieties in recent years. Perhaps a *MAN* identification trip, taking specimens from Wales to Brittany, is in order one Autumn.

If the Teilo tradition is true, it indicates Welsh knowledge of cultivated apples in the C6th (about 200 years after the last Roman garrisons left Britain). The *Afallennau* is generally considered to have been composed sometime between the C6th and C9th. In the C10th we find the possible references to cultivation and propagation in the Laws of Hywel Dda. Around the end of the C12th come more references to sweet apples in the 'Red Book of Hergest' and elsewhere.

These accounts, many apparently written down after many centuries of verbal transmission, do not prove conclusively that orchard skills continued uninterrupted until the Norman period. There are, in particular, problems with the texts written towards the end of this time. Norman influences would have been steadily growing, and the monastic scribes themselves could have been influenced by cultivation methods introduced from their mother churches on the Continent. There do seem, however, to be considerable hints regarding the esteem, continued use, and probably cultivation, of sweet apples in the Celtic nations during this post-Roman period.

John Powell

THE HIGHER, THE FEWER

What fruit tree varieties should I be growing at over 1000 feet? If I had a pound for every time I have been asked this question, I should be a rich man!

This is an important question, however, and I am sure no variety trials have ever been conducted at these altitudes. The Ministry considers 35 inches of rainfall and 300 feet above sea level to be the upper limits for commercial apple production.

There are four main problems associated with altitude:- late spring frosts, lower temperatures, higher rainfall and wind. You therefore need varieties that are late flowering to avoid late spring frosts, and early cropping to take advantage of the shorter growing season. These varieties also need to be scab and canker resistant to minimise the effect of rain.

We know that *Victoria* plum and *Merryweather* damson crop above 1000 feet, so I would guess that the hardier stone fruits would be worth a try. *Conference* is a northern pear which is both hardy and self-fertile, so this variety would be worth trying.

We know that *Mère de Ménage* and *Tom Putt* will crop at this altitude, and we can be fairly sure that *Royal Jubilee* and *Lord Derby* will as well. *Marged Nicolas*, one of the West Wales varieties, is also known to crop at 950 feet. After this, try some of the Scottish and Northern English varieties such as *Scotch Bridget*, *Stirling Castle*, *Keswick Codlin* etc., which should be reasonably adapted to the conditions.

As for rootstocks, you need a stock that is neither too tall nor too weak. *MAN* generally recommends MM106, but MM111 might be more suitable if your soil is

wet. Dwarf rootstocks have very weak and shallow root systems, and even if well staked, will tend to rock about badly in the wind

If you have any experience of growing fruit trees at high altitudes, please let us have the benefit of your knowledge. It is important that we prepare a variety list as soon as possible. A great many would-be fruit growers will thank you!

Paul Davis

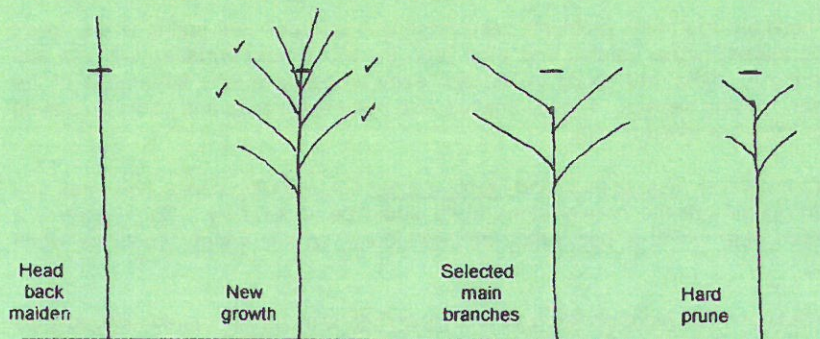
WHAT TO DO WITH A 'MAIDEN'

I shall restrict the following modest advice to the initial shaping and pruning of apple trees.

For *MAN's* orchards, we propagate our own trees from budwood and graftwood obtained through our orchard surveys or by 'networking'. The result after the first year's growth is a 'maiden' tree, consisting of a single stem, usually between 3 and 6ft high, with or without 'feathers' i.e. small side shoots. Purchasing of fruit trees at this age is now popular; it is also sensible. Not only do maidens transplant and establish well, but it offers the opportunity to shape the tree properly by careful pruning.

Fruit trees can be trained into many different shapes or forms but, in response to most members' needs and enquiries, I'll ignore the artificial forms and concentrate on the more natural forms not needing permanent supports. This includes bush, half standard and standard trees, which all require a similar approach, the main difference being the height of the trunk. (For appropriate rootstocks for these forms, see Newsletter No.2).

