

# MARCHER APPLE NETWORK

NEWSLETTER No 8

Non-Members £2.00

Summer 2002

## CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

MAN continues to grow in structure and focus, even if it does not often hit the headlines by discovering 'lost' apple varieties among orchards in the Welsh Marches. In an attempt to discover our members' predilections and eagerness for involvement, Sheila Leitch devised a questionnaire for circulation with our first half-yearly News Sheet. We are most grateful to members who took the trouble to complete one. The answers we received have brought skills to light which we are already able to harness. For the first time we have experts willing to engage in setting up a website and, at the same time, negotiations (rather prolonged) with the Charity Commission, to enable us to become a registered charity, have led us to welcome the offer of some legal guidance which may prove invaluable. But the most exciting news to break recently is that we have been awarded a Heritage Lottery Grant to invest in equipment and skills which, we hope, will enable us to implement a programme to reproduce the marvellous paintings of apples and pears printed in Victorian times in 'The Herefordshire Pomona', in order to make them more widely accessible. The diligence and skill of our (voluntary) Project Officer, Tony Malpas, within a sub-committee headed by Peter Austerfield, needs to be recorded - the fruit (forgive pun) of two years' endeavour. We are now benefitting from the production of an illustrated booklet embracing apples grown in Wales and the Marches, thanks to Michael and Christine Porter. (See P. 26) Their involvement with Tony in negotiations with Herefordshire Council's Parks and Countryside Department has resulted also in the purchase of Marler-Hayley display boards, including the design work involved in what goes on them. These are in regular use at shows in which we participate.

All of this activity has resulted in an increasing number of sub-groups of our main committee, and more time and effort devoted to organisation and administration. Increasing activity among other groups in the U.K. with similar aims to our own has raised the issue of whether we join a National Orchards Association (N.O.A.), with its own structure, or whether we want simply a central organ for distribution of information and awareness, which is what we would prefer.

As regards orchard development, we now have the real possibility of participating in the Holme Lacy College's organic initiative called 'Project Carrot'.

These are all in addition to the normal pre-occupation with cultivar identification and general advice, generated by the annual displays of fruit to the public.

Ray Boddington

## WEOBLEY A.G.M. REPORT

Last year's annual celebration of Apple Day was held in the Village Hall at Weobley on 6th October and was well attended. It was preceded by the third Annual General Meeting at which the Chairman, Ray Boddington, said that it had not been

a good year, with Foot and Mouth and wet weather conditions virtually preventing any orchard work. Some trees at Donnington had died of waterlogging and other orchardists had reported similar problems. The new display boards were up on show in the hall and thanks were expressed to Herefordshire Council for funding the purchase, and to the staff who had prepared the eye-catching posters. Charitable status was still being worked on. Diggory Kempton had taken on the work of Membership Secretary from John Aldridge, a Founder Member.

Tom Froggatt presented the accounts, showing a healthy position and John Aldridge reported twelve new Life Members, but would like to see more renewals.

After the formal business was concluded, items discussed included Dr Barrie Juniper's visit to Uzbekistan, home of the apple, and his work on DNA. Appeals were again made for helpers at events, or for more specialist jobs, and this provoked a lively discussion with some excellent ideas being raised, including more contact with members throughout the year. John Powell demonstrated apple identification on his computer, while Mike Porter and his band displayed 143 apple varieties and were very busy identifying samples which visitors had brought. Teas and various apple goodies were popular and the day was deemed to have been a success.

Tom Froggatt

[Editor's Footnote. The offer of help from Richard Cheshire, as an Assistant Editor, resulted in the production of the first short Spring News Sheet, circulated in March with the questionnaire. His computer skills have been much appreciated, and, from the analysis of the returns prepared by Ray, Richard put the information received into spreadsheet format, so that it can be read easily and further additions incorporated. If you have yet to complete a questionnaire, there will be some at the AGM.]

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

### Apple Day at Penlanole

For the first time, one of our members in Wales, Philip Bowen, opened his orchard in the Wye Valley, near Rhayader, and, on a sunny Sunday in September, a very pleasant day was enjoyed, with a barbecue and bar to sustain the visitors, an interesting old orchard to be investigated, with new plantings of trees supplied by Paul Davis and country dancing led by the local ceilidh band, aptly named Crabapple, to add to the entertainment. *MAN* put on a small display and attempted to identify some of the fruit specimens brought in. Some need to be looked at again, this year, particularly a very late yellow green cooker shown to us by member William Thomas, from Penybont, not far away, and an interesting one from Ystrad Farm, across the Wye, brought by Julian Gibson-Watt, which we thought might be *Galloway Pippin*. Philip has sent some background material about the farm and the CCW Orchards and Parkland Scheme grant, as follows:-

"When Penlanole was put up for sale in lots in September 1910, the whole estate comprised some 3,340 acres stretching across a sizeable chunk of Brecknockshire and Radnorshire but there was no reference, either in the sale details or on the accompanying plans, to any apple orchard.

My mother-in-law bought the house and surrounding 39 acres fifty years later, in 1958. On a terraced south facing bank to the east of the house there was, by that time, a well established but abandoned orchard. We believe this must have been laid out in the 1920s.

In 1998, with generous financial support and invaluable advice from the Countryside Council for Wales, we started the regeneration process: clearing the bracken, pruning and replanting. In four years we have added some 50 trees to the existing 24. Although Ray Woods of CCW has found some interesting lichens and bryophytes, the Marcher Apple Network tell us that there is nothing of great significance in those 24 original trees. The late-flowering cooker, *Royal Jubilee*, is there. But an orchard is much more than the sum of its constituent parts. Our orchard is a place to picnic, (along with Dinah the saddleback as she scrumps for windfalls). It's a place to be quiet as the mist clears from the valley on an autumnal morning or it's a place to work, collecting apples for the press and filling the coldroom with bottles of juice to last through the coming year. It's also a place to party! This year we'll have another Open Day with the theme 'Entertainment under the Apples'. We've booked a Barbershop Choir, two theatre groups, the local childrens' choir and a band. Again there will be a barbecue and bar and it'll all be for charity. So put down September 15th in your diary. Don't miss it!" [See Events P.30.]  
Philip Bowen

#### **2002 Royal Welsh Smallholder Magazine Weekend**

Once again, *MAN* had a stand at the Smallholder Show at Llanelwedd on May 18th/19th. This year, the Show included a Garden Festival and the event attracted nearly 13,000 people, over twice as many as last year when it was held in October because of the Foot and Mouth outbreak. Actually, October is a better time for us as there are lots of apples to display at that time of year. All we could manage in May were a few trees in blossom but, nevertheless, there was a lot of interest although time will tell if this is translated into new members!

I was asked to give a talk both days about the Marcher Apple Network but these were poorly attended and I was talking mainly to the converted.

Many thanks to all the people who assisted on the stand. If anyone else would like to help out next year, could they please let us know? You don't have to be a fountain of knowledge on the subject, only enthusiastic and each helper gets a free ticket!

Paul Davis

**Llancaiach Fawr Manor, Treharis, Glamorgan.** *MAN* put on the large display of fruit which had earlier been on show at 'The Big Apple' at Much Marcle in Herefordshire. All labelled in their baskets, they looked most attractive and we were fortunate in obtaining the services of David Brinn, formerly Education Officer of the Brecon Beacons National Park, (now retired) who came on the Sunday and took photographs of the display tables, the named apples and the new display boards. These transparencies will add to the collection of slides available for lecture purposes by members. Paul Davis also had a stand there and had some of the Welsh varieties of apple trees for sale, together with displays of their fruit.

Sheila Leitch

## ORCHARD GLEANINGS

The outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease last year curtailed our programme of orchard visits, but we were able to survey one interesting old orchard at White Castle in Monmouthshire. In several ways this is a typical traditional farm orchard of this area: situated in a sheltered sloping site below the homestead and containing a mixture of standard trees. Probably in the last century the fruit was sold at market in Abergavenny or Monmouth. There were several large trees of Bramley's Seedling and a wide range of other varieties from early apples like Emneth Early and Lady Sudeley to late keepers such as Blenheim Orange, Lord Derby, Monarch, Newton Wonder and May Queen. At the top of the orchard, behind a barn, were two trees bearing heavy crops of small top-shaped apples - like some we had seen, but been unable to identify, at another old orchard near Llanarth belonging to the brother of the White Castle farmer. This puzzling apple, which does not seem to be a cider variety, keeps until Spring but does not seem to develop much flavour and is far too small for a cooker. At the foot of a steep bank in an adjacent relic orchard was a single tree of a sort of quoining we have not encountered before and which was grafted last Winter for further study in one of the MAN museum orchards. In the main orchard there was a single, very tall, tree of the Monmouthshire variety St. Cecilia, a fine-flavoured late eater raised in 1900 by John Basham, Nurseryman, of Bassaleg, near Newport.

During a visit to the Royal Horticultural Society Lindley Library in London last Autumn, I had come across a paper by John Basham which he read to the Society on 21st Nov. 1899, entitled 'Fruit in Monmouthshire and South Wales'. In 1899 there were 4,035 acres of grass orchards in Monmouthshire, nearly all of which were "situated in sheltered spots near the homestead". In his treatise, Basham travelled on a pomological tour through Monmouthshire describing the condition of orchards, the varieties of fruit grown and commenting on the state of the fruit-growing industry in the county. Speaking at a time of agricultural depression, with labourers leaving the countryside to seek higher wages in the towns, he commented on the problems of orchard maintenance, the variable quality of crops and the difficulty of selling fruit. In Autumn, dealers travelled around the farms buying entire crops at knock-down prices. Basham talks mainly about apples, but there is an occasional mention of other tree fruits, such as the large crops of Shropshire Prune damsons grown in hedges around Llandevaud and the small, late cherries cultivated around the Wentwood Forest for the markets in Newport and Cardiff. The regions around Cwmcarnvan, Monmouth and Skenfrith were noted for the production of cider apples, with "Potheer" (probably Perthyre, which originated at a farm of that name near Monmouth) recorded as a favourite variety. At Cwmcarnvan Basham encountered several trees of Ten Commandments which previously he "had only read about in Dr. Hogg's Fruit Manual". Varieties of apple are frequently noted. In many places King of the Pippins, generally known locally as "Shropshire Pippin", was popular; in the region around Dingestow this was called "Orange Pearmain".

