



Marcher Apple Network

Charity No: 1095 151

NEWS SHEET No. 18 Spring 2019

We are very sorry that 2018 saw the passing of two long serving members: **Diggory Kempton** and **Tom Froggatt**, both committee members for many years as Membership Secretary and Treasurer. Tom was also Company Secretary and a Trustee. We benefited greatly from their enthusiasm and guidance. We have many happy memories of times with them so we thought we'd begin this News Sheet with a report of a show to which Tom Froggatt and Diggory's wife Ros attended last October.

The Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre's Apple Day celebrations 21 October 2018

Tom Froggatt invited Tony Malpas and myself, to help on the stand. Ros, Diggory Kempton's partner, had supplied a lovely display of 25 named apples from Diggory's orchard. This was a great help in attracting interest and an aid to identification. We were all very busy from 11a.m. until 2.30p.m. trying to work out varieties. A lot of folk had come with one apple only — looks like they will need to be encouraged to bring more along next year!

The highlight of the day was BBC Midlands News filming at the Centre, including all of us busily identifying! The reporter did a piece-to-camera outside and spoke about the *Onibury Pippin*, having gone to some trouble beforehand to find out from us what to say and how to explain the apple's history.

Someone brought along a carefully drawn plan of a newly acquired orchard and we confirmed *Court Pendu Plat*, *Catshead*, *Harvey*, *Crawley Beauty*, *Belle de Boskoop* and *King of the Pippins*. Then we recognised *Catshead* picked from a large old tree within the Centre's grounds. A 'Ten Commandments'-type apple was brought in, which the owner said had made beautiful pink juice when pressed. There were lots of *Ribston Pippins* (Tom's favourite!), a *Reverend W. Wilks* and possibly a *Hoary Morning*. Then a *Keswick Codlin* appeared which was very clearly identified and we were surprised to have several varieties from a Northampton garden to discuss.

A busy day and well worth repeating next year!

Karen Limbrick

First Show of 2019

A reminder that we have our first stand of the year at the Bee Keepers Convention at Harpeur Adams University, where we will have a stall on Friday-Sat. 12-13 April. We should be very pleased to see members who might like to call in and see us, and we would be very glad if any member would like to help us

for all or part of a day. Harpeur Adams is at Edgmond, near Newport, Shropshire TF 10 8 NB.

Any members who would like to help, please contact [David Smith membership@marcherapple.net](mailto:David.Smith@marcherapple.net)

AGM on 17th November 2018

In 2017 we had a very good turnout for our AGM at Pudleston Village Hall, so we thought we'd return to the same venue in 2018. Well then, we had 25 members attend.

The meeting was introduced by our Chair of Trustees, Jackie Denman. Formal business included receiving the annual Report and Accounts and re-election of Trustees Mike Porter Jim Chapman and Jackie Denman. The Report was accepted with some corrections to the Accounts requested. All three Trustees were re-elected. Jackie described some of the highlights of the last year, including some fascinating DNA results and decision to agree a 25-year lease for the new collection at Ty Glyn, located opposite Ainsleigh's home (see below).

We were also very pleased that a member volunteered to join the Committee, welcome to David Olivier.

Afterward the formal meeting Tim Dixon described the work of the Colwall Orchard Group, a community-driven project which has energised this village with its long history of fruit processing and orchards. New orchards have been planted, old ones pruned and managed, alongside a wealth of community events from Wassails to picnics, all getting local people to love and cherish their orchards. Tim's talk was warmly received, and kindly acknowledged.

We were most appreciative of the hard work that Daniela Bergman and her friend Janet made in sorting out the Hall and providing lovely catering for all members who came: thank you indeed.

Identification report 2018

A cold winter delayed pollination by about two weeks from recent trends, so by early May orchards were beautiful and more co-incident with historic timing. A hot dry summer soon brought on fruit early and in abundance, a veritable mast year, perhaps surprising considering the drought conditions.

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Identification panel meetings	6	9	7	9	6
Events at which MAN offered identification	9	9	9	10	8
Total identification sessions	15	18	16	19	13
MAN hours involved	306	465	476	465	310
Number of samples examined	352	350	530	618	375
Number of exhibitions staged	2	3	3	3	4
Most productive events for identification	Tenbury (81)	Big Apple (74) (2 days)	Big Apple (109) (2 days)	Tenbury (108)	Leominster (62)
	Big Apple (60) (2 days)	Malvern (54) (2 days)	Leominster (85)	Malverns (79) (2 days)	Tenbury (56)
	Leominster (51)	Chepstow (42)	Chepstow (68)	Big Apple (76) (2 days)	Big Apple (55) (2 days)