Gardeners know that any young shoot shortened during winter pruning will tend to produce a number of new shoots. This tendency is used in both the initial training of maidens, and, later, in increasing the number of branches on main branches.



Some varieties, such as *Adams' Pearmain* (spreading habit), can sometimes be very oblique and offer a number of feathers on the maiden. If only a bush is required, then these might be at a suitable height to provide you straight away with the basis of a framework. However, the general rule is to behead the maiden in winter in order to stimulate the growth of new shoots. Last year my *Lord Hindlip* generously produced eight shoots, so it was easy to select four which were well

spaced up the trunk, and evenly spaced around it. I had headed back this maiden a little higher than is usually recommended, with the intention of removing the apical and next two shoots (possibly more) later. Knowing that the angle between shoot and trunk becomes more acute towards the top, I wanted to ensure wider branch angles, which make for stronger main branches with plenty of room for infill branches, and for light to enter.

This would not be as crucial for, say, *Scotch Bridget* which makes naturally wide angles, but the vast majority of varieties would benefit. Indeed for some upright growers like *Pitmaston Pine Apple*, *Mother*, *Annie Elizabeth* and *William Crump*, utilizing the top shoots as described and drawn in most manuals, could result in a very tight basic framework. But all would not be lost, as this could be gradually remedied by regularly pruning out the congested centre, and using the new outside growth to extend the framework. Later, the tree will give you some help too by natural drooping, but I think it would be better to do it properly from the beginning.

How many main branches should your tree have? Between three and five, depending on the individual variety's growth habit which can vary from very upright to widespreading. When do you remove the unwanted shoots? For spreading varieties like *Scotch Bridget*, *Peasgood's Nonsuch*, *Tom Putt* and *King's Acre Pippin*, you could do this in the following winter. However, the top few shoots of upright growers could be retained for another 2 or 3 years. During this time, the leaders can be cut back in winter to encourage more growth, and thereby gradually fill the spaces. When the unwanted top growth is finally removed, the centre will be open, creating the desired goblet shape. From now on, the right balance must be struck in pruning for new wood growth and for fruiting.

Depending on the vigour of the variety, it might take two or more years to achieve the required height for a standard. (It was once a common practice, especially for weak growing cider varieties, to graft a strong stem-building variety on to the rootstock, and then graft the desired variety on to the stem-builder) During the time that the stem is growing to the required height, the extension shoot should be left unpruned. Strong low branches can be removed, but most side-shoots can be temporarily left, provided they are spurred back to an inch or so in winter. The stem should be headed back when it is well above the height at which the head is to be formed. The forming of the main branches is similar to that previously described except that hard pruning of leaders should be continued longer until a rigid framework is achieved.

John Aldridge

GRAFTING ROMAN STYLE: VIRGIL'S OBSERVATIONS ON AN AGE-OLD SKILL

Having followed a scientific training and career, there are inevitable gaps in my knowledge of the Arts and Classics. One such gap has now been filled, I am happy to say, by a reading of Virgil's *Georgics* in a version translated and arranged by an old friend, who, needless to say, read Classics.

Virgil I remember vaguely from long distant Latin lessons at school. The *Georgics* has been a revelation and as I grow apples, pears and grapes (alas, not olives), I find these sections of Virgil's observations fascinating.

I am also informed that the name George means farmer, hence Virgil's title for his book. The name is derived from the Greek Ge (earth/land) and Ourg (work/er).

The following passage from the Georgics might be of interest to *MAN* members.
Grafting

Grafting, however, 's the method for Almonds, under Arbutus' crinkled skin, and Planes have fostered the burliest Apples. Beeches have turned into Chestnuts, and Mountain Ashes are white with Pear-blossom. Under an Elm-tree, a herd of pigs gobbles acorns.

More than one method of grafting exists. First "budding": a tip's just pushing proud of the bark and breaking the delicate skin there. Right at the point of the bud you must make a narrow incision introducing here the foreign implant, which learns how, sealed in the happy bark, to like its life in its new home.

Grafting, again, can be onto a stub, regardless of budding. Wedges make deep clefts in the stock, and in go the stocks. Soon a lofty tree holds prosperous branches to heaven, feels its alien leaves and admires a foreigner's first-fruits.

Virgil, The Georgics, A Version in English Hexameters by Jonathan Trench, published by the author, Norwich, 1999. Reproduced by permission.