In one orchard at Llantrisant in the Usk valley nearly all the trees, including a prolific "Russet", had been raised from seed. On our orchard surveys in this area we have found that this practice continued well into the twentieth century. In the Usk valley, around Bettws Newydd and Llanfair Kilgeddin, fine crops of Cox's

Orange Pippin, Alexander, Blenheim, Catshead and King of the Pippins were destined for sale in the markets at Abergavenny and Pontypool.

In the light of the problems *MAN* has encountered with waterlogged soils, it was instructive to read John Basham's description of the system for establishing orchards on the low-lying land between Chepstow and Newport now known as the Gwent Levels. To avoid waterlogging, the young apple trees were planted on the surface of ridges running parallel with the reens (drainage ditches), the roots being covered with soil previously dredged from the reens. After they had been well-staked, the trees were dressed with plenty of farmyard manure which encouraged surface rooting. Shelter from the strong westerly gales was provided by planting belts of willow or English elm. By this very labour-intensive method, heavy crops of high quality fruit were obtained, though it is admitted that the apple trees were comparatively short lived.

One reason for visiting the Lindley Library, which holds the main archive of the RHS, was to try to authenticate an apple from Glasbury which the *MAN* panel had provisionally identified as Sugarloaf Pippin. Further detailed investigations last Autumn supported that diagnosis. In the 'Pomological Magazine' (1828) at the Lindley Library was a description of the Sugarloaf Pippin, with a large coloured illustration, which left little doubt that this is the true identity of the Glasbury apple. According to the 'Pomological Magazine', the variety is of Russian origin, having been sent to the London Horticultural Society early in the nineteenth century as Dolgoi Squoznoi (meaning long and transparent). It is a very early tall apple, with a smooth yellow-green skin which becomes very pale when the apple is ripe in August. Its flavour is good, but its season short.

I have been trying to trace two old apple varieties of the Welsh Marches. The Birdstow Wasp has not been recorded, to the best of my knowledge, since Hogg described it in the final edition of the 'Fruit Manual' (1884). It was a large, second-early cooker, about the size and shape of a 'Bramley', in most respects rather like the apple known in the Glasbury area as 'Carnation'. Hogg adds as a postscript that it "...derives its name from the parish of Birdstow, near Ross, Herefordshire, and is called 'The Wasp Apple' because these insects are so fond of it. The skin is greasy when handled and leaves the apple scent on the hands". Clearly its place of origin is Birdstow, a village about 1 km. west of Ross-on-Wye, with a parish church dedicated to St. Bridget, or Bride. I wonder if the Birdstow Wasp still survives in a cottage garden or orchard around Ross.

The Sweeney Nonpareil was also described by Hogg in his 'Fruit Manual'; I have found no subsequent records. This was a medium sized, regular, round-conical, late cooker, with a skin "...of a fine lively green colour, which is glossy and shining, but almost entirely covered with patches and reticulations of thick greyish-brown russet, which in some parts is rough and cracked; sometimes tinged brown where exposed to the sun". Hogg considered it an excellent sauce apple, but too acid for the dessert. The Sweeney Nonpareil was raised in 1807 by Thomas Netherton Parker of Sweeney Hall, near Oswestry in Shropshire. His handsome mansion has been transformed into an hotel. It would be interesting to hear from residents in that part of Shropshire whether any trees of Sweeney Nonpareil are known.

Mike Porter

## FRUIT NEWS FROM GELLIRHYD

Springtime this year was wonderful with some of the finest and most prolific blossom that we have ever witnessed - our anticipation of a bumper crop of fruit for our juicing business was very high. Then, having given us such good blossom, Mother Nature decided that we needed constant rainfall - so our hopes for a good crop turned to concern that if the bees couldn't get out to pollinate, then our crop would be non-existent.

By some miracle, however, we are pleased to say that our apple crop is very good, and we can only assume that the pollinating insects all had a good supply of sou'westers!

The only variety not doing so well this year is Blenheim Orange. Most pears are fruiting well and our cherries cropped well and supplied our bird population with a feast. Can anyone tell me how jays can locate ripe cherries from miles around?

One problem this year, particularly on the cherries, is a very high infestation of blackfly, but then the insect eating birds and the ladybirds are happy!

Colin Gardiner

## NEWS OF OUR ORCHARDS

### TREDOMEN COURT, Llanfili, Breconshire.

Last year, Bryn Davies strimmed around all the trees. In the Spring a work-party removed some dead trees and planted a few new varieties in the drier parts of the orchard. All the trees were pruned, ties adjusted and labels replaced where necessary. Old plastic labels are being replaced with more permanent aluminium ones.

Mike Porter

### CROFT PENDARREN, Llangynidr, Breconshire.

With the addition of three young trees in the Spring, the orchard is almost full. Bracken and bramble are invading vigorously from several directions; it would be helpful to have a mower capable of controlling these. There have been fine displays of bird's-foot trefoil and knapweed - the former attracting a small colony of common blue butterflies. Small skippers, meadow brown and speckled wood butterflies have been flying on warm, sunny days. Four trees have produced an apple or two. Across the lane, marauding parties of grey squirrels have joined forces with a family of carrion crows in attacks on the early apples. Once again Irish Peach, Devonshire Quarrenden, White Joaneting and Gravenstein have been stripped.

Mike Porter

### WESTHOPE, near Canon Pyon, Herefordshire.

While all the trees continue to grow well, this year has been a poor one for pollination. We will be lucky to get a dozen fruit from the fifteen standard trees. Last year some of the trees cropped quite well, especially Severn Bank and Domino.

John Aldridge undertook the annual pruning and this year I was not able to see him in action. Imagine my surprise, therefore, when I saw the tree in the top right hand corner had been reduced to what appeared to be a five foot 'broom handle'. This has been top grafted with Newland Sack from Newland Court on to a tree which might possibly be 'Butter Apple'. Wood from the 'Butter Apple' has been taken for

grafting on to M9 so that it can be properly identified. The Newland Sack seems to have taken well.

Keeping the rampant vegetation at bay around the perimeter of the orchard is a continuing task. The brambles creep forward yearly in spite of my best efforts and more drastic action will be necessary soon. A fine stand of Rose Bay Willow Herb at least adds colour but we all know how this spreads too.

The deer cages can be kept tidy by strimming inside and around, a delicate operation I have referred to before. I am trying to devise a way of entering the cages other than by ladder (they are about five feet high). All the trees now have mesh guards instead of plastic and these should keep the rabbits at bay.

Peter Austerfield

### **DONNINGTON, near Ledbury, Herefordshire.**

We continue to monitor the situation on this site, following the loss of some half-dozen trees to root asphyxiation last year, due to the excessively wet winter of 2000/01. We have not attempted to replace the dead trees, obviously, nor to fill up the rest of the allotted site in the meantime, but the survivors have been making encouraging progress. Is it too much to hope that the worst may be over? Some investment in better land drainage may be required. The planned production of an Information Sheet when planting is completed has, of necessity, been delayed.

Ray Boddington

### **NEWS FROM OTHER GROUPS**

We continue to exchange Newsletters with other groups with similar aims to our own. A few extracts and items of interest are included below:-

#### **CHESHIRE ORCHARD PROJECT**

This group is a partnership of organisations coordinated by the Cheshire Landscape Trust working with Cheshire County Council, Cheshire Federation of Women's Institutes, Cheshire Wildlife Trust and a number of other local bodies. The Trust has joined *MAN* as a Life Member and we keep in close touch. 'The Acorn', their Newsletter for Parish Tree Wardens, Winter 2002, has an interesting article from 'Tree Damage Alert No. 70, Dec. 2001\*', from which the following extract is given :- "In March, (2001) Tree Damage Alert 65 predicted that 'sodden and drowned' (S.A.D.) might have affected trees. We suspected the grey skies and persistent flooding during the winter months had killed the roots of some trees. This proved to be the case when we examined trees where above ground parts had recently died. Some of these trees had managed to produce some new roots, but these were inadequate to sustain the trees during the hot dry weather around Easter. Other trees did survive, but succumbed later showing signs suggestive of an infection by a Phytophthora species, or Honey fungus (Armillaria species). Such infections were sometimes confirmed in laboratory tests". It goes on to say " It is possible many trees that survived the flooding and the ups and downs of the 2001 summer weather may still succumb in 2002. Much may depend upon the weather conditions during the coming months!"

\* *Tree Damage Alerts* are produced for the benefit of the arboricultural profession and issued by the Arboricultural Advisory and Information Service.

To quote from their information leaflet, "The Cheshire Orchard Project is trying to track down old varieties of Cheshire apples. We currently know of 32 different varieties that were developed in the county and have 15 of them grafted onto rootstocks. Cheshire Landscape Trust provides many of these rare varieties to Tree Wardens, schools and community groups to plant in community orchards. To date the Trust has supplied free trees for over 35 orchards across Cheshire."

Details of the conference they are holding at Norton Priory, Runcorn, called 'The Orchard Revival - where are we now?' are listed under Apple Events on P.30. It is not yet fully booked, so do try and go. Unfortunately, It clashes with the Malvern Autumn Show weekend, but Tom Froggatt, our Company Secretary/Treasurer, has arranged to attend and will still be on duty on Sunday at Malvern.

Sheila Leitch

### **GLOUCESTERSHIRE ORCHARD GROUP**

The editorial of their Newsletter Issue 1, Spring 2002, states that "GOG, recently launched in collaboration with Gloucestershire County Council, aims to conserve, celebrate and promote traditional orchards within Gloucestershire. Sadly, the county has already lost 75% of its orchards in the last 50 years. By bringing together people with a shared interest in orchards, we hope to halt and reverse that decline, and help preserve this vital remaining part of our heritage. We hope that the group will enable a gathering and exchange of information, a sharing of resources and that it will develop and promote orcharding practice that will enhance biodiversity." MAN welcomes the formation of another neighbouring orchard group with similar aims to ourselves. They are holding pruning, budding and grafting training events throughout the year, in conjunction with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers.

Sheila Leitch

### **NORTHERN FRUIT GROUP**

Hemsley Castle, N. Yorks. Collection of 'traditional' North Country apples. This is an exciting and important development in the attractive walled garden, made possible in part by the generous gift of a large number of apple trees by Hilary Wilson, Chairman of NFG.

Great Yorkshire Showground Orchard. We are also involved in developing a collection of Yorkshire varieties at this site in Harrogate.

### Heritage Lottery Fund Progress Report

The application from NFG/University of Leeds for funding for locating and surveying a sample of Yorkshire's orchards is now being considered again after final points from the referee's report have been answered. We should have their decision early in September.

