



Marcher Apple Network

APPLES & PEARS

AFALAU A PÊR

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*Reviving the old varieties of apples and pears
in the marcher counties*

www.marcherapple.net

MAN committee in action in 2007/8

Photo: Richard Wheeler



Tom Froggatt and Ray Boddington (left) exchange views while Richard Cheshire (right) casts his critical eye over some cider apples at the 2007 Open Day held in the Cider Museum, Hereford

Photo: Richard Wheeler



Photo: Richard Wheeler



Last minute conferring before the start of the AGM in the Cider Museum, December 2007

Photo: Richard Wheeler



A queue quickly forms at 'The Big Apple', Much Marcle, Oct 2007, keen to tap into the expertise of Sheila Leitch and Ray Boddington

Photo: Richard Wheeler



Sheila engrossed in the tricky business of apple identification at 'the Big Apple'

Photo: Richard Wheeler



Not all orchard visits are blessed with good weather. The MAN visit to the Elgar Museum on 16 October 2007 was decidedly damp!

Photo: David Kirby



Tom Froggatt engaging a visitor to the MAN stand at the Smallholder and Garden Show, Builth Wells, in May 2008

Photo: Chepstow Town Council



The 50th tree

Chepstow Town Council's scheme to create community orchards around the town has reached a milestone with the planting of the 50th apple tree near the Larkfield roundabout. Local residents and councillors lend a hand with the planting of a 10-tree orchard.

Chepstow was once famous for its sea of apple blossom in the spring, so this is an important contribution to Agenda 21 initiatives. Cider apples, plums, pears and cherries will be added to the orchard over the years so that residents and visitors can enjoy the blossom in the spring and tasty fruit in the autumn.

Front cover: Bringewood Pippin in flower, as far as is known, the only surviving tree of this variety — see page 7.
[Photo: Mike Porter]

Notes from the Chairman

Another busy year with much planning and progress.

We welcomed two new members to the committee, Sylvia O'Brien, our new Project Officer and Celia Kirby, our new Editor. Welcoming these two new members did bring home the need to improve communication within the committee as well as with new members. Many of us have been on the committee since or almost since the foundation of MAN and thus take a lot for granted. We just know about things and tend to forget that others do not. Sylvia and Celia gently reminded us of this and our Secretary, Marie, is devising a committee members' pack that will be useful to us all. Developing this idea, our Editor is currently working on a new members pack that we hope will be available later this year.

Last year's Newsletter featured, in particular, the Paramor Orchard and we made the orchard the theme for one of our 'Forward Planning' meetings. These meetings are held occasionally to deal mainly with single issues that are too big for normal committee agendas. The outcomes included initial landscaping work (a new entrance and some hard standing) and a first phase planting plan. There was also a need to address drainage in part of the orchard and improve the attractive copse area.

The new entrance has now been completed, apart from hedge planting, and the initial planting of trees which are those to be featured in our *Welsh Marches Pomona*, will take place at the end of the year. At the time of writing the orchard is being grazed but sections will be fenced off progressively as we plant up.

Committee member, Nicky Matcher, was instrumental in getting us to focus on a longer term plan for the orchard. To this end she is working on a 'Paramor Vision Statement' incorporating views from the committee so that we have at least a five to ten year plan for the orchard. Such a Development Plan is essential when dealing with grant-awarding bodies and, for example, the National Park. The Plan should be ready later in the year and we are grateful to Nicky for her 'vision'.

Last year I mentioned that we had made a decision to separate our Apple Day and the

AGM. Prior to 2007 we had held both on the same day which meant that the apple display, one of the biggest in the West Midlands, was open to members and the public for just one afternoon. Mounting and taking down the display is a huge effort with Mike and Chris Porter (dessert and culinary fruit) and Richard Cheshire (cider fruit) particularly involved but supported by other committee members. Last year the display was open for a day, the very minimum I have always thought, and this year, 2008, we will have a two day display in conjunction with the Herefordshire Food Festival at the end of October. Details of this event and the AGM (again in December) are given elsewhere.

Mentioning the AGM reminds me of the excellent talk we had last year from Dr Murray Mylechreest on the life and work of the Herefordshire pomologist, Thomas Andrew Knight. We hope to have another speaker this year. The AGM is also the opportunity for members to raise matters about MAN and our various activities. Do come along with your views and suggestions.