Many thanks to our regular identifiers; we are grateful to John Savidge for bringing his invaluable database to every session. As we did not attend Malvern, nor advertise our ID services for postal receipts, fewer samples were submitted by the public. Also cold wet weather may have discouraged attendance at shows. At the eight events we attended, a total of 225 samples were inspected and some of the more unusual varieties seen were:

- *Haughty's Red* (Tenbury)
- *Witney's Kernel* (Tenbury)
- *Neidz Vetriana* (Big Apple)
- *Wyken Pippin* (Big Apple)
- *King George V* (Big Apple)
- *Gascoyne's Scarlet* (Leominster)
- *Royal Jubilee* (Leominster)

A further 27 sets of samples were submitted variously by post, from members, neighbours and Hereford Cathedral.

Conveniently, with fewer apples received, we were able to concentrate on apples from our own orchards. We confirmed, as suspected, two trees had been mislabelled and inventorised. First fruits from young trees at Paramor (38) and Ty Glyn (18) were matched against that of trees from which scions had been taken, thus enabling us to transfer the DNA fingerprint identification of reference trees (e.g. at Lower Ffordd-fawr or Tredomen) to their clones at Paramor and Ty Glyn. Several unknowns were identified and a few tentative identities suggested such as the 'Ludlow Longnor' apple might be *Bringewood Pippin* or *The Grange Apple*. An apple from an old tree in Leominster (on land once part of the Earl of Meath's estate) might match the *Gelli Aur* found in Carmarthenshire and Fermoy, County Cork (DNA confirmed this: see below). We checked all our accessions of *Green Purnell* against samples of *Old Girl* taken directly from the source tree; while awaiting the DNA finger-print of all these, we believe all MAN's samples of *Green Purnell* match that at

Brogdale and it is possible that *Old Girl* matches too, which would be a fluke! Following the DNA results we could see that it really is a fluke too..

Finally, a number of MAN's apples were compared with samples sent from two enthusiasts in the East of England, two of whom believe they may have a copy of *Waltham Abbey Seedling*. We remain doubtful but a third apple sent from Kent from a tree grafted with scions from Ipswich just might be. We are looking carefully

Last year DNA showed an old tree at the London Orchard Project, Lady Gilbert Orchard, matched two accessions we have of a variety tentatively identified as Rymer; the samples kindly sent by LOP indeed appeared morphologically similar.

The table above allows comparison of this autumn's activity with the previous four years.

Register of Local Cultivars — Accreditation

On 6th November Chris and Mike Porter attended an Adjudication Panel meeting at the University of Reading for accrediting varieties for accession to a National Register of Local Cultivars. MAN submitted nine varieties, as shown in the table on the next page, and all were considered by the Panel.

Bob Lever has commented: "The work that MAN is doing on finding old CVs [cultivars] is marvellous. Please send my congratulations to the team!"

Stephen Ainsleigh Rice

Name	Sample	Panel notes
Barcelona Pearmain	A356	Striking resemblance to literature gives accreditation on balance of probability. It may be that there are European comparisons available in the future.
Black Gilliflower (RLC)	A358	Further research to get comparative DNA value e.g. US samples.
Bringewood Pippin	A362	Name accredited to DNA Fingerprint in 2018 for cultivar previously thought lost.
Gabalva (RLC)	A393	There is limited evidence in historical documents. Investigate if pictures in Lindley Library or Journal entry
Gipsy King	A398	Name accredited to DNA Fingerprint in 2018 for cultivar previously thought lost.
Pig yr Wydd	A464	Name accredited to DNA Fingerprint in 2018 for local cultivar.
Spring Grove Codlin	A388	Name accredited to DNA Fingerprint in 2018 for cultivar previously thought lost.
Sweeney Nonpareil (RLC)	A485	Panel suggested seeking an illustration in Lindley Library and Brogdale in case there is a reason why this is not

DNA Fingerprinting update - 2018 campaign

As reported in Apples and Pears last year, we have largely covered all DNA FP work in our orchards. Of the 614 trees in Paramor, Westhope, Croft Pendarren and Ty Glyn, 521 have been sampled and analysed (in)directly, with certainty of morphological identification on all but two of the remaining 93 trees.

We've had a preliminary look at the results received recently from East Malling Research and from FruitID. Here are few snippets to whet your appetite for some of the surprises we will report in the Autumn Newsletter

Last year we reported a concern that there might be an error with identifying or propagation of *Green Purnell*. There is no error, thankfully. But there remains the fluke that the tree propagated from scions we got from Brogdale was planted at Tredomen at location LO8 immediately next to two trees grafted from a tree called *Old Girl* from Bromyard, a veritable old tree, that we'd planted a year earlier. In addition, we've found that two other of our accessions, from Broughton Green and Rockfield, are also *Green Purnell*.