### The Apple Identification Key

Progress is being made. Visits to Brogdale and Wisley this year will, in part, be to 'fill in' missing values in varieties already described, as well as describing more varieties. A slightly different filtering system is to be used this year, in conjunction with a database in which all missing values have been eliminated. i.e. only those varieties where the descriptions are complete have been included. Major advances in APPLEKEY require (expensive!) computer programmer's time. Money has been



allocated for this work in our HLF bid (see above) so 'fingers crossed'! We are hopeful that an effective user friendly APPLEKEY is possible and, moreover, well on the way.

Simon Clark

### **SAVE FOUNDATION**

This organisation, devoted to safeguarding agricultural varieties in Europe, has produced the first edition of 'NGO-Zoom Fruits', described as a Directory and portraits of organisations dealing/working with old fruit varieties in Europe. Reports are sent to us in exchange for our Newsletters. *MAN* is the only entry under the heading Great Britain. My postcode is incorrect and telephone number not given, which may account for no enquiries coming in from this source.

Sheila Leitch

### **AN UPDATE ON THE DREAM**

Thank you all! Last year, as a wet-behind-the-ears new member of the Marcher Apple Network, I wrote of my dream to have an orchard to manage, and appealed for your help in finding something suitable. I received several calls, letters and emails, spoke to four people at length, in the end visited only a couple - but as of now am no further forward towards my goal than at this time last year.

Just the same, I am most grateful to all of you who got in touch. It was a serious enquiry, and I learned a great deal from talking, and exchanging letters and emails, with you. The process did however help to draw a clearer picture of what my wife and I are looking for - and indeed, what we are not looking for. I also feel that the contacts made during the process could ultimately have led to success, but circumstances got in the way. Let me explain.

Very soon after publication, my wife and I travelled to North America - principally a holiday, encompassing much of New England and the contingent Canadian provinces. We had plenty of time to think and plan (not least during and in the aftermath of the September atrocities; we were several hundred miles away, but caught up in the emotion and turmoil), and we looked at a number of upstate New York and Ontario commercial orchards. The prices there are attractive, but ultimately we decided we didn't want that intensive an operation.

This helped us to focus. What we are looking for is what you might term an old domestic or farmhouse orchard, not a commercial site. Not serried ranks of small trees, but rather no more (maybe fewer) than a dozen or twenty old, standard, trees with enough gaps to fill in with a little new planting. And we are looking to buy something like this outright. We had various offers of co-management schemes - I had specifically invited ideas like this - but when giving this deeper thought, it starts to get complicated around issues of investment, responsibility, who decides what, even the ability to learn through making mistakes!

We also visited a beautiful old orchard which would have fitted the bill perfectly but for one thing: one of its boundaries was a busy, and noisy, main road. A key part of the better-defined dream involves peace and quiet away from traffic.

I'm still eager to hear from anyone - perhaps a farmer, or someone with a larger village home - with a redundant, maybe derelict, orchard. Laugh if you will at my blind optimism, but if no-one knows what we're looking for, there's no way we'll ever find it!

And why haven't we followed up more opportunities this year? Well, early in the New Year we bought the bungalow next door to our old Lincolnshire farmhouse, so all of our spare time, and much of our spare cash (lovely idea!) has been devoted to renovating that. At the same time we were blessed with a wonderful gift of Bramley windfalls which kept us well provisioned from November until the end of April - which raises another question: does anyone please have a sound, large, unwanted apple rack for sale? Something maybe three foot square and four foot high - maybe even larger?

Another year, another Newsletter - so it must be worth trying again. Do drop me a line if you can help with either plea! Write to me at The Old Farmhouse, Church Road, Branston, Lincoln LN4 1LZ, or by email to ct@clara.net.

Chris Taylor

Editor's Footnote: I hope that when the Taylors find their orchard, their love and care are rewarded and do not meet with the trials and tribulations that Sarah was telling me about, ruefully, when we met up for a walk in the Black Mountains on a lovely day in July. I suggested she put her plea into the Newsletter from whence advice might come on the various problems affecting her orchard, though I doubt, in her more optimistic moments, that she would wish it away. On the walk the song of the skylarks, the distant views, the warm sunshine, the infectious joy of the dog and the good humour of other walkers we met, who had been waiting so long for a fine weekend to get out onto the tops, did us both good and I returned to the compilation of this year's Newsletter in a better frame of mind. I had been despondent with the lack of material which had come in by the deadline of 1st July due, of course, to the fact that so little could be done last year. Some urgent phone calls have produced further articles, for which many thanks.

Sheila Leitch

### **SARAH' S AFFLICTIONS**

Anyone want to buy an orchard - one hundred and forty varieties and dropping rapidly ( the number of varieties, that is)? Depression is setting in.

After 'Foot and Mouth', when I couldn't get the orchard mowed, the rabbits moved in. I'd had no problem before due to some helpful foxes but, with the growth of grass hard around each tree, disaster emerged at the end of the year, with fourteen girdled and another eight half eaten.

My solution, which has half-worked, was to inarch\* the trees with two new rootstocks each ( which has made a mess of my notes) and stuff a big green rabbit guard around each.

2002. Now brings the next problem. The ants have laid eggs and filled with soil those expensive rabbit guards and 'suffocated' several trees. The 'mowers' I employed at £250 a throw to mow (at least that is what they call it) my one acre have

brush-cut through at least two more trees. Canker has laid waste to a few others and something (potash deficiency? apple mildew?) is browning off the leaves of any number of my poor trees that are still remaining.

My dad has none of these problems, not even canker, in his walled garden collection at Wytham, Oxford. He doesn't even have to cut the grass as he can lay carpet down between the trees. Nothing seems to attack them apart from sawfly.

Help! I guess I'm just too amateurish, but all this is making me wonder why I'm bothering. Roll on Apple Day. That'll cheer me up.

Sarah Juniper, Dursley, July 2002.

[Editor's Note: Inarch\*. I had to consult one of our library books ('The Fruit Grower's Guide, 1892') to understand this term. A strong stock planted alongside a ring-barked tree can be grafted into the tree above the damaged area by cutting a slit upwards in the tree and a slit downwards in the stock to receive it. They should fit closely together and then be covered with wax or clay, so that the ring-barked tree virtually has a new root system to supply water and nutrients.

Has anybody else had a similar bad time? We can certainly sympathise with the ant soil problem which has built up in our cheap spiral brown plastic rabbit guards and caused the bark to rot. My own old damson trees have distorted brown foliage and hardly any fruits this year and looked awful in June, though new shoots were freshening up the appearance by mid July. Paul Davis has sent in notes from the RHS (see below) which Sarah and others may find helpful.]

### APPLE AND PEAR SCAB

Scab is a very common disease of apple and pear trees, which affects both leaves and fruit. Foliar scab has been particularly bad this year in West Wales.

#### How do I recognise scab?

The leaves develop dark greenish-brown spots or patches and may fall prematurely. Dark or corky patches also appear on the fruit. If extensive, the corky patches may crack, often in a pattern of small squares, causing considerable damage to the fruit. On badly affected trees the twigs will develop blistered swellings that burst in spring, releasing disease spores.

#### What causes scab?

The fungus *Venturia inaequalis* affects apples, and the related *V. pirina* affects pears. The disease is likely to be worse in mild, damp weather and some varieties are more susceptible than others.

#### How serious are apple scab and pear scab?

A mild attack will cause only cosmetic damage, but a severe attack will weaken the tree and spoil a lot of the fruit. Damage to shoots by scab can also provide entry points for the spores of canker, a more serious disease.

### **Can the damaged fruit be used?**

Yes. Peel off the scabby bits. The affected fruit can usually be stored successfully unless it is badly cracked.

### **What about resistant varieties?**

Any variety can get scab, but good varieties showing more than average resistance include the following:

**Apples** Discovery, Lord Lambourne, Grenadier, Falstaff

**Pears** Beurré Hardy, Beth and Conference

### **Are there any varieties to avoid?**

These varieties are particularly susceptible to scab:

**Apples** Bramley's Seedling, Cox's Orange Pippin, Gala, James Grieve and Laxton's Superb, John Downie.

**Pears** Williams Bon Chrétien, Doyenne du Comice.

### **How can I control the disease?**

Once established, it cannot be controlled that season.

### **What can I do to prevent it?**

Clearing up and burning fallen leaves from infected trees reduces the numbers of spores available to re-infect next season. With badly affected trees, cutting out twigs with scabby swellings will also help. Susceptible varieties will probably need spraying, too, to keep the disease under control. Spray with a contact fungicide such as Bio Dithane 945 or a systemic fungicide approved for fruit trees such as Nimrod-T, Spotless, Systhane and Supercarb at the following stages:

- I. Bud burst, when the buds first open (March to early April).
- II. Green cluster, when the leaves start to open and the flower buds are visible (early to mid April).
- III. Pink or white bud, as the flower buds start to open (late April).
- IV. Late petal fall, when most of the petals have dropped (May).
- V. Fruitlets, when the young fruit are clearly developed (mid June).

This programme will also control mildew but it is better to replace susceptible varieties with resistant ones rather than fight it with chemicals.

Paul Davis

[Editor's Note: For those who use organic remedies, hygiene is very important as the disease overwinters on fallen debris. Lawrence D. Hills, founder of the Henry Doubleday Research Association, in his book 'Organic Gardening' suggests, if trees are growing in grass, mow with a rotary grass cutter so that fragments can be taken underground by earthworms. He says "To these useful creatures, the 95% of the scab spores that overwinter on dead apple and pear leaves are the equivalent of mushrooms on toast. Those who do not have this type of mower should sweep their leaves in the normal way, and tuck them away in the middle of the leafmould heap to rot harmlessly." A spraying programme with Bordeaux mixture can also be used, but has to be frequently repeated from before blossom time.]

## FRESH OFF THE PRESS

Might it be a good idea to open up a section in the annual Newsletter for those with juicing, cider or perry-making interests to write about their activities, needs or enthusiasms?

I am an amateur cider and perry-maker, producing enough for the needs of the family, friends and interested parties (a growing number of these)! My particular interest is in perry, an enthusiasm that started having made a delicious but very laborious gallon eleven years ago on a tiny hobby press in a domestic kitchen. I would be keen to hear from or start a dialogue with others of similar inclination, reporting through the Newsletter any interesting or entertaining findings. It would be excellent if we could thereby continue lots of good work already done by *MAN* members and others if we could help preserve endangered or useful pear varieties and share ideas on good practice. I think it is quite right that *MAN* should be preserving and researching old fruit varieties, but if enjoyable use can also be made from the glut of fruit that will inevitably result one day, the drive to keep up the good work will be given extra momentum. It might - legal requirements permitting - provide further means to enable *MAN* to raise more funds for development and management of its various sites and projects.