The *Welsh Marches Pomona* progresses and Dr Margaret Gill, our artist, has produced

some beautiful illustrations very much in keeping, in my opinion, with those of the *Herefordshire Pomona* which are generally recognised to be some of the finest watercolour paintings of apples and pears in existence. Mike Porter is working on the text and we hope to publish in 2009. Meanwhile, our Project Officer, Sylvia O'Brien, Mike and myself are working on a substantial grant proposal to help us make this particular vision a reality.

As usual we had a full autumn programme of shows and identification sessions and it is not unusual now for a MAN presence at Spring and Summer shows as well. We are kept busy and, as always, appreciate help from members. As I write we are planning two members' events including a return visit to the orchard of our President, Sir Andrew Large. Details will be available later.

Also as usual we maintain our contacts with other similar groups which grow, I note, by the year. The National Orchard Forum's Gazetteer lists these groups and it is gratifying to see so much interest in preserving this aspect of our heritage.

Peter Austerfield

People

At the AGM later this year Tony Malpas will be standing down as a committee member. Tony has been a stalwart of MAN for many years as committee member, Vice-Chairman, Project Officer and Chair of the Editorial sub-committee. The above says it all about his enthusiasm and commitment.

Tony did much of the work which led up to our successful Lottery grants which enabled us to produce our CDs '*The Herefordshire Pomona*' and '*Vintage Fruit*'. Always looking towards the future he proposed a third CD which might see production one of these days. He was also at the front of organising our very successful 'Long Ashton Legacy' conference. The new look Newsletter in 2007 owed much to Tony's energy and guidance as we moved to a completely different format, one, I may add, that has had considerable praise.



Tony was a very supportive Vice-Chair and on many occasions we have bounced ideas off each other or solved the odd problem over a pub lunch. I shall always be grateful for his support and advice.

We wish him well as he pursues his many other endeavours and I am sure he will be with us in spirit if not in person. Thank you, Tony.

Peter Austerfield

News of MAN Orchards

We are fortunate in having several museum orchards in different parts of the Welsh Marches, all now well established. These are all on private land, and exist through the support of landowners sympathetic to the aims and aspirations of MAN. Briefly, they are:

Croft Pendarren [map ref: SO167.196], 48 trees, planted 1996 onwards
Donnington [map ref: SO710.334], 60 trees, planted in 1996
Lower Ffordd-fawr [map ref: SO202.405], a nursery plot of 61 trees on dwarf rootstocks
Paramor [map ref: SO182.239] the most recently acquired — see below
Tredomen [map ref: SO122.317], 200+ trees, planted 1995 onwards
Westhope [map ref: SO 467 509], 15 trees, planted in 1995

Because these orchards are private property, it is not possible to guarantee access at any particular time although of course we do try and organise maintenance expeditions when appropriate, to which MAN members are warmly welcome. Any members who have a particular interest in a specific location are asked to contact the MAN Secretary to discuss possible visits.

Croft Pendarren

Three of the 4 Welsh apples seem to be flourishing here. This spring *Marged Nicolas*, *Pig yr wydd* and *Pig aderyn* had lovely blossom which appears to have set well. Only *Pren glas* does not look very robust. Most of the older trees have started to crop. These were planted some 11 or 12 years ago and demonstrate how long it takes for apples on traditional (M25) rootstocks to become fruitful. Last winter, 4 new trees were planted, making an orchard of 48 apple trees.

Last year the blossom and fruit from *Marged Nicolas*, *Pig yr wydd* and *Bridstow Wasp* were painted by Margaret Gill in preparation for including in our “Welsh Marches Pomona”.

The owner of Croft Pendarren took a late hay crop from the orchard after the bracken had been knocked back in June. Bracken remains a problem and needs similar treatment this year, but the banks of bluebells and patches of milk-maids were very beautiful in May. The Common Blue butterfly caterpillars should have plenty of their favourite bird's-foot trefoil to feed on this summer: so we are getting some of the management right.

Donnington

No problems to report with this orchard, the trees continue to thrive.

Lower Ffordd-fawr

Some pruning was carried out in the winter, although there was no time for an official pruning party to visit as there was so much to do at Tredomen Court. The 61 young trees at this small nursery site are looking

well now in May. Thirteen have set fruit and if these reach maturity, we may be able to carry out some identifications come Autumn. Three are slightly affected by mildew. The planting area is nearly full now as the spare ground at the far end is somewhat over-shadowed by large ash trees.

The Paramor Orchard

Our goal of having an orchard of our very own is now a reality, as reported last year. Progress with this lovely site, situated on the edge of Cwmdru in the foothills of the Black Mountains, is going smoothly. We have now made some essential changes to the entrance, including taking the gate back a few metres and providing a proper splay to make it easier to turn into and get out of the orchard. The hedging that had to be removed has been replaced with a stock-proof fence and new hedging will be planted in front. The main field has been let for grazing for this summer. The 30 trees featured in the forthcoming *Welsh Pomona* (see page 8), now grafted by Paul Davis, will be planted in the autumn.