We've found that another of our varieties is present at several locations. We had one from Hereford that we call *Hollingworth Cooker* that matches one we call *Weekes's Red Dessert* from near Droitwich and

Hollingworth Cooker



these match two at Hill Close Gardens in Warwick and one in London at Hainault. This last campaign adds one more that we had loosely called *Severn Bank* from Checkley. Our source trees and that at Hainault are old trees, so this must have been quite a popular variety, but what was it?

You may recall that I've a particular interest an old, old tree at Gelli Aur near Llandeilo. Paul Davis thinks it nearer 200



Gelli Aur

than 100 years of age, is a cooker with golden skin flush and streak with some red. We call this variety *Gelli Aur* (surprise, surprise). In 2017 we reported on its two old relatives in Fermoy, Ireland. The DNA results from 2018 confirm that there is a matching old tree in Leominster, on land that once was part of the Earl of Meath's estate. Well then, is

this originally of Welsh or Irish origin? Another variety that appears to have been quite popular many years ago



Weekes's Red Dessert

Bridstow Wasp is a variety described in the Welsh Marches Pomona (also in R. Hogg). We've found several sources of this locally, as readers will recall. Results of this recent



Bridstow Wasp

DNA campaign show it matches that of scions we had from Brogdale under the name 'Glory of the West', a variety apparently no longer available from the NFC. As this early eater is a variety we wish to accredit we need

to confirm which name has the earlier provenance: we think it is *Bridstow Wasp*. But where and why did the name 'Glory of the West' arise?

Collaboration resolves puzzle

A fine example of collaboration between Marcher Apple Network and Gloucestershire Orchard Trust has confirmed that the variety *Berkeley Pippin* is a synonym of *Slack-my-Girdle!* A few pieces of the puzzle had come in over a few years. There is one old apple tree along the avenue of pear trees that leads to Hellens*, it is the last but two on the left hand side, flat round with shiny red streaks on a green skin. "Of course that could only be one or other of those two varieties", do I hear you say?

In 2016 a sample was submitted by GOT on behalf of MAN: result — *Berkeley Pippin*. We had hoped it was *Hellens Kernel*. Concerned lest another tree had been sampled, we collected it again in 2017 and resubmitted: result — *Slack-my-Girdle* this time. The fingerprints were a bit different and both GOT and MAN were puzzled.

This last Autumn Jim Chapman asked both Charles Martell and Mike Porter to confirm which trees they had sampled. Answer: the same one. Was there evidence of a top graft, of two different sorts of apple growing? Well some apples were a bit greener or some redder but not obviously different. Jim then opened up both books by Liz Copas and Charles Martell and compared the photos and descriptions. Ah, very similar..... So we asked East Malling Research to look at the DNA fingerprints. They have replied feeling fully justified in making a small adjustment to the one number by which the fingerprints differed, So BP is SmG or a sport of it.

* Charles Martell adds further interesting notes to this. There were 2 apple trees near the top of the drive. Being both unidentified and included in the venerable avenue of perry pears, some of which date back to 1710, I rather fancifully thought these apples may have been the lost *Hellen's Kernel* (note the first published spelling in 'Apple and Pear as Vintage Fruits' by Hogg and Bull, 1886.) and may have been planted by C.W. Radcliffe Cooke the 'MP for cider', as a young boy. The two trees were similar in several respects; one was recently cut down and logged. So we can't be sure whether or not this was *Hellen's Kernel*. And is it '*Slack-My-Girdle* or *Slack-Ma-Girl*? Another subject for the

As an fascinating aside Charles adds: there is an interesting historical connection between the Hellens and Berkeley Castle. It was from the Hellens that Maltravers and Gurney were sent by Mortimer to Berkeley Castle to murder King Edward II. I'm not absolutely sure of my historical facts but it's a good story!

Following some careful detective work, David Powell and Wade Muggleton may have found an old Worcestershire variety, *Witney's Kernel*, at a site near Tenbury Wells. This is a tricky one as the only historical reference is in the National Apple Register stating that it was exhibited in 1883 under that name from Worcester; thus we have no descriptions of it anatomically. However, what we do have is anecdotal evidence from three different sources around Tenbury that that is what it was known as.



anecdotal Witney's Kernal
(Photo: Wade Muggleton 2018)



Folly Autumn Pearmain (false)

We do now have confirmation of a second tree matching it that is located near Orleton, just 10 km west of Tenbury. We have called it *Folly Autumn Pearmain (false)*, and you can see why it is qualified with both 'Folly' and 'false'.

