



Marcher Apple Network

Charity No: 1095 151

NEWS SHEET No. 17

Spring 2018

AGM on 25th November 2017

With some regret we had decided during 2017 that for our we'd try another venue than the Cider Museum in Hereford. Some members have wanted to attend our meetings but are reluctant to come into Hereford near Christmas. We selected Pudleston Village Hall as a rural location and only sent out the meeting notice in *Apples and Pears* with no follow-up reminders. Would we be quorate? Yes! Over forty members came.

The meeting was introduced by our new Chair of Trustees, Jackie Denman. Formal business included receiving the Annual Report and Accounts and re-election of Trustees: Peter Austerfield, Stephen Ainsleigh Rice and a new Trustee, David Smith, who is our Membership Secretary.

At the end of the meeting Jackie noted that Peter Austerfield had decided to step down as Chair of Trustees, and she thanked him for his effective and kindly steerage of MAN over the last fourteen years, nine years as Chair of management Committee/Trustees and five more years as Chair of Trustees. All expressed their thanks to him.

Afterwards we had two speakers, Karen Humphries of the Three Counties Traditional Orchard Project and Rosemary Winnall of the Wyre Forestry Study Group. Karen explained how the Lottery Funded TCTOP had been set up to enable folk to manage orchards from inception to good husbandry, mindful of biodiversity. Above all its programme to teach and embed skills has proved as highly effective as it has been innovative. Rosemary spoke of the amazingly comprehensive study of biodiversity, social and cultural history in three old orchards in the Wyre Forest. She made a strong case for their long-term importance to communities, both of people and of flora and fauna, for their timelessness. Not least of all leaving deadwood as habitat for a wide range of organisms that these days are being forgotten. Both were warmly received, and kindly acknowledged.

Ainsleigh Rice

MAN visit to Frank P. Matthews

In September, 30 enthusiasts — some MAN members, some not — enjoyed a visit to Frank P. Matthews fruit tree nursery near Tenbury Wells. We ranged in experience from newly-interested amateurs to expert pomologists — and we all had an interesting and rewarding day.



Nick Dunn, managing director of the nursery and grandson of Frank Matthews, took us on a tour of the extensive site. The nursery grows the widest range of trees in the UK, with over 200 different varieties of apple and many well-known and unusual fruit trees. Nick responded to our stream of questions about root stocks, diseases, budding, pruning, new varieties and more with good humour, immense knowledge and clear explanations.

After lunch our group had the run of the tree shop, and many took the opportunity to stock up their gardens from the wide range of stock available.

Not only did we learn a great deal and have a delightful day, but MAN's bank account was enriched by £165. MAN levied a charge of £5 per head and Nick Dunn provided his time and expertise to us for free - we are grateful for his generosity.

Jilly Rosser, MAN member

Identification report 2017

Cold winds and rain at pollination time, followed by late frost, conspired to reduce the quality and quantity of the apples offered for identification during the autumn. We were especially grateful to John Savidge for bringing his photographic inventory of apples to our ID workshops, despite an early start from Aberystwyth and sometimes unkind weather on the way.

During the last two sessions we focussed on some of the varieties brought to light by the 2016 DNA fingerprinting

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Identification panel meetings	9	7	9	6	7
Events at which MAN offered identification	9	9	10	8	10
Total identification sessions	18	16	19	13	17
MAN hours involved	465	476	465	310	350
Number of samples examined	350	530	618	375	420
Number of exhibitions staged	3	3	3	4	5
Most productive events for identification	Big Apple [74] (2 days)	Big Apple [109]	Tenbury [109]	Leominster [62]	Malvern [94] (2 days)
	Malvern [54] (2 days)	Leominster [85]	Malverns [79] (2 days)	Tenbury [56]	Big Apple [73] (2 days)
	Chepstow [42]	Chepstow [68]	Big Apple [76] (2 days)	Big Apple [55]	Chepstow [50]

exercise. Efforts to follow up 'duplicates' from other Apple Groups have continued; in particular we looked at *Gelli Aur* and some samples of its 'duplicate' *Turnip* apple kindly sent to us from Ireland. *Hollingworth Cooker* was compared with samples from Warwick. We have worked on *Gabalva* and its Cornish links and more recently had news of a Cumbrian duplicate to *Llangenny Evagil*.