Peter Austerfield

PUSHING BACK THE TIME OF GRAFTING

In last year's Newsletter (No. 5), I reported on an experiment I had conducted comparing the performance of two composts at different grafting times. I concluded that grafting on March 3rd was superior to grafting a month later and decided to experiment on grafting even earlier.

Two composts were compared, the first being my usual Nursery Stock compost and the second a mixture of B&Q Multipurpose with 25% sterilised bark. The first grafting date was Jan. 31st and I had intended grafting every fourteen days thereafter to the beginning of April. By the beginning of March, however, young growth on the earliest grafted stock was already 15mm long, so the experimental treatments were stopped. Excision of the two buds normally bound by the grafting tape was also investigated. I have found that these buds often die and are a source of canker infection later in the year.

One to two year 7-9mm MM111 rootstocks were planted in the appropriate compost in 5 litre, lay-flat polythene pots at the end of January and kept outside. Immediately after grafting with various apple varieties, the pots were placed in a polytunnel in a randomised block design with four replicates. The pots were moved outside on May 1st, staked, the grafting tape cut, and scored for growth and vigour on June 4th.

Although the differences were slight, there was a clear linear effect of grafting date on subsequent vigour. The earlier the grafting, the better was the subsequent growth. There was no difference between the composts at this stage and any effects of removing the buds will not be evident until later in the season.

B&Q multipurpose compost always gets a good write-up in the 'Gardening Which' magazine, and is half the price of my current purpose-built compost. However, I lose a lot of stock during our Welsh winters due to water-logging in the pots, so any benefits or otherwise will probably not be noticed until next year.

I have tried planting some rootstocks in peat-free composted bark compost. This appears to be intrinsically freer draining, and shrinks less with time, while a change to a rigid pot, as well as overwintering established pots in a polytunnel, are all options that need to be considered in future experiments.

Next year, I shall begin grafting at the end of January, allowing me a short break before lambing!

Paul Davis

LOST AND FOUND - AND A MYSTERY

Of the many lost apples, one high on my personal wish list was the Worcestershire variety, Newland Sack. I had hoped to rediscover it locally as I live close to the area where it was once grown. I liked its name and the painted illustration in 'The Herefordshire Pomona'. More substantially, Hogg described it appreciatively in 'The Fruit Manual' and I couldn't work out why such an apple should have disappeared. Now I have it growing in my own garden, thanks to a MAN visit to Erddig National Trust property near Wrexham, and the Head Gardener there, Glyn Smith. Propagated about 25 years ago by his predecessor, Glyn thinks that scions were obtained from another National Trust property but, so far, the source has not been traced.

Last year I budded Newland Sack onto M25 and MM106 rootstocks for planting this Autumn at Donnington and Tredomen respectively; another two, on M25, will be planted in Herefordshire Council's traditional orchard at Bodenham. MAN Committee member, Mike Porter, thinks he has discovered another tree of Newland Sack. Since we also propagate such finds onto quick-fruiting dwarfing rootstocks, we shall be able to compare them soon and double check their authenticity.

Members might recall another Worcestershire variety, Chatley Kernel, mentioned in Newsletter No.3. In addition to locating a number of old trees, MAN member Peter Weeks had put together a dossier of supporting evidence and other information about that variety. I have no doubt that Peter has found Chatley Kernel, especially as other trees have independently come to light since then. But has Peter also found Chatley Pippin? From propagation material supplied by him for our M9 trial plot, MAN has some excellent trees with fruit. It is clear that we have an apple similar to, but not the same as, Chatley Kernel. The story requires a fuller telling in our next Newsletter.

MAN is a member of the Northern Fruit Group, and vice versa, so I was pleased to read, in the NFG Newsletters, two articles by Philip Rainford that rang some bells. One of our members, Bill Bailey of Goosnargh, near Preston, sent us some graftwood of a local variety he called 'Greensweet'. It took Bill a long time to finally locate a tree of this variety, although it was apparently quite commonly planted in his area in past times. Looking through Hogg's 'The Fruit Manual', I came across Hargreave's Green-Sweet - to my knowledge, a lost variety. Hogg stated that "The original tree, which was of great age, was, in 1846, when I last saw it, still standing in the Nursery of Messrs Hargreave". (Nurserymen of Lancaster). Philip, who also lives near Preston, writes that his fruit matches descriptions of that variety, and he has sent scions to Brogdale - perhaps we can compare fruits.