Stephen Ainsleigh Rice

Our orchards and collection

Last year we reported that our collection was being rationalised. We have released both Donnington and Lower Ffordd-fawr and indeed the latter is already being redeveloped by the owner.

Over this winter most trees at Tredomen have been pruned of their lower branches as we hope to start light grazing by sheep underneath either this year or next, at least in spring and early summer. We are also going to graft on all the 'valuable' trees at Tredomen, the genes of which we wish to have preserved at Paramor and Ty Glyn.

At Paramor, the Cwmdu Support Group have given excellent support doing a tough but vital job. In the main orchard they have replaced 20 of the original tanalised stakes of trees planted about eight years ago, that had rotted, with [high temperature and pressure] creosoted stakes. These new

stakes should have a life of 15 or more years, making the premium price very well worth while. Missing ties and labels were also replaced. The next job is to cut back the hedge and incursions of black-thorn and brambles. Finally, we are wondering about topping the grass for hay as a way of improving biodiversity. Does anyone have experience of hay-making with a small tractor and bailer? If so please let our secretary know.

As mentioned at the AGM, your Trustees decided to agree to a 25-year lease on part of a field opposite Ainsleigh's home, Ty Glyn, where a collection is being established, currently 103 trees, and to have about another 230 added in February. It will house at least one copy of each of MAN's varieties and provide a more convenient location for recording their characteristics. Ultimately, the site can house 540 trees and will become our second location after Paramor. Members are welcome to visit to view, and of course work in it if they wish. Please contact Ainsleigh before you come, though.

At the same time we have accepted kind offers of additional homes for some of our collection. We have taken up the offer by Nick Dunn to plant up to 140 seedlings and especially interesting varieties at FP Matthews nursery. We have already delivered over 100 trees there for conserving rarities.

As mentioned last year we are also establishing Duchy of Cornwall and National Trust orchards in Herefordshire with Welsh Marches and Welsh traditional varieties on standard rootstocks, about 100 varieties for the Duchy and about 40 variously at three NT sites.

These actions will be enable a more assured conservation of MAN's collection.

Three Counties Project draws to a close

The Three Counties Orchard Project is now drawing to an end. The objective of this 3 year Heritage Lottery Funded project, is to raise the profile of the ancient orchards of Herefordshire, Worcestershire & Gloucestershire. The project has run a range of courses, pruned and gapped old old orchards as well as trained many people in orchard skills, for not only are traditional orchards in decline but the skills and knowledge in knowing how to manage and look after them is also fading. Hopefully, these activities will have gone some small way to reversing that in the project area.

MAN has benefited significantly from the project, with considerable funding for our website redevelopment, some for DNA research and contributions to ID work. The project leaves a valuable website www.tctop.org.uk with some really good resources, including downloadable information sheets and Youtube films on "Planning and planting an Orchard" and "Growing Fruit Trees in small spaces", with at least one other film to follow in early summer.

Grafting in 2019

There were some failures amongst the trees grafted last winter. Hardly surprising given that last year Paul Davis and Tom Adams grafted about 500 trees each of different variety or rootstock in a very short time. They will be re-grafted.

Additionally we will graft trees for Paramor and Ty Glyn of all those varieties at Tredomen that are considered valuable and not yet present at both locations. This will be about another 100 trees.

Finally, we propose to offer a home at Ty Glyn for some of the varieties that the Welsh Perry and Cider Society have been offered by Members, the Public and other sources as well as have been found during their recent project to conserve Welsh cider trees – see <https://www.welshcider.co.uk/heritage>. A total of 150 ore trees to be planted next winter.

Surplus trees

For a variety of reasons, grafting work during 2018 resulted in more trees than we needed for the customers mentioned above. Nurserymen Paul Davis and Tom Adams have added these surplus trees to their stock lists. Many of them have also had DNA fingerprinting for confirming their identity. We'd like to give MAN members the opportunity to buy them. If interested please contact them directly:

Paul Davis: <http://www.applewise.co.uk/>
01558 668744

Tom Adams: <https://www.tomtheappleman.co.uk/>
01691 777 512 & 07776 498 936

Website

Our website is being maintained by Wade Muggleton. Some improvements to the Shop, Membership and Resources pages have been made recently. Committee and Trustees are most grateful for the hard work and care. We are hoping to get some additional help shortly so that we can all concentrate more on the content than functionality.

You can find it at <http://www.marcherapple.net/> If you have any corrections or additions you would like to be made please contact Wade via secretary@marcherapple.net

Welsh Perry and Cider Society reaches the BBC

Press release: 'New' apple and pear varieties found in Wales
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-46796649>

And they have created a Welsh Pomona which you can find at <https://www.welshcider.co.uk/heritage>