David Frith

## DOES *MAN* NEED A CIDER AND PERRY GROUP OF ITS OWN?

*Tony Malpas discusses the pros and cons.*

Over the last year or so it has been suggested that we should get together those members who have a particular interest in cider and perry varieties with a view to forming a cider group within *MAN*. Of the 60 or so replies to Sheila's questionnaire, there were more than 50 with positive responses to the questions on cider, perry and juicing, so the interest is certainly there.

But if there is that level of interest, why not encourage members to join one of the organizations in our area devoted to cider and perry, such as the Three Counties Cider and Perry Association (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire), the Museum of Cider in Hereford or the recently formed Welsh Cider Association?

In fact many of us already do belong to one or other of these, some even to several. The 3CCPA and the Museum serve the interests of cider and perry makers locally very well, their main focus of interest tending to be on manufacturing techniques and cider quality, competitions and tasting. The Cider Museum puts on every year a display of cider apples, in which a *MAN* member plays a part, and The Big Apple also includes a show of cider apples and perry pears, as well as dessert and culinary, on Apple Day. *MAN* members make contributions to all these shows. Several members of the 3CCPA are also involved in the running of Big Apple Day. For more information on the Welsh Cider Association, see the article below by Dave Matthews.

It can be argued however that, in spite of all these interesting and useful activities, we still lack a means of focussing attention on identification and conservation which, in *MAN*, are so well developed in the culinary and dessert

departments, and yet somewhat lacking when it comes to cider and perry fruit. There is a need for a wider dissemination of knowledge about cider fruit and the peculiar problems of identification which they present. Also, on the English side of the border, activities referred to above are confined largely to the three counties mentioned and do not provide a forum for the varieties of Shropshire, for example, or for those of *MAN* members living somewhat further afield.

With all this in mind, it is proposed to call a meeting, on the same day as the *MAN* AGM, to discuss what might be done to meet these needs. If you are interested, please come to this meeting and make your views known.

Tony Malpas

### **WELSH CIDER SOCIETY - CYMDEITHAS SEIDR CYMRU**

The Welsh Cider Society was founded in June 2001, and our primary aim is to promote craft cider and perry making in Wales. Of more interest to *MAN*, however, is our secondary aim of identifying and conserving all Welsh varieties of cider apple and perry pear.

I started to track down some local varieties in Raglan's orchards during the autumn of 2001, with initial identification help from Tony Malpas. I was reasonably successful, and the results can be seen on our website at [www.welshcider.co.uk](http://www.welshcider.co.uk) where you should click on 'fruit'. Our internet fruit database has two uses. Firstly, it is meant as a tool for identification, with photos and descriptions of the fruit and trees. It is my hope that other organisations, such as *MAN*, can also produce internet identification databases, and that, with links between the sites, we can provide a resource for the whole world. Secondly, graftwood has been taken from many of the varieties, and has been propagated by Paul Davis at his nursery. Paul's contact details are on the database, allowing the public to directly order rare varieties for their orchard or garden.

Our second Welsh Cider Festival and Championships, held at the Clytha Arms, near Abergavenny, will be over the Whitsun weekend of 31st May to the 2nd June, 2003. You'd be most welcome! We hope to have Paul Davis there, selling Welsh cider and perry trees to the public. So, in a bizarrely glass-to-fruit kind of way, drinkers who find a cider or perry that they love, may be able to take home a tree of the variety that produced it!

There are a number of ways in which you can support the Welsh Cider Society. Order some trees from Paul Davis, or join me in my hunt for Welsh varieties. You could even join the Society by sending £5 to me. My contact details are on the website.

Dave Matthews, Secretary CSC

### **CIDER APPLE SUB-GROUP**

For those members of *MAN* interested in identification of cider apples (rather than in cider making) it has been suggested that a register of the varieties to be found in the old orchards of the Marches could be created. Many of the orchards across the region were planted at the turn of the century and further extensive planting was done in the years after World War 1. The identity of individual trees planted during

this period have, in many cases, become lost.

The idea of creating a register is to attempt to re-identify these trees by cross-reference and comparison with known trees and apples in different orchards. That which may not be recognised in one location may be fully identified in another and hence the variety of an unknown tree can be re-established.

Perhaps this could also be discussed if a meeting takes place at the AGM, as proposed by Tony Malpas.

Richard Cheshire

[Editor's Footnote: Well, we have given cider and perry trees and juice production a good airing in this issue, having, up till now, been rather shy of getting involved, as we lacked any expertise on the subject and felt we had more than enough to do to build up our knowledge of dessert and culinary fruits. However, with membership growing and the interest and knowledge increasing, as indicated by replies to the questionnaire, the time seems to have come, so air your views at the AGM or, if you are unable to attend, write to us and we can read out your letters.]

#### CIDERMAKING FESTIVAL

To celebrate Apple Day, the Cider Museum in Hereford holds an annual Cidermaking Festival which this year will take place on Saturday and Sunday, 19th & 20th October. Refreshments are available and our shop offers a wide range of books about apples, plus gifts and apple-themed kitchen ware.

Normal Museum entrance charges apply (£2.60 adults, £2.10 OAPs, Children & students, with special rates for parties of 15 or more) - Contact the Cider Museum for more details, Tel. 01432-354207. [See Events on P.31]

Margaret Thomson  
Museum Director

#### A SWEET ASSIGNMENT

Someone who used to keep his bees in my orchard was, inter alia, Trade Standard Officer at the National Bee Convention at Stoneleigh in April. Having been let down by two paying organisations, he asked if *MAN* would be interested, at no cost. I like freebies and so, armed with apple and quince blossoms in various stages, from an early cider apple just formed to a *Newton Wonder*, still tightly budded, I arrived at Stoneleigh at 8a.m. to find that Ken had already erected notice boards. Posters were soon fixed, blossoms laid out and labelled and books set out for hopeful sales. *MAN* member, David Barker, a beekeeper from Kings Norton, Birmingham, joined me and there seemed to be a continuous flow of questions, on all aspects of pomology and related subjects. How I wish that I had taken Joan Morgan, Rosanne Sanders and Mr Bultitude's books to help identify "an apple my grandmother grew in her garden 60 years ago. It was red with pale stripes and would cook as well as eat". I am still learning identification skills when confronted with real apples, but ones in someone else's memory defeat me!

Book sales exceeded all expectations and we enrolled some new members, in fact an emergency supply of extra application forms was prepared for us by the Bee

keepers' Office. Delivery of the Notice Boards to Aylton, for use at the Big Apple Blossom weekend, brought a long and satisfying day to a close.

We have been invited to attend the Convention in 2003.

Tom Froggatt

Elizabeth Rowe has sent in this evocative scene:-

**Mary Webb's heroine, Prue Sam, describing the attic where apples were stored in 'Precious Bane', published in 1924, and set in the early 1800s, in the Marches.**

'When I was lost for somewhere to turn to, I'd run to the attic, and it was a core of sweetness in much bitter.....The roof came down to the floor all round, and all the beams and rafters were oak, and the floor went up and down like stormy water. The apples and pears had their places according to kind all round the room. There were codlins and golden pippins, brown russets and scarlet crabs, biffins, nonpareils and queanings, big green bakers, pearmains and red-streaks. We had a mort of pears too, for in such an old garden, always in the family, every generation'll put in a few trees. We had Worcester pears and butter pears, jargonelle, bergamot and Good Christian. Just after the last gathering, the attic used to be as bright as a church window, all reds and golds.

#### FROM OUR CORRESPONDENTS

I mentioned in last year's Newsletter how often my interests overlap and interconnect, and the following letter just received is a lovely example:-

Dear Mrs Leitch,

The R.H.S. gave me your name and said that you may be able to help me track down an apple.

I am interested in Family History and have been in touch by post with a distant cousin. I am not a direct descendant of Jeremiah Mutton, late 1800s, but he is on the family tree. Gill said that he had given a cutting of an apple tree to a friend and the friend's son, or grandson, had sent a cutting [actually an apple] off for identification.

It was a new/or unknown apple and the centre [MAN] would propagate it and put it on the market as the Jerry Mutton apple tree. I don't have any children but my three sisters do and there are quite a lot of Muttons in the U.K.

The R.H.S. cannot trace this tree so I hope you will be able to help me. Many of us would love to buy an apple named after one of our ancestors and I would like to be able to give them some good news. I enclose a S.A.E. for your reply.

Yours sincerely,  
Dorothy Hague.

P.S. I was always embarrassed by the name as a teenager but Gill Reynolds has traced the male line back to the 1500s so I don't feel so bad.



I have telephoned Dorothy and promised her full details of how we came by this apple, which turned out to be a Burr Knot apple, which will grow from cuttings, roots being produced from the 'burrs' which occur at the base of the branches. We grafted the scion sent to us by Mr Pegram from Market Harborough, Leicester, who had lived near the original tree in the garden of Jerry Mutton and had asked us to identify the fruit. We planted it on an M9 rootstock at Tredomen in 1999, as one of our 'wait and see' trees, but how news of it reached some of the Mutton family remains a mystery. Dorothy was delighted to hear that Paul will graft trees for those who would like to have them.

### Solitary Bees

Chris Taylor's article in Newsletter 7, entitled 'Positive Pollination, or life after Varroa' evoked a response from another member, who has gone abroad on holiday and not had time to write in again with his views. Further letters welcome for next year's publication. Chris now adds a follow-up:-

#### **Taken to Task....**

Within these pages last year, your generous editor Sheila Leitch allowed me space to make the case for Osmia rufa, the red mason bee, and other wild and solitary bees as a means to counter reduced numbers of honey bees (through Varroa), or because of bee-keepers' reluctance (or enforced inability) to travel in the countryside as freely as in other years. My suggestion was that reduced numbers of the latter could be countered by increased numbers of the former, with the goal of keeping the pollination process up to scratch.

Well, I was taken to task most firmly - and perhaps with good cause - but let me reply with an affirmation of faith! There is no pastime as satisfying as bee husbandry (although my wife might suggest I enjoy bell-ringing as much: not so). Over the two periods in the last 20 years or so that I have not had an active hive in the garden, I have missed my bees more than I thought possible, and, beyond that, there is really no substitute for your own harvested honey. Bought from the shops it just isn't the same - indeed, we now learn it carries its own hazards - and jars provided as gifts by friends almost make the suffering worse, in that it serves as a constant reminder of all those empty jars in the larder, and undrawn frames in the garage.

