



Marcher Apple Network

Charity No: 1095 151

NEWS SHEET No. 11

Spring 2012

A QUESTION OF TASTE

Lots of people criticise modern apples as being beautiful to look at but rubbish to taste so we thought you might be interested in hearing about the results of a tasting organised by some 11-year old Girl Guides who were comparing three varieties of apples from the Hartpury Heritage Orchard as a puree - no added sugar or anything. The results were:

- 1st place (by a big margin) was Tom Putt,
- 2nd was Scotch Bridget and
- 3rd was Bramley.

Our correspondent who sent us this snippet makes the point that older varieties might indeed have a future with the younger generation already!

A CAVEAT

The above tasting took place in September last year. Could this be a fine example to illustrate a warning given in a letter to 'The Times', on the 16th September 1930:

Sir,— As this is the month of the apple harvest, may I give a word of advice to amateurs?
Very much fruit is spoiled by being gathered too early. All late apples, such as Blenheim, Cox's orange, sturmer pippin and the like, are not worth eating unless they are touched with red. Green shaded fruits within the tree will never be worthy of dessert. The longer the fruit keeps the longer should it stay on the tree to perfect its flavours. Sturmer pippin and all after-Christmas apples should hang til October, and Cox's orange itself for a week or two yet if not well coloured. Late pears should have the same treatment.
I know too well that tits and wasps in unholy alliance hasten our gatherings, but to what end do we store up fruit which in late winter spells only indigestion? Clear off leaves around the fruit and let in every ray of sun, and we can then approach our Coxes in March and our sturmers in May with untroubled minds and bodies.
I am, etc.

EDWARD A. BUNYARD.

PRUNING & PLANTING WORK PARTIES

Saturday, 18th February 2012. Designed as a follow-up day to the Apple Pruning Course on the 4th February, so that course members may practise their new-found skills, we will also welcome volunteers to our Tredomen Court orchard. This is a golden opportunity to gain experience alongside others who may be more expert. There is plenty of work to be done so if you can spare the time, lunch is free and petrol paid! Please let Tony Pain know if you can help. Tel. 01746 712325 or email Tony at publicity@marcherapple.net.

TRAINING COURSES

Saturday, 4th February 2012. Apple Pruning Course at MAN's Tredomen orchard, run by Paul Davis of Dolau Herion, was fully booked by the time we went to press but members may be interested in the following:

Saturday, 10th March 2012. Nick Dunn of Frank Matthews Ltd is leading two courses, "Restorative pruning of old apple trees" near Ludlow on Saturday, March 10th, 2012. The morning course, limited to 20 persons will commence at 10 am and will last for two hours. A light lunch will be taken at 12 noon and those people attending the afternoon course, also limited to 20, will also take their lunch at this time, commencing their course at 1 pm to finish at 3 pm.

As the trees are about 60 years old and quite tall it will not be practicable for all to "have a go" but a variety of trees with different growth characteristics will be worked on and it could well be a chance to learn how to revitalise an old favourite tree.

The cost, including a light lunch, will be £15 a head (£20 for non-members of MAN). Please indicate whether you would like to attend the morning or afternoon session and send a cheque payable to Marcher Apple Network to Mr T W Froggatt, Ashford Mill, Ashford Carbonel, Ludlow, SY8 4BT by **February 25**. Please also enclose a SAE to receive location instructions and your meal ticket(s). Car parking facilities are nearby and toilets will be available from 11.30 until 1.30 pm.

We are also in the process of arranging a 'Summer Pruning' course, to be led by MAN member Tom Adams. The provisional dates are either Saturday **4th August** or Saturday **11th August 2012** at Tredomen Court orchard. Details will be announced later in the year.

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Thursday 20th September 2012. A beginner's guide to apple identification, conducted by Sheila Leitch and held at the Harp Inn, Glasbury. This course will be free for MAN members (£10.00 for non-members) and will be limited to 10 people only.. Further details to follow.

Members' event 2012.

Saturday 12th May.

We have now fixed a date for a visit to Tidnor Wood orchards near Hereford with its national collection of over 400 cider apple varieties and orchards extending over 20 acres, all managed organically. On-site cider making is also a feature of Tidnor Wood. As we should be in blossom time, this will be an excellent time to see this part of the County at its floriferous best. Further details will be announced later.

Highlights from ID sessions (2011)

Among the apples we investigated last autumn were some notable finds. These included Gabalva, a Welsh variety grown on the estate of the Marquis of Bute from about 1840 and introduced by the Cardiff nurserymen Treseder and Sons in 1901. The putative Welford Park Nonsuch from Lugwardine seems to match its descriptions in Hogg's 'Fruit Manual edition 5' and 'The Herefordshire Pomona'. Apples of such rare varieties as Barcelona Pearmain and Round Winter Nonsuch appeared for the second time so we know that at least 2 trees of each variety survive. One of the trees in our museum orchard was identified as Evagil. Further details of these exciting discoveries will appear in the next edition of 'Apples and Pears'!

"Growing Fruit in Powys"

This report, published recently by the Dyfi Valley Seed Savers, gives useful information on local varieties, performance, etc. including a very nice 'case study' on our own Croft Pendaren orchard. Organised as the Powys Orchard Project, this nicely illustrated report has the results of an online survey among fruit growers in Powys on the health of their trees and their experiences in managing an orchard. It is hoped this will help local nurseries decide which trees to propagate and orchardists which to plant. Orchard management systems and their effects on production and environmental/wildlife value were assessed, from both economic and hobby viewpoints. You can access the file through a link to it on our web site under links to Powys Orchard Project.

New Committee Member

We welcomed **Ainsleigh Rice** to the committee at our last meeting in 2011. Ainsleigh volunteered to join the committee at the AGM and comes to us with a range of experiences, including employment with Royal Dutch Shell over 28 years, for much of which he lived overseas in Holland, Oman, Nigeria. He lives near Hay-on-Wye, has more than 40 various fruit trees (over 20 varieties of apples) in his garden. He has been a MAN member for nearly 15 years and since retirement in 2008 has worked in the Tredomen and Ffordd Fawr orchards. His other hobby is designing and installing micro-hydroelectric schemes.

and return of a good friend

Tony Malpas, previously long serving member of the Committee and Editor, has re-joined us as our cider representative. Welcome back!