In another Newsletter, he mentions Albert Harris and his Lady's Finger-type apple. Mr Harris is originally from the Hoarwithy area, in Herefordshire, has since lived at Bledington on the Gloucester - Oxford border and now lives in Stony Stratford. Mr Harris contacted me to help him identify two of his apples, one of which turned out to be Burr Knot, which he had brought from Hoarwithy. (The young tree at Donnington is from this source). He also sent me specimens of Lady's Finger of Lancaster and an extraordinary long triangular purplish-red apple with a beautiful bloom. We have this growing now at Tredomen under the provisional name of 'Lady's Finger of Bledington', as it was grown in orchards around that village and two others. When I showed fruits to the other MAN committee members, it caused some jaws to drop. Like Philip, I can imagine some people growing this apple for ornamental reasons.

John Aldridge

LOCAL GROUPS

In Newsletter No. 4 Diggory Kempton wrote "There must be a huge fund of skills and experience amongst readers of this Newsletter, and a wide appreciation of apples too. People interested in pooling ideas about community orchards, or who would like to look into the possibility of setting up such a scheme, may find it useful to contact me on 01588 660392, and I would act as co-ordinator to put people in touch with each other." Do ring and have a chat with Diggory, to see what has happened on this front since the plea went out.

Sheila Leitch

HELP

Friends of Brogdale will already be aware of the financial problems which have arisen over the past few years. Basically, visitor numbers, envisaged when Brogdale was privatised, did not materialise, so insufficient cash was available to repay the mortgage of £1.6m. to Duchy of Cornwall and Swale Borough Council.

Several schemes were examined - the most promising one meant that, in return for private housing development on about 8 acres of the farm, a developer would pay sufficient cash to clear the mortgage, make alterations to the present buildings and provide some much needed working capital. Unfortunately, planning permission on mainly 'brownfield' land was refused, so the Trust pay an annual rent of £48,000 to the developer who now owns the site.

Friends have made outright gifts or provided loans which are only drawn upon for special purposes. A complete re-appraisal of the Brogdale operation has been made 1) to reduce costs, 2) to make a more efficient administrative and marketing procedure and 3) to make Brogdale more appealing" to visitors. "No pun intended!

It is a great shame that the National Apple Collection and the other fruit collections are operating on a shoe string, and not a very thick one at that. Please give your support by becoming a 'Friend', visit the site and purchase trees, graftwood and/or produce. Application forms will be available at all our shows this year, or you may contact Brogdale Horticultural Trust direct at Brogdale Road, Faversham Kent, ME13 8XZ. Phone 01795 535286/535462. FAX 01795 531710.

Tom Froggatt
(A Friend of Brogdale)

UK NETWORK FOR *MALUS*

As a result of the European *Malus* Germplasm meeting held at Wye College, Brogdale in June 1995, the UK Network for *Malus* was set up by Wye College, a year or so later, to locate genetic resources of *Malus* (apple) in Britain and to compile a National Register of *Malus* collections in the UK, as none existed.

By 1997, Dr. R.A.Janes reported to Paul Davis that, resulting from a questionnaire, she had details of over 2000 *Malus* accession records held in local collections, botanic gardens etc across the UK, excluding the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale. She requested a list of the orchards which MAN managed, with a variety list for each, the information to be added to her data base and this we duly did.

The recently re-named Imperial College at Wye, Brogdale, will be holding a full day meeting at Brogdale on 13th September, to which MAN, together with representatives of other orchard groups, has been invited. There will be a tour of the National Apple Collection with Dr. Emma-Jane Lamont, the Curator, followed by a session viewing and discussing *Malus* cultivars 'at risk'. After lunch there will be a presentation of descriptor lists for characterisation and discussion on *Malus* keys with Dr Alison Lean, Research Fellow. Then there will be a workshop using published notes for identification of varieties, with the expert opinion of Dr. Joan Morgan, Fruit Historian and Co-ordinator for the Friends of Brogdale. For readers who know little about Brogdale, I quote from the back of the programme leaflet:-

'The first National Fruit Collection was first established in Chiswick, London, in the early 1800s by the Horticultural Society (now the Royal Horticultural Society) under the guidance of Thomas Andrew Knight. The origin of the Collection resulted from a need to establish correct nomenclature and accurate cultivar descriptions of temperate fruits grown in the United Kingdom.

Over 2300 *Malus* cultivars are now maintained in the National Fruit Collections at Brogdale forming the largest collection of *Malus* germplasm on a single site in the world, and is an internationally recognised genetic source.

Maintenance and development of the UK National Fruit Collections is funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) as part of its research strategy for the conservation of plant genetic resources. Imperial College at Wye is responsible for the scientific development of the Collections. Brogdale Horticultural Trust is responsible for their maintenance.'