I would never advocate Osmia rufa and its solitary fellows as a substitute for Apis mellifera, rather I seek merely to position them as an interesting alternative when the one is in short supply. I thought they would serve a useful purpose - but, a year on, I'm not so sure! My family of Osmia bees has failed to multiply at anything like the rate I had hoped for, although the size and variety of our bumble bee population has dramatically increased. But regardless of this, my neighbours report a sad lack of bee activity on their fruit trees (and broad beans).

It's far too soon to write off the solitary bees as having a useful role as orchard workers (and experiments in my village garden hardly amount to a fair test anyway), but first impressions are less favourable than the theorists suggest. My feeling now is that these bees are an interesting study - one I'll keep up - but no substitute for the real thing. Indeed, I'm planning to re-install the 'real thing' next spring, and am

already quite excited at the prospect of welcoming them back (I now await howls of protest from the solitary bee brigade!)

Chris Taylor

### Pruning

With the permission of both Mr Essex-Clegg and John Aldridge, I thought this correspondence could be usefully added to the most helpful article on pruning, sent in for the Newsletter. (Pure gold - nothing has been omitted).

Dear Mr Aldridge,

The bulletins of the Marcher Apple Network are most interesting and informative. Prompted by one of the notes, I have ventured to put together some notes of my own, here enclosed, in the hope that some part of them may be of interest to other members.

For information I would like to say that I had some training as a gardener from the late forties onwards, including Luton Hoo, and then a botanic garden in New Zealand for four years, the short working week permitting part-time work on export apples. Nursery work in this country followed, and after an enforced break, agricultural work around the West Midlands, hence the hedge-laying. The general result is that I have spent a good deal of my life cutting things of many kinds, and am still much interested in the subject of pruning, whatever the horticultural subject.

A photograph of fruit from one of my own Bramley apple trees is enclosed. Planted in 1973 and regularly winter pruned and summer pruned, the crop of 1989 seems to illustrate the point I wanted to make. Do please keep it, as I have copies.

With cordial kind regards  
Frederic Essex-Clegg

### **THE WHEN AND HOW OF PRUNING**

During my working life, with some training as a gardener, and later associations with agricultural work, a good deal of experience was gained in almost every form of pruning, and with tree surgery and hedge-laying. The question of pruning interests me in relation to the bulletins of the Marcher Apple Network, partly because it is so rarely mentioned. However, where crops of high quality are required, continuous regulation of apple and pear trees is necessary, a fact that is not often understood by the layman, who may be contented with fairly regular crops of these fruits which, although not marketable, can be readily disposed of by eating and cooking.

Experience has long suggested that there are two basic methods of producing apples - either by growing them in restricted spaces as garden fruit under very special conditions requiring professional pruning systems - of which the French have long been legendary masters, with the gardeners of former stately homes a close second, or by growing them in orchard systems. My interest here is with the orchard system, (rather than the espalier systems), where a form of branch pruning is required, best undertaken as winter pruning, followed by a pruning of the new young annual growth in late July or August - summer pruning.

Winter pruning, undertaken when the trees are quite bare of foliage, regulates the frame of the tree, producing well-spaced branches, usually round an open centre. The inner parts of the tree, especially the fruit spurs, are barely touched at this stage. Summer pruning regulates the profusion of primary young growth that occurs in the first half of the year, and the secondary growth that occurs from July onwards, and is perhaps best undertaken about mid-August. This pruning involves the selection of vigorous shoots of the current year's growth, placed in such a way that they can replace or extend the older wood of the framework. These shoots stay intact until the winter pruning. The remaining shoots are then eliminated where they tend to grow vertically, or threaten to crowd the spaces within the tree, and the remainder are reduced to three or four buds from their point of origin. These buds then begin to form dards [Ed's note, (I had to ask) the pointed shoot buds] and fruit buds, eventually becoming fruit spurs. The summer pruning conserves the energy of the tree, allowing space and light for the development of the existing fruit, and ensuring, over a period of years, quite regular crops of clean, good quality fruit. In this instance, I would exclude from summer pruning the full standard orchard, now much less common than the half-standard bush and dwarf trees of small scale plantations.

It is not often realised among lay people that the term 'pruning' really means 'regulating', and that the process is continuous throughout the life of the subject being pruned. Few horticultural sights are more depressing than the 'short back and sides' cure-all treatment of trees of many kinds, even though long neglect usually requires apparently drastic treatment. The term 'pruning' can be extended to mean the removal of any part of a tree, shrub or plant, and, in the classical sense, any such cutting should be done in the long-term interest of what is being pruned - in the sense of preserving the plant for future production. Good pruning steadily increases the future production of the material desired, or prolongs the life of the subject. (The principle applies perfectly to Christmas greenery, and is important to cut-flower specialists and flower arrangers).

On innumerable occasions private requests have been received to 'prune my apple tree' or 'do my orchard', and so often the trees prove to have been long neglected. The initial treatment may have been rather drastic, but over a period it has often been possible to recreate graceful, productive fruit trees. May I be permitted to ask of those who rescue and replant neglected old varieties of apples and pear trees how they treat them subsequently? And if they undertake winter pruning, is this followed by summer pruning? When these tasks are undertaken, the quality of the crop will rise and there will be a distinct reduction in the incidence of pests and diseases and their subsequent treatment.

Frederic Essex-Clegg

Dear Mr Essex-Clegg,

Thank you for your informative article which I have forwarded to Sheila Leitch, who edits our Newsletter.

I agree entirely with your views on summer and winter pruning and am similarly appalled at what Raymond Bush once described as 'workhouse pruning'.

Articles on pruning have appeared in Newsletters 3,4 and 6, mainly in response to member's enquiries. In this region, many of our members are tending to grow trees on vigorous rootstocks M25 and MM111 in field situations. MM106 is also popular and slightly more manageable.

Obviously, there are no problems (or shouldn't be) for people growing their varieties on dwarfing and semi-dwarfing stocks, which are easily regulated.

Your final paragraph could be very helpful to us. *MAN* requires more volunteers to maintain our 'museum orchards' and I have suggested to Sheila that she includes a request for more pruners. It is a daunting task for the same small group of volunteers to be expected to both summer and winter prune the increasing number of trees that we are planting. All the trees have been winter pruned regularly since being planted as maidens. This is mainly for shaping the framework. With those on M25 now branching as standards, we aim to keep them tidy, but summer pruning is beyond our manpower resources. Many of us have our own gardens and orchards to maintain (Mike Porter has about 300 varieties) and *MAN* does not have sufficient income to pay for the level of professional services required.

I'm sure our members will find your advice useful, particularly those with bush trees on stocks up to M26. I hope you enjoy the next Newsletter.

Yours sincerely,  
John Aldridge

[Editor's note. This wealth of experience prompted me to follow up John's suggestion, sent to me with the article and correspondence, and I have spoken to Mr Essex-Clegg. He has agreed to run a pruning demonstration this winter, in January or early February, to be followed by a summer pruning demo. in August. As one of the overworked parts of the *MAN* manpower, (which term, I hasten to point out, includes womanpower), with a somewhat neglected orchard, I will happily offer my site for demonstration and practice. Trees here, at Wye View, vary from standards, aged 110, and overgrown espaliers of the same age, to bush trees planted too close together in 1976 by the former owner's gardener, and three cordon apples put in as maidens about ten years ago and a couple of small pear trees on semi-dwarfing Quince C stock. The follow-up summer pruning of the bush trees could also include various stone fruits, which, of course, should not be winter pruned because of the risk of introducing silver leaf disease. Of these, there are damson trees, plums and a greengage: also a fan-trained *Stella* cherry tree planted as a maiden when we moved here 20 years ago. Tea and coffee can be provided, a warm by the kitchen stove if the weather is chilly, lunch at the pub and overnight accomodation would be available in the village of Glasbury, either B&B or choice of two pubs for members from a distance. Please contact me if this is of interest. This would be an excellent way of enlarging our small team of pruners and enable them also to tackle summer pruning where required. See P.21 for details.]

#### **MAY I RECOMMEND....?**

Eager to master the management of my fruit trees, both new and inherited, yet totally bemused by varied instructions and diagrams which bore no resemblance to

the subjects facing me, with relief I applied for the pruning course organised by Herefordshire Council Parks & Countryside Service, in conjunction with *MAN*.

The venue, Bodenham orchard, which belongs to the Herefordshire Nature Trust, proved a most interesting and singularly appropriate location. A warm, friendly welcome from James Bisset, Partnership Project Officer, more than outweighed the somewhat basic facilities, but then I had come to learn, and I was far from disappointed. The course leader, Paul Davis, of Dolau Hirion Fruit Tree Nursery, offered concise yet comprehensive information, and was very willing to address the individual needs and queries of the assembled group; a highly respected authority in his field, his relaxed, practical approach made it all seem so achievable. Then it was out into the orchard - let battle commence!

Young trees, old, damaged, diseased and neglected - all were represented - providing an ideal opportunity to put theory into practice. We were encouraged to assess each tree in turn, discuss our proposed course of action and then apply it, working under supervision with the reassurance of being able to call upon the expert to confirm or correct, before a near-fatal cut was made. A wide range of pruning tools and equipment was available for us to use and handle for suitability; always of value.

Two sessions had been arranged - Formative and Restorative Pruning and, like several other people, I attended both, each offering the same high standard of information, guidance and practical work. Like most short courses, the pace was intense, yet relaxed and friendly, and, by the end of the day, we departed feeling encouraged, confident and far better equipped to tackle our own respective trees and orchards.

Ellyne Curtis

### ORCHARD TRAINING COURSES

Herefordshire Council Parks & Countryside Service is not running courses this Winter and Spring, but have offered to subsidise *MAN* and arrange all the publicity if we can put on four winter pruning courses and take the bookings. Paul Davis has agreed to do three, on successive Saturdays, (provisional dates November 23rd, 30th, and Dec. 7th, probably at Berrington Hall in north Herefordshire near the Shropshire border, at Bodenham, north of Hereford and at Applemead, a cider orchard near Kinnersley, west Herefordshire. Fred Clegg, as he likes to be known in working circles, will do the fourth at Glasbury-on-Wye, Powys, at a date to be arranged in late January or early February, with Sheila Leitch taking bookings for that one. It would be helpful if you could let us know by phoning, if you are interested, or tell us at the AGM. We want *MAN* members to have first chance of filling the places, before the dates are widely advertised by Herefordshire Council Parks & Countryside Service.