The table above allows comparison of this autumn's activity with the previous four years. Some of the more interesting varieties we received at shows this year included *Belle de Pontoise* (Chepstow, Leominster), *Rosemary Russet* (Chepstow), *Round Winter Nonsuch* (Big Apple) and possibly *Chorister Boy* (Big Apple), *Star of Devon* (Leominster) and *Lewis's Incomparable* (Chepstow).

Mike Porter

DNA Fingerprinting update

2016 campaign

Mike Porter reported the very considerable consequences of the 2016 DNA Fingerprinting campaign in the last *Apples and Pears* (Volume 2, number 11). Since then we have continued work towards accrediting a few of our 'gems', notably those found unique (or nearly so) which match a historic description. It is no small task, the bar being set high for avoiding inadvertent mistakes that would add to a subject already encrusted with confusion. Our priority list includes:

Barcelona Pearmain
Black Gilliflower
Bridstow Wasp
Bringewood Pippin
Brithmawr
Brookes's
Crichton's Reinette

Gabalva
Gipsy King
Hunt's Duke of Gloucester
Lady's Finger of Shropshire
Marged Nicolas
Martin Nonpareil
Pig Aderyn

Pig yr wydd
Puckrupp Pippin
Spring Grove Codlin
Sweeney Nonpareil

Tir Allen 65
Trevithel Small Russet
Winter Quoining
Wormsley Pippin

2017 campaign

Results from the 2017 campaign were received in January. A summary comparison with those from 2016 is presented in the table below of the 346 sample submitted to date. Of 113 trees for which there was an expected ID, fingerprinting has given 36 alternative names. Of 63 trees without an expected ID, 22 now have suggested links to named varieties in the NFC [7], other Orchard Groups [11], and duplicated/triplicated [19 trees] within our own collection. A disparity in numbers arises as some of our duplicate/triplicate tree varieties are also in other orchards (this can be very confusing).

This year we had more ID confirmations. Fewer of them were unique — a necessary condition for a 'find'. It is notable that a few more cider varieties were being covered. Future campaigns will likely continue such a trend, though they will be still well warranted.

The ID team has still to review the results more formally, but a few examples can be presented to show the value derived. If you are interested to become involved, please contact our secretary, Wade Muggleton at Secretary@marcherapple.net. The variety we call *Hollingworth Cooker* (Tredomen B08) had previously also been found at Hill Close gardens in Warwick and now we have it matching *Week's Red Dessert* (Tredomen E15) from the Droitwich area. It's also been found in London at Hainault. So this isn't a chance seedling.

MAN had identified a variety known as "Walter 2" to be *Round Winter Nonsuch*, a lost variety. An NFC match suggests it is "false Morning Pippin". We've no information about this

	2016	2017
Samples submitted	70	176
Of those samples which had made an identification:		
names which matched our expectation	50	77
names didn't match our expectation	38	77
and of those we had not identified:		
New names came from matches with NFC and other Orchard Groups	10	7/11
Duplicate or triplicate trees with the MAN collection	2	19
Trees which appear to match old varieties, unmatched at		
any other Orchard Group	16	to assess
No names matched — i.e. are Unique	36	24
Missing data — yet to resolve		17

variety; have you? We shall discuss with NFC to check the correct name.

Among those varieties that we had been given the names of known varieties more in hope than conviction, several were found to be unique and not to match those of the same name in the NFC. They include *Bascombe Mystery*, *Golden Nonpareil*, *Nine Square*, *Sheep's Nose*. Back to the drawing board...!

A few cases point to possible propagation and leaf sampling errors. For instance, two or three trees, from supposedly different sources, planted adjacently in the same year, seem all to be the same variety. Hard to spot this any other way than by DNA.