We are hoping that a couple of our members will be able to attend this important meeting, and can then report back to our committee.

An advertisement in the programme of the Royal Welsh Show referred to The Brogdale Collection of Fruit Recipe Books, one each for Apples and Pears, Soft Fruit and Stone Fruit, costing £7.95 each or complete set of three for £19.95. These are obtainable from Geering's of Ashford Ltd., Cobbs Wood House, Chart Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1EP. You might like to buy advance Christmas presents and, at the same time, support Brogdale.

Sheila Leitch

SALE OF GRAFTWOOD AND BUDWOOD

A few members have taken advantage of the offer in last year's Newsletter to supply propagation material, and we hope to hear of successful results. *MAN* will continue this service. As stated last year, in order to make the collection of material reasonably convenient and economical, there will have to be cut-off dates for receipt of orders. Those for graftwood have to be in by 10th January, and budwood by 20th July. Mike Porter, Tel: 01874 - 730354, Sheila Leitch and John Aldridge will have lists of varieties grown within the Network. Prices per stick (10 - 12") to members £1.25 (non-members, £2.50) plus £2.00 p&p. The scheme is geared primarily to personal, rather than commercial, quantities.

John Aldridge

MAN LIBRARY

A list of books is available for a second class stamp and a SAE. These can be consulted by arrangement at Wye View, or at an event, or some can be borrowed for short periods by members living locally, who are able to return them in person. Two additions to the list in Newsletter No. 5 are:-

Hogg, Robert, LL.D., F.L.S. The Fruit Manual. 3rd Edition (London: Journal of Horticulture)
Directory of Grant Making Trusts. 14th Edition. (Charities Aid Foundation)
Bultitude, J., Apples; A Guide to the Identification of International Varieties.
(London, Macmillan Press Ltd, 1983)
Sheila Leitch

COMMON GROUND'S NEW ORCHARDS BOOK

Dan Keech, Orchard Officer, has sent a flyer giving details about the major new book which will be launched On Apple Day, 21st October - 'The Common Ground Book of Orchards; community, conservation and culture'. Compiled over the last decade of the 'Save Our Orchards Campaign', it will be illustrated and with photographs and "Contributions will cover everything there is to know about orchards". A very useful section to us will be the one on Maintenance (grazing,

mowing, pruning, fencing, hedging). It will cost about £15.00. You are asked to "Please register your interest and Common Ground will send you full information when available". Send name, address and SAE to Common Ground, PO Box 25309, London, NW5 1ZA.

Three further sets of notes have also been prepared:-

No.13. Small-Scale Apple Juice Pressing

No.14. Small Scale Cider Making

No.15. Infant Fruit Tree Care - The First Five Years

These cost 50p each and are obtainable from the same address.

[See John Aldridge's article on 'Maidens' on page12]

Sheila Leitch

HENRY DOUBLEDAY RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

A useful set of Fact Sheets is available to members of HDRA, a number of which are concerned with fruit. One sheet lists fruit varieties known to be less susceptible to pests and diseases. Apples showing good resistance to scab and those less susceptible to mildew make interesting reading. A list of plums less susceptible to bacterial canker, and a rather longer list of those less susceptible to rust are useful. Recommended resistant varieties of soft fruits are also included. Subjects covered are:-

No. GG8 Resistant Fruit Varieties

No. GG22 Fruit Tree/Bush Suppliers

No. GG25 Rootstocks for Tree Fruit

No. GG26 Planting Fruit Trees and Bushes

DC2 Apple Powdery Mildew

DC14 Organic Disease Control. Bitter Pit

HDRA News, over the years, has carried articles on 'Renovating old trees and orchards' and 'Cutting pruning down to size'.

Sheila Leitch

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

Interests and hobbies can overlap to mutual benefit sometimes. Visits to historic old houses in the Marches, for work in connection with local history and genealogy, can bring to light hidden orchards, sometimes with the old planting lists still surviving. These are a tremendous help in assessing which of the varieties are still in existence at the site. Colin Gardiner, our member in Liangenny, who makes single variety apple juice and visits numerous large old orchards, has come up with news of such an orchard and list of names for us to visit in Monmouthshire this Autumn.

Walled Garden, Ty Glyn, Cilliau Aeron, Lampeter, Cardigan.