Costs:-

Full Day, from 11.00am - 4.00pm: £20 - Includes Tea & Coffee. Bring your own lunch or a pub lunch could be arranged.

To book: send £5 deposit with a **separate cheque, for each course**, made payable to **MARCHER APPLE NETWORK**. Give details of the course you would like to attend along with your name, address and telephone number.

For the pre Christmas courses send to:-

Dr Paul Davis, Dolau-hirion Fruit Tree Nursery, Capel Isaac, Llandeilo,  
Carmarthenshire, SA19 7TG. Tel. 01558 668744.  
Or, for details of the date of the Jan/Feb one contact:-  
Mrs Sheila Leitch, Wye View, Glasbury, Powys, via HEREFORD, HR3 5NU.  
Tel. 01497 847354.

Sheila Leitch

### GOLDEN JUBILEE TREE KITS

The Partnership Team has produced a 'Special Royal Golden Jubilee Commemorative Selection for 2002' leaflet giving information on Fruit Tree Kits available for planting on sites within the county of Herefordshire, for applicants not receiving financial support from 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 for applications is 20th November and tree kits must be collected the weekend 30th Nov./1st Dec., from Queenswood Country Park, Dinmore Hill. There are Orchards Kits, with a choice of six apple varieties for orchards, budded onto vigorous M25 rootstocks, together with 2 pears, a quince and a damson. 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.

James Bisset

### IDENTIFICATIONS

May we again remind members who wish to have apples identified that we require some information on season (early, mid or late), 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.

### APPLE IDENTIFICATION . . . A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

Project yourself in your imagination ten years or so ahead. It is a November morning in the year 2012. Members of the *MAN* committee are meeting for an apple and pear identification session at a Herefordshire College. They are looking forward to it because it is a real meeting and not a video-conference this time. They have a large number of apples to identify. In the meeting room there is hanging on the wall a large flat computer screen and at various points around the table are small terminals, one for each person. The session begins. A sample of largish apples is laid out on the table for the panel's consideration. Somebody suggests it could be a *Ribston Pippin*. Somebody else murmurs "What about *Blenheim Orange*?"

The screen and the PC's are switched on and the *MAN* Apple Archive is accessed. Sheila (for it is she) keys in *Ribston Pippin*. A menu opens up, listing the illustrations and descriptions of this variety in the archive, Bunyard, *The Herefordshire Pomona*, Hogg, *RHS Journal*, Taylor, Sanders, *MAN* Apple Photos, and several others. They select *The Herefordshire Pomona* first and then the *MAN* Apple Photos. The *Pomona* was the first source they archived, digital photography by Julia Craig-McFeely, back in 2002, and it has been a valuable reference tool in

this handy form, providing on the screen high quality images of the paintings done by Miss Bull and Miss Ellis for the Woolhope Club in the 1880s, as well as the associated text. Colour prints with accurate colour values are also immediately available from it if they are wanted by the group. The published forms of it were also very successful. The de-luxe edition, a full-size, full-colour complete facsimile, beautifully bound, and with a new introduction by Ray is now in its second impression, and the paperback, *Leaves from the Herefordshire Pomona*, is also selling well.

The illustrations on the screen are similar in some ways to the apples in front of them, but the group are not convinced. They turn next to *MAN Apple Photos*. This is a collection of digital photographs started in 2003 and built up over the years since then. The early ones are simple static images of apples laid out in conventional form on a sheet of pale blue paper. The more recent ones have the very useful move-around virtual reality facility developed in the mid-norties enabling the user to view the apples from any angle.

The photos of *Ribston Pippin* also fail to convince. Corresponding images of *Blenheim Orange* and some others are called up in windows alongside, and several descriptions of these varieties are also put on screen. Still no decision is possible. Apples are sectioned and compared with drawings, tasted, etc. Finally they switch to *MAN KEY*, a computer-aided apple identification program developed by John in the early norties. They key in their short list of possibilities, including *Ribston Pippin*, *Blenheim Orange* and one or two others. They answer the questions put up by the computer as best they can and the machine uses this to compare all available images and descriptions with their keyed in answers. This whole process will become very much easier and quicker when they have available the new experimental photo-video program, currently being developed. In this method, a sample of apples to be identified, some sectioned, are suspended in a transparent cradle, and a video camera scans in 2- and 3-D images of the apples and compares them with material stored in the archive. It then comes up with a short list of three, probability-weighted, answers. Not that everyone agrees with all this high-tech stuff.

*MAN KEY* has completed its work: *Kings Acre Pippin*:80%, *Ribston Pippin*:10%, *Sturmer Pippin*:10%. Someone says in a small voice, "I thought all along it was *King's Acre Pippin*". The panel move on to the next sample of apples. . .

### **So much for the dream. What about the reality, in 2002?**

We have made a start. Herefordshire Council have awarded us a grant of £750 to pay for the digital photography, by Dr Julia Craig-McFeely of Oxford University, of the 78 plates of the copy of *The Herefordshire Pomona* owned and kindly being made available by Sheila Leitch. We have also received an *Awards for All* grant of £4,987 from the Heritage Lottery Fund which will enable us to purchase computer equipment. So we are at the very beginning of the establishment of a *MAN Digital Archive* of apple and pear varieties. The archive will be a valuable resource for the use of members and will also provide a data base from which an edited version of the material on apple and pear varieties in the *Pomona* may be published as a handbook, (the publication *Leaves from The Herefordshire Pomona*, dreamed of above). Samples of information from the archive may also be available on the Internet via our website, [www.marcherapple.net](http://www.marcherapple.net). (By the way, after much

discussion and debate, we do not at present plan to produce a facsimile edition of the *Pomona*.)

Many questions will now need to be addressed, concerning matters such as copyright, access and secure storage of material. The development of the archive will keep us busy at least until 2012, and probably much longer. If you would like to be associated with this work, or can help, please contact Peter Austerfield, Chairman of the Pomona Project committee, or Sheila Leitch, Librarian and Archivist, or me.

Tony Malpas, Pomona Project Officer

### I LOVE YOU, NEWLAND SACK!

In the 'Herefordshire Pomona', Dr Robert Hogg tentatively suggested that the local apple, Newland Sack, was found as a chance seedling at Newland Court. He stated "The origin of this apple is uncertain. It is supposed to have sprung from a pip in the refuse heap of the cider mill at Newland Court, near Great Malvern, towards the end of the last century [Editor's note i.e. the Eighteenth]. The farm at that time was occupied by Mr Cresswell who discovered its merit and grafted it freely". It was used mainly as a cooker although quite sweet and made a good dessert later in the season.

As mentioned in *MAN* Newsletter No. 6, a relatively young espalier labelled as Newland Sack was seen by Ray Boddington on a visit to the National Trust property at Erddig, near Wrexham. I had hoped to find a very old tree of this variety somewhere but had not actually taken the most obvious step to achieve this. Fortunately, a new member called Tony Buxton read my article and displayed a bit more gumption than me by checking with his neighbour at Newland Court., Lloyd Jenkins. Mr Jenkins, who has lived there since 1927 said that one tree was surviving - but only just!

Last July I arranged to visit Mr Jenkins with Ray Boddington and obtain budwood, hoping that the old tree had managed to throw out a bit of new growth. I can remember feeling rather intrepid as we negotiated undergrowth, hedges and barbed wire in order to find the seemingly remote orchard.

Once in the 'orchard' I could see that it was only a large field used for grazing and could not locate an apple tree anywhere. We walked on, Mr Jenkins pointing to a dwarfish growth in the distance. I felt a terrible pang of disappointment, thinking that there had been some misunderstanding and we were on a wild goose chase (this does happen when you are looking for lost varieties). On approaching, I could make out an enormous prostrate trunk, rotten and hollow like a primitive dug-out canoe. Emerging from the ground, a single root precariously held the trunk in position and, at the far end, the tree had had enough strength to produce a shoot which had grown into a little M9-size pyramid tree festooned with fruit. I must admit that, at that point, I had a lump in my throat and, as I cut good quality budwood, I imagined the dying tree saying "I've clung on to life waiting for you; where have you been?" For the last few years, Mr Jenkins has been keeping his bull in the field. The bull uses the tree as its rubbing post and the root could have snapped at any time.



I budded one M9 and eight M25 rootstocks with the wood I obtained and am pleased to report that all were successful. Mr Jenkins will be presented with a maiden this autumn and he has promised me that he will plant it in a protected position! Tony Buxton has taken some beautiful professional photographs of the old tree, one of which graces my study and another will form part of the *MAN* display at shows.

It is likely that this particular tree was growing when the fifth edition of 'The Fruit Manual' by Hogg was published in 1884. Hogg wrote that Newland Sack was "highly appreciated and extensively grown at Newland and in the surrounding villages. It keeps well even up to February, does not bruise in travelling, or if bruised will not decay. It is a great favourite with Mr Baron Webster, at the fruit farm of Newland Court, who says he wishes all his orchards were Newland Sacks and Blenheim Pippins".

Mr Jenkins knew nothing of Mr Webster except his name, but confirmed that three of the Court orchards each had had a row of Newland Sack, three trees survived until 20 years ago. The apples were popular during the war but Mr Jenkins added wryly that "you could sell anything then - it's not a pretty apple". They continued to be sold at Worcester market into the Fifties. Hogg thought the fruits were attractive and, since I have a preference for the older style reinette-type apples, I totally agree.

Mr Jenkins told me that Newland Court was originally part of the Madresfield Court estate (q.v. William Crump and Madresfield Court) and was sold off from the estate in 1919. A butcher called Coldwell owned it from then until 1927, when Mr Jenkins' father, Benjamin, purchased it. Another piece of background information threw up a clue as to how Newland Sack came to be growing at Erddig. In about 1950, Christopher Norbury, of the well-known local fruit growers and cider-makers, approached Benjamin Jenkins for scions of Newland Sack. On contacting Norbury's, I was told that the resulting row of dwarf trees was grubbed up long ago, as the fruit was not sufficiently profitable. It is thought that the previous head gardener at Erddig obtained propagation material from Norbury's.

Newland Sack is not available commercially as fruit or trees. Neither is it represented in the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale, so *MAN* will send scions taken from the only known old tree of this variety.