A tree supplied from a nursery as *Red Ingestrie* was found, sadly, to be *Orange Pippin*, one of its parents.

Two trees in MAN orchards, one Westhope and the other Lower- Ffordd-fawr, were found to have the same fingerprints and to match an Irish tree with accession name *Charlotte Daunt* from County Cork. How would those connections been made so easily without DNA?

Another tree from Tir Allen was confirmed as *Bridstow Wasp*, and fascinatingly this time it is said to be identical with a variety in Ireland described in Michael Hennerty's book "*The Heritage Apples of Ireland*" as "*Beauty of Ballintaylor*". Another Irish holiday beckons....

Our appetite for participating in a further campaign remains strong. If we include other member orchards, there are another 170 varieties or so to consider testing.

Stephen Ainsleigh Rice

Two new collections underway in Worcestershire

Over in Worcestershire two new and possibly unique collections are underway, inspired by Wade Muggleton's book *The Apples & Orchards of Worcestershire*. The Vale Landscape Heritage Trust aim to plant two of each variety from the book in an orchard in Naunton Beauchamp. The vast majority have gone in during this planting season, with the remaining few being grafted this season for planting out next winter. Until Wade's book never before had all the county varieties been recorded together in one place: now it seems that within a year they will all be growing together in one orchard, making the first ever Worcestershire collection.

Meanwhile a few miles away at Tiddersley Wood near Pershore, what will hopefully go on to be a collection of Warden Pears has begun, again possibly the first of its kind. These hard culinary pears, some of which date back at least 600–700 years or so, are a very understudied group. Following some

Harry Green of Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and Wade Muggleton of Marcher Apple Network with the first tree to be planted in the warden Pear collection a Frank Mathews Grown Worcester Black Pear on Kirchensaller rootstock.



work on Worcester Black Pears as reported in *Apples & Pears* in 2016 & 2017, Harry Green of the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust proposed the idea of a collection so in December, Harry along with Wade Muggleton and a group of Volunteers, planted the first trees. It is intended to add other Warden-type pears like *Catillac* and *Uverdale St Geramin*.

Wade's book is available from the www.marcherapple.net/shop Wade is now working on a book *The Worcester Black Pear* which should be out later in 2018.

Wade Muggleton

Rationalising MAN's orchards: our collection

As a result of many man-years of volunteer effort, MAN has established six orchards, and two members have large private orchards. With the exception of Paramor, accessions have necessarily been opportunistic; whenever interesting varieties were available they were grafted and planted... with enthusiasm. There are now over 1600 trees in these orchards. Often ID followed several years later, once clean fruit became available. Sometimes 'gems' were discovered, such as *Barcelona Pearmain*, *Bristow Wasp*, *Brithmawr*, *Gipsy King*, *Wormsley Pippin*, and, we hope, *Spring Grove Codlin*. More often, though, they proved to be more 'common' varieties such as *Alfriston*, *Belle de Boskoop*, *Blenheim Orange*, *Harvey*, *Lady Henniker*, *Wheeler's Russet*, etc. Multiple copies of many of these are now held across the collection and not infrequently several copies occur within any one orchard. The DNA fingerprinting campaigns have greatly aided recognising those of interest and those less so, especially varieties with which we are less familiar, say because they are from out-of-area. This has accelerated our understanding of the collection and increased confidence in what is and isn't important to both MAN and the wider Orchard Network (aka the Public).

Your committee has considered our orchards and collection and made extensive recommendations to the Trustees who have approved them to be carried out, as follows:

Donnington Orchard was originally developed in 1999. It has now been released and the owner notified. While over 80 trees were originally planted, many of a North American origin, only about 40 survive as a result, we believe, of poor drainage. All interesting varieties have been grafted elsewhere.

Lower Ffordd-fawr will be released during 2018. The owner has been informed. This is timely since he is considering alternative development plans. It has been a very useful orchard with many interesting varieties investigated; all have now been secured elsewhere. However, we shall take scions for this year's grafting work from those trees that had leaf samples taken for DNA fingerprinting.