A letter was received last Autumn, from a recently joined member of MAN, Ros Laidlaw, who is the landscape designer for the Ty Glyn Davis Trust, a non-profit-making organisation which provides holiday accommodation for visitors with special needs. She is restoring a derelict walled garden at Ty Glyn, for which the original planting list has survived in a garden notebook covering the period 1835-59. The book, too fragile to photocopy, lists varieties of apples, pears, cherries, plums, greengages, damsons, nectarines, apricots, medlars, mulberries, soft fruits and

other trees, with dates of planting and names and addresses of the nurseries from which they were purchased. Historical information about the site records that, when the estate was sold in 1883, the catalogue referred to 'extensive gardens well stocked with the choicest fruit trees'. Sadly, a herd of pigs destroyed all the fruit trees. Advice on those varieties from the old lists which are still available and which could be recommended for restocking the garden was sought. We hope to visit this site, which is adjacent to the National Trust property of Llanerchaeron, from where our member, Dr John Savidge, has brought numerous apples from the thriving wall garden for *MAN* to identify and which we also hope to visit. With all the apple events and food fests which now occur every weekend, Autumn just hasn't enough days to fit in all the site visits we need to make, each of which needs lengthy identification sessions, to evaluate the finds.

Morgan Sweet

As Hon. Librarian of the Brecon Group of Powys Family History, I received an interesting printed set of study notes on Morgans in Breconshire, collected and compiled by David Morgan of Solihull, the Secretary of the Morgan Society. (There is a Guild of One Name Studies, known to its friends as GOONS, of which the Morgan Society is a member). During the course of a telephone chat, I brought the *Morgan Sweet* apple to David Morgan's attention. It is a cider apple grown extensively in S.W. England and became popular as a dessert apple amongst the South Wales miners. He was most interested, and will be publicising it in the next Morgan Journal. Paul Davis has been warned that there could be a sudden demand for this variety from Morgans all over the place!

Fruit collection at Cui Parc, Talybont. (See below). One of our members, Sir Andrew Large, has sent a nine page list of his collection of varieties, with notes. Some of the trees are old, possibly planted about 1875, others date from about 1900, 1930, 1970 and the recent plantings were begun in 1990. The numerous sites, at different altitudes, now contain a very interesting collection of over 360 trees, though some varieties are represented by up to half a dozen specimens. Quite a number of the scions have come from Brogdale, others from Mike Porter's extensive orchard, and some of the recent Welsh apple finds from Paul Davis' Nursery. *MAN* has drawn up a list of old local varieties and should be able to supply Sir Andrew with 11 from this list which he wants to add to his collection. He is looking forward to seeing the fruits on the graftwood obtained from the Gibson-Watt orchards at Ystrad and Doldowlod, Radnorshire. Old tree orders dating from 1808 show that James Watt, (of steam engine fame), when he ordered fruit trees from Messrs Bigg of Worcester, favoured some of the hardy Scottish varieties with which he would have been familiar. One ordered was *Dumbarton Pippin*. Is anyone familiar with this apple? It is not in the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale, nor is it listed by Taylor.

Sheila Leitch

APPLES AT CUI

Some 10 years ago, I noticed that the old 1904 maps showed two orchards at Cui. Today there are only a handful of trees left - including a *King of the Pippins*, a *Bismark*, a *Brownlees Russet*, and a few ancient unidentified perry pears. But the fact that the trees had withstood the damp climate in the lee of the Brecon Beacons for 100 years made me think of reinstating them, and to focus where possible on old and local varieties. So now I have about 250 varieties in and around - some on seedling rootstocks for the orchards, and some on M9 for the kitchen garden. Quite

a lot are still unidentified, having been grafted from trees which I found struggling around long-abandoned farms. Others are old favourites - my main problem are the sheep which like nothing more than to ring them after getting through the best of barricades. As we all know, apples demand a lot of patience, and crops are still low - helped too by an abundance of squirrels and crows. But each year a few more trees give us their first fruits. Perhaps I could swap lists with others who might be trying the same thing.

Andrew Large

WANTED APPLES

We are still keen to hear of the following varieties of trees, listed in last year's Newsletter, which have not been propagated from material obtained directly or indirectly from the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale, so that fruit can be compared with the Kent examples. These include:-

Waltham Abbey Seedling
Wormsley Pippin

Springrove Codlin
Bringewood Pippin

First and Last
Golden Harvey

Others we are still looking out for are some described in 'The Herefordshire Pomona' and include :-

Queen of Sauce Apple
Pearson's Plate Apple

Coe's Golden Drop
Herefordshire Spice

Ord's Apple

As mentioned by Mike Porter on page 6, we are also keen to find more trees of Landore.