John Aldridge

#### WANTED

Usually, requests which come in for apple wood are for graftwood, but a recent telephone message from Scotland turned out to be different. A return call established that Shamus Ogilvy wanted to know of any orchards being grubbed up, or where a reasonable amount of fallen fruit wood might be available. This was wanted for using in an experimental smoking process. A lorry would be sent down if a worthwhile quantity was available anywhere. Please reply direct to Mr Shamus Ogilvy at Mills of Earn Farmhouse, Crieff, Perthshire, Scotland. PH7 3RN. Tel. 01764-662075.

A second unusual request came from a smallholder moving from Kent to a house with only a small garden, in Ledbury. She has three breeds of geese, and a small herd of llamas, which she hopes can be located near enough for her to keep in touch with them, so Herefordshire or Gloucestershire would be ideal. Charles Martell put her on to me, in case we had any members with an orchard needing grazing. There are Pilgrim geese, a docile breed which can be autosexed from hatching. Comprised of several bloodlines, there are 7 females and 6 males, but some may go elsewhere. Secondly there are Brecon Buffs, (3 females and 2 males), of two bloodlines. Thirdly, Grey Chinese (4 females and 3 males). This breed were traditionally used as guards in orchards so, if scrumping is a problem, there is your answer. Geese need to be shut in for safety at night, and fed wheat in winter, but provide eggs and free mowing with no problems. All are docile and used to dogs.

The llamas, (3 females, 3 males and a young male, known as a cria) are great favourites with Mary Marshall, who is happy to sell or share these llamas and geese in order that she can bring them (or at least some of them) up to her new home area. She moves in September. Can anyone out there help or perhaps offer a holding area until Mary can advertise locally? Her Tel. 01634-371303. What next??

#### **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, to Mike Porter, Tel: 01874-730354, and budwood by 10th July to John Aldridge, Tel. 01432-820304. 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). Postage at cost, minimum £2.00. The scheme is geared to personal, not commercial, quantities.

#### **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 new additions this year are:-

Fruit in Monmouthshire and South Wales. Mr John Basham F.R.H.S. [Read November 21, 1899.] Reprinted from the Journal of the Royal Horticultural Society, Vol. XXIII. Part 3. Photocopy kindly donated by Dave Matthews.

Apples of the Welsh Marches. Text by Marcher Apple Network. Photographs by Michael Porter. Design and Typeset by James Bisset for Oldlands Press.

This first publication of *MAN* lists the old varieties of apples cultivated in the traditional orchards of the West Midlands and the neighbouring parts of Wales. It includes dessert and culinary apples available for sale by nurseries, but excludes purely cider apples. There are alphabetical lists of 'local' apples, with a brief account of each variety, arranged by county or region where they are thought to have originated. Also listed are varieties extensively grown in our area in the past and

still to be found in local farm orchards. 88 are listed and described and are accompanied by 20 beautiful colour photographs. Priced at £3, or £4 with post and packing, this very attractive and informative booklet can be obtained from the Membership Secretary, Mr D. Kempton, Brook House, Hopesay, CRAVEN ARMS, Shropshire, SY7 8HD, and will be on sale at all the Autumn events which we shall be attending.

Sheila Leitch

### OUT AND ABOUT

As I mentioned in last year's Newsletter, visits to historic old houses in the Marches 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. John Aldridge's article finding the Newland Sack apple expresses vividly the anticipation and excitement of such visits. Last year we planned to visit an orchard in Monmouthshire which Colin Gardiner, our member in Llangenny, told us about. Making single variety apple juice, he visits numerous large old orchards. We hope to go there this Autumn, as the owner knows the names of most of the trees and we need to draw a plan. Ideally, I would like to see more time made for visits to orchards we need to survey, with regular identification sessions every Thursday throughout October, November and early December, to avoid the huge build up of specimens which occurs with the influx from Apple events. We also need more learners coming to join the sessions, to help them build up the necessary skills. Phone me on Tel. 01497-847354 if you would like to join us at a session at Wye View. Orchard visits need a reasonable weather forecast, but if you would particularly like to come on one and perhaps help with photography or drawing a simple plan, let me know by phone or at the AGM and I will try and phone you if a visit in your area is planned. This can be an exciting experience, as John has described on P.24 and see below.

Sheila Leitch

### Walled Garden, Llancaio House, Usk.

A phone call from Gemma Bodé, Wildlife Site Project Officer of Gwent Wildlife Trust, aroused my interest when she told me of a relict orchard in a walled garden which the owners are keen to restore. She was making a visit to look at an old hay meadow and thought *MAN* might like to see the orchard. I arranged to meet her there at the end of July, to see if an Autumn visit was worth while. Amongst the head-high nettles and thistles some twelve or so old apples, pears and greengages were located, the most exciting find being a huge old espalier with a girth of some 6' and two enormous low horizontal branches; the crown covered in ivy. The Jarvie family had moved there in 1957, and Sarah Tagg, who was guiding us around, took me in afterwards to meet her father and find out what the orchard was like at that time. When I mentioned the espalier, Mr Jarvie told me there had been a double line of espaliers with a six foot path between them, running across the orchard. He said the diameter of the trees at that time was about 9-10". The trunk of the remaining tree must be more than twice that size now. The fruit was already colouring up and looked as if it might be Gladstone. This variety was introduced in 1868, as 'Jackson's Seedling', having been grafted from a 100 year old mother tree at Kidderminster, an unknown seedling. It received a First Class Certificate in 1883 from the RHS, and then was re-named Mr Gladstone, after the Prime Minister, now just called Gladstone. We have not come across it before in an orchard as, having a very short season from late July to mid-August, it has lost popularity, though,

picked from the tree, it is said to be deliciously sweet and juicy, with a fragrance such as the quoinings have. Looking at this venerable tree, it could well date from the 1880/90s, when so many orchards were planted up as a result of the resurgence of interest in fruit resulting from the National Apple Congress of 1883 and the Autumn shows held at the Crystal Palace in the 1890s, sponsored by the RHS and the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers. Joan Morgan, writing of this variety in 'The Book of Apples' says that after the Congress, it was "strongly recommended for profit and widely planted commercially and in gardens; early market apple until 1960s". Mr Jarvie said that fruit from the orchard was regularly sent to a Newport fruiterer for sale. He said that there were wooden pegs in the ground bearing the names of the trees and remembered there was a pear called Beurré Diel. If it is still there, this would be a very welcome find. We also noted a large, heavily laden early codlin which I did not recognise. This fruit has been provisionally named by Mike Porter as White Transparent, which he has in his own orchard collection, but is already stripped of fruit by birds. There were also two varieties of Cherry-plums, or Myrobelles, one yellow and ready late July and another yellow, flushed red, not quite so early. These had thin, cherry-like stalks, clearly distinguishing them from the small plums, damsons and greengages also present. The family plan to replant with young trees derived from grafted scions from the survivors of the original orchard, together with other varieties which would have been grown in Monmouthshire. Two beehives within the walled orchard should help with pollination when the new trees begin to blossom. The espalier certainly needs to be photographed after the surrounding nettles are cleared away. A later check at a committee meeting on this early dessert confirms it as Gladstone. We will visit this orchard in September and collect graftwood in the Winter.

Sheila Leitch

### WANTED APPLES

We are still keen to hear of the following varieties of trees, 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 the following, of which Lorna Doone is an early bittersweet cider apple:-

Waltham Abbey Seedling  
Wormsley Pippin

Springrove Codlin  
Bringewood Pippin

Lorna Doone  
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 in last year's Newsletter, we are also keen to find more trees of Landore and we have yet to hear of a definitive Sugarloaf Pippin. This year, in his 'Orchard Gleanings', he expresses interest in the Sweeny Nonpareil and the Birdstow Wasp.

Mention was made in our News Sheet No. 1, which went to members in the Spring, of a finding of Brith Mawr at a site in South Wales, where it used to be a popular fruit. The only brief description we have of this apple was found in the R.H.S. Report of the Fruit Conference, 1934, entitled Apples and Pears - Varieties

and Cultivation. In the hope of locating some of the other 13 dessert and 'kitchen' varieties which were examined, together with 10 cider apples, at the Crystal Palace Exhibition, with South Wales, Glamorgan or Monmouth given as the source, I list them with the accompanying notes (where given) from the Conference list:-

### Dessert and 'Kitchen'

- Bodenham Beauty, S. Wales, Dessert, large, round, green with flush.  
Brithmawr, S. Wales, Kitchen, Oct.-Dec., large, conical irregular, striped red.  
British Queen, S. Wales, D. or K., Dec.-Mar., medium, round conical, yellow, red striped, flush.  
Buscombe's Fair Maid, S. Wales, K., Oct.-Nov., medium, round, striped red.  
Carpenter, The, S. Wales, K., Sept., medium, round, green.  
Charles Pearnain, S. Wales, K., Oct.-Nov., large, round oval, yellow, red stripes.  
Galloway Pippin, Kent & S. Wales, K., Oct.-Feb., large, round, yellow, brown flush.  
Ham Seedling, S. Wales, D. or K., Oct.-Nov., large, conical, red.  
Henry Davies, Glamorgan, Use -, Season -, small, round, green, red flush.  
Henry Winch, Glamorgan, D., Sept., Size -, round, yellow.  
Honeycomb, Glamorgan & N. Ireland, (Nothing further given).  
Hounslow Wonder, Glamorgan & Berks., K., Dec.-Mar., medium, round, yellow, red flush, striped.  
Kerl Apple, Glamorgan, K., Nov.-Dec., large, conical, yellow, red flush.

### Cider Apples

- Belle Norman, Monmouth, bittersweet, midseason, large, conical, yellow.  
Breakwell's Seedling, Monmouth, sharp, early, small, conical, striped.  
Broom, Monmouth, sharp, midseason, small, round, yellow.  
Frederick, Monmouth & Long Ashton, sharp, midseason, medium, round, crimson russet.  
Gloucester Pippin, Monmouth, sharp, midseason, small, conical, striped.  
Jones' Sharp, Monmouth, sharp, midseason, small, conical, yellow.  
Mullin's White, Monmouth, bittersweet, midseason, small, round, white.  
Perthre, Monmouth, bittersweet, midseason, large, conical, yellow.  
Red French, Monmouth, bittersweet, midseason, small, conical, red.  
Worcester Red, Monmouth, sharp, midseason, small, conical, red.

N.B. Obviously most of the above are not Welsh apples, specimens merely having been sent in to the Exhibition from growers in the area, but it would be interesting to hear from anyone who knows anything about Brithmawr, Henry Davies, Jones' Sharp and any of the others, where few details are given. Please notify the Marcher Apple Network or phone Sheila Leitch 01497-847354.