Westhope (on M25) and **Croft Pendarren** (on M25) orchards, will be maintained. Both are full and have a range of very interesting varieties, such as *Sam's Crab*, *? Domino*, *Newland Sack*, *Pomeroy of Herefordshire*, and also *Bridstow Wasp*, *Gipsy King*, *King's Acre Bountiful*, *Pren Glas*, *Pig yr Wydd* respectively.

Paramor will remain MAN's prime orchard, with the standard trees (on M25) forming the core collection of local varieties. The nursery orchard will provide both fruit for ID investigations and a site where varieties can be grown for reference purposes.

We are fortunate that the contents of two large private orchards at Aberhoywe and Cui Parc are made available to MAN for both ID research and for the additional trees which increase the security of the gene holding, especially of 'gems'. We thank the owners of both.

Removing trees in order to re-use the location is time consuming, costly and may require leaving the site unused for a few years for avoiding "re-plant" disease (marigolds are said to accelerate recovery). This will become an issue even in the Paramor nursery area; early removal of unneeded trees is envisaged.

However, an alternative solution to grubbing up and replanting has been agreed necessary for giving more flexibility. As noted in the last *Apples and Pears* we have help from both National Trust and Duchy of Cornwall. NT have agreed to accept about 40 varieties at three of their properties: Berrington Hall, Croft Castle and Brockhampton. They are of our 'gems' closely connected with the local area of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. These will be on M25 for longevity. All IDs are to be supported from our DNA ID work. Grafting cost is for the NT. The Duchy of Cornwall has kindly agreed to take over 100 trees. These again are of our gems, varieties local to Wales and the wider Welsh Marches, so include *Pig Aderyn*, *Pencaled*, *Gabalva*, *Gipsy King*, *Martin Nonpareil*, *Puckrupp Pippin*, *Lord Hindlip*.... Already half of the total trees have been grafted, and those for the Duchy have been planted already!

There remain then varieties to protect, including those the ID of which has not yet been established, or of varieties that are of reference use during ID. F.P. Matthews have kindly agreed to host 200 trees as cordons on MM106 rootstock. This



is enough to secure many of those 'unknown' and 'unsure' varieties. Again MAN is most grateful to Nick Dunn and the staff of F.P. Matthews for giving us this security.

Lastly, a new orchard is being established on about 1 acre of a field opposite to my home Ty Glyn. It will host cordons on

M26. With guidance from Nick Dunn on how to do it, about 500 trees can be planted in six rows, each about 72 m long. The picture shows the site now fenced ready for trenching, trellises and trees.

This is more than sufficient to house one specimen of all MAN's varieties, both those identified that we wish to keep and those as yet unidentified or uncertain. A life of about 25–35 years is expected. This will provide an interim solution toward the consolidation of MAN collection at Paramor and perhaps later another orchard of standard trees elsewhere in the area. And I will be able to look after this collection more easily. MAN is working towards a formal agreement with me.

When these changes are made, MAN's primary tangible asset, its collection, should be secure in at least two places and sustainable for decades to come.

Stephen Ainsleigh Rice

Grafting in 2018

About 180 trees were grafted last year for NT, DoC and FPM. There remains about 550 to do; Paul Davis and Tom Adams will work on it this winter. It includes all those mentioned above and some space for new acquisitions.

Surplus trees

For a variety of reasons, grafting work during 2017 resulted in more trees than needed for the customers mentioned above. These are now surplus and the Nurerymen, Paul Davis and Tom Adams, have added these to their stocklists — see below.. Many of them have also had DNA fingerprinting for confirming their identity. We'd like to give MAN members opportunity to buy them. If interested please contact Paul and Tom directly:

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

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

Variety	Synonym or sport	Rootstock		
		M26	MM106	M25
Alfriston		TA	TA	
Barnack Beauty	Credenhill Pippin		TA	
Blenheim Orange		TA	TA x 2	
Breakwell's Seedling				TA
Bridstow Wasp	Beauty of Ballintaylor	PD	TA	PD
Cornish Gilliflower		TA	TA	
Crimson Queen	Summer, Whitehead or Gwatkin Quoining	TA	TA	
Forester		PD	TA	TA
Tedstone's Red	Friar or Five Fingers*			PD
Gloucester Underleaf		TA		
Green Costard		TA		
Landore	Underleaf, Monmouth Green	PD,TA	TA x 2	PD,TA
Lodgemore Nonpareil		TA		
Margoeed Nicolas	Margaret Nicholas	TA		
New Hawthornden		TA	TA	
Newland Sack		PD		PD
Notarisappel		TA	TA x 2	
Pig Aderyn		PD	TA	
Pig yr wydd		PD	TA	
Queen Caroline		TA	TA	
Sain Edmund's Pippin		TA	TA	
Sam's Crab		PD	TA	PD, TA
Thomas Rivers	Rivers' Codlin	PD	TA	
Tom Putt		TA	TA	
Warner's King		PD	TA	

* The variety Friar or Five Fingers has puzzled us ever since John Tedstone brought this to our attention. It's a highly angular crimson red apple, the ultimate quoining. It might be the Friar mentioned in Hogg but it might be Five Fingers as illustrated in a draft plate of the 'Herefordshire Pomona'.

Website

Richard Wheeler developed a website for MAN 15 years ago and then maintained it for us. It was hugely important for building our sense of purpose and communicating with the public, explaining our aims, advertising courses and events we run, and what we have to offer. We are most grateful to his many years' stalwart service to MAN including, and let's not forget it, the Pomona project that produced the two CDs: *Herefordshire Pomona* and *Vintage Fruit*.

With his move from Herefordshire to Kent we recognised we had to find another solution. Charlie Searl stepped forward and has worked with Mid-Wales Design to build a new and more easily maintained website. Now she and Wade Muggleton are developing and refreshing it. Thank you both.

You can find it at <http://www.marcherapple.net/> Now, please, if you have any corrections or additions to make please contact Wade via secretary@marcherapple.net

Courses

Details of our courses appear on our website, of course — enquiries to our Secretary as above — but here's a brief summary

GRAFTING APPLE TREES by Tom Adams -

Cusop Village Hall HR3 5RW (Grid reference SO 23340 42362 via <http://gridreferencefinder.com/>)

Sunday 18th February, 2018 10.00 to 15:00.

You should bring with you a pair of secateurs whilst other course materials will be provided. (You are welcome to bring your own grafting tools and graft wood if you wish). You'll leave with four young trees of variety and rootstock of your choosing from among the huge range that we have available.

A light lunch taken at a local pub or café in Hay-on-Wye.

(Lunch is not included in the course fee).

The course fee is £30.00 for members of Marcher Apple Network and £40.00 for non-members. There are just twelve places. To book a place please contact secretary@marcherapple.net

PRUNING COURSE / REFRESHER by Ainsleigh

Cusop Village Hall HR3 5RW (Grid reference SO 23340 42362 via <http://gridreferencefinder.com/>)

Saturday 24th February, 2018 10.00 to 13:00.

In the event that the Saturday morning is inclement, we will try deferring it to the afternoon or to the Sunday 25th, thus we should like contact details for making last minute changes.

We look after nine neat young apple and pear trees at the Village Hall. We aim to get the trees trim in readiness for delivering the autumn harvest. They are nice ones for you to refresh and practice skills on.

You may wish to bring with you a pair of secateurs and dress in warm clothes with boots and gloves. Loppers, bow saws, long pole pruners and ladders will be available should you wish to use these

The event is free for residents of Cusop Parish. For other members of the public the course fee is £5.00 for members of Marcher Apple Network and £10.00 for non-members.

PRUNING COURSE by Paul Davis at Tredomen Court

Orchard, date and time to be confirmed, though likely in late February. Paul has been giving closely supervised courses at Tredomen for many years now. We may have sufficient folk interested that we can again offer this course,. If you're interested please would you contact our secretary and we'll try to accommodate any individual preferences.