John Aldridge

CIDER AND PERRY SUB-GROUP

Some of our members have a strong interest in cider and perry fruit varieties and regional tradition demands that MAN pays more attention to this area than we have done so far. It makes sense for members with this common interest to share their knowledge, exchange propagation material etc. Obviously, you've got to know of each other's existence! If you contact me first, I shall put together a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers which I can then send to each of you.

John Aldridge

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday/Sunday, 26th/27th August. Talgarth Festival. MAN will have a small display of early season apples, in the Market, on the Sunday, from 12.00am - 5.00pm.

Sunday, 3rd September. Open Day at Elton Hall near Wigmore, NGR SO 458711. The former home of Thomas Andrew Knight, the garden has been recently restored and developed and garden produce and specialist plants will be on sale. Small display of early-season apples by MAN. Open 2.00 - 6.00pm. Admission £2, proceeds to NCCPG Herefordshire.

Saturday/Sunday, 23rd/24th September. Malvern Autumn Show at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern. The RHS mount a magnificent fruit display and offer an identification service. MAN will also have a display, including some apples

from Berrington Hall. Paul Davis will have a stand and be demonstrating grafting and budding and will have apple trees for sale.

Saturday, 30th September. Croft Castle will again be holding an 'Apple Fair' this year. A National Trust property, north of Leominster, with connections with the fruit breeder, Thomas Andrew Knight. Apple displays and identifications by MAN, fruit and cider tastings, orchards to visit, plus sales. Weston's horse and dray will be present. For details, Tel. 01568-780246.

Saturday, 30th September. A Biodiversity Fair will be held at the National Botanic Gardens of Wales, Middleton Hall, Llanarthney, near Carmarthen. Trinity College, Carmarthen, are focussing on the biodiversity of apple varieties and Paul Davis has been asked to help organise and attend the event. The history of the rediscovery of some of the local apples will be featured and the Dinefwr Orchard Group will be launched. Details from Charles Stirton, Tel. 01558-668768.

Saturday, 7th October. Marcher Apple Network's annual event to celebrate Apple Day. (I know, we are two weeks early!) To be held at Clifford Community Hall, just off the B4352 Hay to Bredwardine road, behind the school, NGR SO 268446. Doors open 2.00pm. Our second A.G.M. at 2.15pm, will be followed, about 3.00pm, by the opportunity to enjoy all the usual events associated with Apple Day, including a display of old apple and pear varieties, some of which you will be able to taste. An identification panel will try to name your unknown fruit. (Bring at least 3 specimens of each variety please). There will be apple juice tastings, and bottles of single variety apple juice will be on sale, which make most acceptable Christmas presents. Paul Davis will bring some old varieties of apple for sale. Later, there will be an illustrated talk, 'The Wye from Source to Hereford' by Brian Draper, MBE, who was a former River Authority Officer. Tea and home-made refreshments with an apple theme will be on sale. Offers to provide some food will be much appreciated and advance bookings help us to estimate the food requirements. Free admission to members attending the AGM. Admission, £3 at the door. Children £1. We expect to finish about 6.00pm. Details from MAN officers.

Saturday/Sunday, 7th/8th October. Brecon Beacons Food Festival at the Mountain Centre, Libanus, near Brecon. No admission charge but Car Park charges apply. 10.00am - 4.30pm. Tel. Andrew, 01874 - 623366.

Saturday/Sunday, 14th/15th October. 'The Big Apple'. A harvest-time celebration of English apples and cider in the Herefordshire parishes of the Marcle Ridge. The venue will again be Much Marcle, where there will be one joint weekend combining interest in dessert and culinary fruit with cider fruit. There will be fruit displays, tastings, identifications and apples and apple juices on sale at The Royal Oak. MAN will be there. Apple teas will be available at Much Marcle Memorial Hall, where there will be a display of cider fruits and perry pears. On Saturday there will be a Gourmet Evening at The Scrumpy House, to celebrate the launch of Big Apple's third cookery book, with a menu of recipes taken from the new book. For details of talks, demonstrations and other events, phone Jackie Denman, Secretary of the 'Big Apple Association', on 01531-670544.

Saturday, 21st October. Apple Day. Events countrywide. Programme available from Common Ground. Send SAE to PO Box 25309, London, NW5 1ZA.
Local events at Hereford, Ludlow, Leominster, Church Stretton and Abergavenny.