Also listed, from not too far from Wales, and it would be fun to find it, is Porter's Perfection, Somerset and Long Ashton, sharp, midseason, medium, conical, striped. (Mike Porter, who is a botanist, has a dandelion named after him, but makes no claim to this old apple). In Joan Morgan's 'The Book of Apples', it is listed in the cider section as having arisen in the orchard of Mr Charles Porter of East Lambrook, Somerset, in the C19th. The first director of Long Ashton Research Station, 'tested fruit from the original tree, and was so impressed by quality of the juice that tree was propagated and became widely distributed throughout Somerset.' One for the cider

folk to try? Tony Malpas tells me "*Porter's Perfection* is certainly worth looking out for, as it is a useful medium bittersweet variety which makes average to good quality cider. It is one variety quite easily identified, as most samples will contain fused fruits (like siamese twins)."

Sheila Leitch

#### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday/Sunday, 24th/25th August. Talgarth Festival. *MAN* will have a small display of early season apples, with some to taste and buy. Paul Davis will have fruit trees for sale. We shall be in the Market, on the Sunday, from 12.00am - 5.00pm.

Friday/Saturday/Sunday, 13/14/15th September. Ludlow Food Fair. Dr Joan Morgan on 'The Apple in the Victorian Garden' on Friday, at 1.50pm. Tel. 01584-861586.

Sunday, 15th September. Entertainment under the Apples at Pentlanole. From 2.00pm-6.00pm. On the A470 between Newbridge-on-Wye and Rhayader, just south of the Vulcan Arms. For further details Tel. 01597-811487.

Saturday/Sunday, 21st/22nd September. Abergavenny Food Festival to be held in the Market Hall and the Castle. A celebration of food of the Marches. Farmer's Market with local specialist food producers selling delicacies. Colin Gardiner will have copies of *MAN*'s 'Apples of the Wesh Marches' book for sale on his Gellirhyd Apple Juice stand. Further details from Julia French. Tel. 01873-851643.

Saturday, 28th September. The Orchard Revival. Where are we now? The Cheshire Orchard Project is holding a conference at Norton Priory Museum (Home to the National Collection of Tree Quince). From 10.00am to 4.00pm. £7.50 per person includes a buffet lunch and refreshments. Although the booking form asks for returns by 30th August, later bookings will be taken if places are still available, but must be made at least one week before the conference for catering purposes. For booking forms and further details Tel. Cheshire Landscape Trust on 01244-376333.

Saturday/Sunday, 28th/29th September. Malvern Autumn Show at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern. This year the RHS will mount a magnificent fruit display and offer an identification service. (Last year the display was vegetables.) *MAN* will also have a fruit display, including some apples from Berrington Hall.

Sunday, 6th October. Apple Day at Berrington Hall. Ray Boddington will be there for fruit identification. Further details from Nick Winney, Tel. 01568-610593 or the Office, Tel. 01568-615721.

Saturday, 12th October. October Food Fest. Hightown, Hereford. *MAN* will be represented. For details contact Kate Easthaugh, Tel. 01432-383209.

Saturday/Sunday, 12th/13th October. 'The Big Apple'. From 12.00am-5.00pm. A harvest-time celebration of English apples and cider in the Herefordshire parishes of the Marcle Ridge. The venue will again be Much Marcle. 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.

'Perry Pears Lost and Found'. Charles Martell will again be leading a walk from Much Marcle to the perry pear avenue at Hellens Manor House. For final details of talks, demonstrations and other events, phone Jackie Denman, Secretary of the 'Big Apple Association', on 01531-670544.

Saturday, 19th October. Marcher Apple Network's annual event to celebrate Apple Day. This year we will be at Dingestow Village Hall, Monmouthshire. Grid Ref. SO 458102. Dingestow can be reached from Monmouth or Raglan. It lies about 4 miles west of Monmouth and is reached from the old road, not the A40 dual carriageway. Doors open 2.00pm. Our fourth 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. 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. Tea and home-made refreshments with an apple theme will be on sale. Offers to provide some food will be much appreciated. An identification panel will try to name your unknown fruit. (Bring at least 3 specimens of each variety please). Free admission to members attending the AGM. Admission, £3 at the door. Children £1. We expect to finish about 6.00pm. Further details from MAN officers.

Saturday/Sunday, 19/20th October. Cidermaking Festival at the Cider Museum, Hereford. (See P.15) For more details, contact the Cider Museum on 01432-354207.

Monday, 21st October. Apple Day. Events countrywide. Programme available from Common Ground. Send SAE to Common Ground, Gold Hill House, 21, High Street, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 8JE. Tel. 01747-850820. Or use the Web Site: [www.commonground.org.uk](http://www.commonground.org.uk)

Monday, 21st October. Brecknock Wildlife Trust are celebrating Apple Day with a 'Watch' event of children's activities at the Mountain Centre, Libanus, near Brecon, from 11.0am - 3.00pm. There will be games and apple bobbing for the children and there will be a small display of old apple varieties. Samples can be brought in for identification, three of each please

Saturday, 26th October. Leominster Apple Fair.

At Lion Ballroom, Broad Street. From 10.00am - 4.00pm. MAN will be holding an identification session. Details from Felicity Norman, Tel. 01568 780886.

Saturday, 26th October. Church Stretton Apple Fair at Sylvester Horne Institute, Church Stretton, Shropshire., from 11.0am - 4.00pm. Stalls, displays and John Lloyd will be holding an identification session. Further details from John Lloyd, Tel. 01694-723143.

Saturday/Sunday, 26th/27th 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. Paul Davis will be there, with some fruit trees for sale and some Welsh apples. For details Tel. 01443-412248.

Sunday, 27th October. Hereford Nature Trust at Lower House Farm, Tupsley. MAN will be holding an ID session. Bring your three specimens.

### **www.marcherapple.net**

This is the web site address, or, in the jargon, Uniform Resource Locator (URL), of the Marcher Apple Network. We are very much indebted to *MAN* member Richard Wheeler for researching the web hosting services available (people who provide web site facilities), selecting a suitable one for us, purchasing and registering the domain name and for acting as our webmaster *pro tem*. Richard has given *MAN* his services free of charge, but of course it has cost money for the hosting service and the registration, which has been paid for out of Pomona Project funds, at least for the first year of operation.

At the moment, because the web site has only just been set up, all you see if you 'visit' it is two pages of general information. The project committee now has the job of deciding in detail what kind of information about *MAN* should appear on there, how web page design will be managed and who is going to be responsible for keeping it up to date. Suggestions about the content which could or should appear are welcome. The web site will allow us the use of E-mail and a number of other facilities, many of which remain yet for us to explore. For news of latest developments over the coming months, watch this cyberspace.

Tony Malpas

### **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 SUBSCRIPTION of £5 NOW, for the current year, while you read your Newsletter No. 8, 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.

Any items for the Spring News Sheet would be welcome, to arrive before March. Material for Newsletter No. 9, preferably typed, as opposed to hand-written, or on IBM compatible floppy disc, (suitable for Word), 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, 2003, at the latest. Dates of events and small news items and 'fillers' can be accepted in early August. Grateful thanks to the team of keen-eyed proofreaders. We should point out that the views expressed in the Newsletter are those of individual contributors, not necessarily those of *MAN*.

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



**MARCHER APPLE NETWORK**  
**A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**  
**COMPANY No. 3787303**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT**  
**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**WILL BE HELD AT DINGESTOW VILLAGE HALL**  
**NEAR MONMOUTH**  
**ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19TH, 2002**  
**AT 2.15pm.**

**AGENDA**

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) Minutes of the last meeting
- 3) Chairman's Report
- 4) Receive & adopt accounts for the year ending 31/7/02  
(Copies available at meeting or posted on receipt of a SAE)
- 5) Consider special resolution over leaf, as required by  
Charity Commission
- 6) Formation of a cider subgroup
- 7) Any other business

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

T.W.FROGGATT, A.C.I.B.  
HON. SEC.

REGD. OFFICE:- ASHFORD MILL,  
ASHFORD CARBONEL, LUDLOW, SY8 4BT

**THE AGM WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THE USUAL**  
**CELEBRATION OF APPLE DAY from 3.00 - 6.00pm**

## SPECIAL RESOLUTION

1. That the Objects Clause, Clause 3, of the Memorandum of Association be amended to read:-

The objects for which the Association is established are to further the education of the public by the promotion of research, identification and conservation by any recognised means of old varieties of apples, pears and other fruits found growing in the Marches area of England and Wales, and elsewhere, and to make the collected information available to individuals or organisations by displays, demonstrations, talks or any other communication system.
2. Existing clauses 3A to 3G to be annotated 3B to 3H and a new Clause 3A be inserted to read: -

To request aid from persons or organisations to assist planting of amenity orchards or any purpose. Amenity orchards are to be operated on a quasi-commercial basis, produce being sold.
3. Clause 4B delete "6 per cent" and insert "2 per cent".
4. A new clause 8 should be inserted to read:—

DISSOLUTION. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Association there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Association, but shall be transferred either to some other charitable institution (whether or not a member of the Association) having objects similar to the objects of the Association, or to some institution (whether or not a member of the Association) the objects of which are the promotion of charity and anything incidental or conducive thereto, such institution or institutions to be determined by the members of the Association at or before the time of dissolution.

5. In the Articles of Association the reference to “no special provisions”, clauses 5 — 8 inclusive, should be deleted and Clauses 9 — 39 inclusive should be renumbered 5 — 35 inclusive. Article 40 should be deleted and Articles 41 — 60 should be renumbered 36 — 55 inclusive. Article 61 should be deleted and Articles 62 — 64 should be renumbered 56 — 58 inclusive. Article 65 should be deleted having been incorporated as Clause 8 of the Memorandum.

If you cannot attend the Annual Meeting on October 19th you may care to appoint a proxy. An instrument appointing a proxy and any supporting documents must be received at the Registered Office not less than 48 hours before the time appointed for holding the Meeting. You may care to complete and sign and return the attached form of proxy.

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I ..... of .....  
.....,  
a member of Marcher Apple Network hereby appoint .....  
.....of.....  
.....  
..... or failing him, the Chairman of the Meeting, as my proxy  
to vote for me on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting to be held  
on October 19th, 2002 and at any adjournment thereof and to vote  
FOR/AGAINST the Special Resolution.

Signed on ...../...../.....

Signature .....