Saturday/Sunday, 21st/22nd October. Cidermaking Festival at the Cider Museum, Hereford. This will be an opportunity for cider lovers and apple growers to get together, discuss their interests and try out samples of ciders and apple juices. There will be a comprehensive display of cider apple varieties and the Pomona Room will be open, where the books illustrating traditional apple and pear varieties from the 19th century onwards are on display. There will be a special apple press set up for children to try their hand at the hard work of pressing the juice out of apples, then sampling it. Normal Museum entrance charges apply. (£2.40 adults, £1.90 concessions, with special rates for parties of 15 or more). For more details, contact the Cider Museum on 01432-354207.

Saturday/Sunday, 21st/22nd October. Abergavenny Food Festival to be held in the Market Hall. A celebration of food of the Marches. Farmer's Market with local specialist food producers selling delicacies. Further details from Vicki Jones, Tel. 01873-890163.

Sunday only. Apple display and identifications (3 specimens of each please).

Sunday, 22nd October. Berrington Hall, near Ludlow. Display of apples and tastings, and apple-based teas, with recipes available. For more details, phone Nick Winney, Tel. 01568-610593 or the Office, 01568-615721.

Saturday/Sunday, 28th/29th October. Celebration of the Apple at Llancaiach Fawr Manor, Treharris, Mid Glam. Apple juice and cider producers will be selling their products in the Long Barn. MAN will be there, with some Welsh apples. For details Tel. 01443-412248.

ORCHARD TRAINING COURSES

Herefordshire Council Parks & Countryside Service is again running a number of half-day or full day courses on subjects of interest:-

Saturday, 14th October, 2000: Adding value to your orchard - Cider Making. A day course at Lyne Down Cider, near Much Marcle.

Saturday, 18th November, 2000: Introduction to Apple Identification.

Saturday & Sunday, 25th/26th November, 2000: Pruning Apple Trees.

Saturday, 17th February, 2001: Grafting Apple Trees.

Costs:

Full Day: £40 or £20 (subsidised rate only for Herefordshire Residents) - Includes Tea & Coffee but please bring a packed lunch.

Half Day: £20 or £10 (subsidised rate) - Includes Morning Coffee or Afternoon Tea

To book, send details of the courses along with your name, address, daytime telephone number and preferred date/session with a **separate cheque, for each course**, made payable to Herefordshire Council.

For further details contact James Bisset, Partnership Project Officer,
Tel: 01568 798341 or email: jbisset@herefordshire.gov.uk

The Partnership Team has produced a Millennium Edition leaflet giving information on Fruit Tree Kits available for planting on sites within the county of Herefordshire, for applicants not receiving any other grant aid initiative. Some of the fruit varieties traditionally grown in the orchards and gardens of the county are available and each tree/kit costs £8.25. Only a limited number of trees are available, so order early to avoid disappointment. Closing date is 30th November and tree kits must be collected early December, from Queenswood Country Park, Dinmore Hill. There are Orchards Kits, with a choice of six apple varieties budded onto vigorous M25 rootstocks, also a damson and a greengage, while Garden Kits offer four apple varieties budded onto M26 semi-dwarfing rootstocks. Leaflets, which include application forms, are obtainable from Parks & Countryside Service, PO BOX 41, Leominster, HR6 OZA. Tel/Fax 01568-797305.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

The financial year for *MAN* begins 1st August, to coincide with the beginning of the apple season. We send out the Newsletter to all those on our address list for the previous year, trusting they will wish to continue supporting *MAN*. PLEASE SEND YOUR MINIMUM SUB. of £5 NOW, for the current year, while you read your Newsletter No. 6, unless you are a Life Member or pay by Standing Order. Slips are inserted in this Newsletter, reminding members who pay by cheque that subscriptions are now due. All members who pay by Standing Order will receive another form in case they need to increase their subscription to the current rate.

Material for Newsletter No. 7, preferably typed or on disc, will be welcomed throughout the year, but please send articles, or at least an indication of length, to the Editor, Sheila Leitch, by the beginning of July 2001 at the latest. Dates of events and small news items and 'fillers' can be accepted in early August. We should point out that the views expressed in the Newsletter are those of individual contributors, not necessarily those of *MAN*.

MAN OFFICERS:-

Chairman
Mr.R.B.Boddington
Westwyn
20 Wainey Lane
Aylestone Hill
HEREFORD HR1 1JD
☎ 01432-273394

Membership Secretary
Mr.J.Aldridge
Orchard Barn
Ocle Pychard
HEREFORD HR1 3RB
☎ 01432-820304

Network Co-ordinator
Mrs.Sheila Leitch
Wye View
Glasbury-on-Wye
Powys via
HEREFORD HR3 5NU
☎ 01497-847354

MAN is grateful to Mr James Bailey, of 'Compuprint', Kilpeck, another of our members, for printing this Newsletter.