But what of the long-term future?

Such an important commitment as this needs some strategic thinking. Accordingly, Nicky Matcher, who looks after publicity matters on the MAN Committee, has put together a “Paramor Vision” which is an invaluable document for now and future guidance. In essence, we wish the orchard to be a traditional standard orchard. It will contain examples of apple varieties typically grown in Wales and the Marcher counties, and thus become a reference collection of apples to help with identification issues.

Specific benefits will include supply of graft wood once the trees are established, as well as becoming a ‘gene bank’ for rarer varieties. There will also be the opportunity to ‘grow on’ unidentified grafted trees to aid with identification. The orchard is to be managed in such a way as to encourage biodiversity and so become an important contribution to the local landscape and ecology. In time, we hope the orchard will be a suitable venue for training courses. The orchard will not be generally ‘open to the public’ but MAN will welcome the public at events and supervised and scheduled visits.

Tredomen

With 230 apple trees Tredomen Court holds MAN's largest collection at the moment. In Feb. 2008, 14 trees were planted: a mixture of known varieties of apple and some only with ‘manuscript’ names at present. They are all ‘specials’, either because they are rare examples or because they are as yet unidentified and need to be observed and researched when they start to bear fruit. It was decided that this would be the last large-scale planting at Tredomen and in future only replacements in existing spaces will take place. The farmer has erected a fine stock-proof fence, with access gates, to exclude his ewes and lambs which will continue to graze part of the meadow.

Most of the trees are looking good after undergoing two years of expert pruning by Chris Fairs, who held a pruning workshop here in 2007 and by Marc Richmond in 2008, helped by MAN members. We are hoping for a good harvest this year with possibly some fruit for sale at events in the autumn. More progress was made with some of the ‘unknowns’ at our ID sessions during autumn and winter 2007/8. We now believe we have *Sanspareil*, *Roundway's Magnum Bonum*, 2 *Yorkshire Beauty* (from different sources), *Sandlin Duchess*, *King of Tompkins County* and *Lord Hindlip*. Another tree of *Bismarck* was also confirmed. So we move in a rarefied atmosphere when visiting Tredomen!

Identification of some of these unknown trees has been difficult. It takes a long time and there are still problems to be solved. If there is anyone out there who has the patience to delve into this apple ID lark, we would be extremely pleased to welcome you to our autumn and winter sessions.

Westhope Orchard

Last year was, in cropping terms, something of a disappointment. However, the trees had done so well in 2006 that perhaps they deserved a year off and, for what ever reason, the amount of blossom was noticeably less. Most trees managed something but *Sam's Crab* was nowhere near breaking its branches under the weight of fruit (in spite of some thinning) as it did the

year before. Our Chairman's own orchard, much lower down in the village, fared much better with one of the biggest crops ever, on a par with 2006.

All the trees seem fairly healthy but one has developed quite a lean and will need some propping up or re-staking. One or two others have grown a bit lopsided and will need further attention this winter. Unfortunately there wasn't time on the Pruning Day for

members (see page 7) to prune the trees under Chris Fairs' attention so the orchard will have to wait until later this year or early in 2009.

Fruiting this autumn will be better and some of the trees are now so big that picking, even on top of a very high Japanese tripod ladder (highly recommended by the way) is something of an adventure. We will see.

MAN in action

Among the many requests which come in seeking advice on planting orchards, there was one in particular this year likely to interest several members. With kind permission from Mr and Mrs Pocock, we reproduce the letter below. The subsequent research by Sheila Leitch entailed a thorough trawl through our library, many contacts with nurseries and lots of telephone conversations.

"We have very recently joined M.A.N. and would very much appreciate help with a capital 'H'."

We have a 200 year old walled garden with some old apples, pears and peaches which we should very much like to identify in due course.

More importantly, we have been awarded an HLS grant from Natural England to re-instate orchards that feature in 18th Century field maps. We would value input from M.A.N., as to what we should be planting in them.

A lot of wants, I appreciate, but we can also offer access to most of the walled gardens in Herefordshire and the knowledge of relict orchards in Herefordshire (68 Hampton Park Road which is a nature reserve, The Ashe, Bridstow, Courtfield at Coppet Hill etc.)

We do hope that you can offer us some advice."

The final list of suggestions is given here as it may well be of interest to others wanting to plant an orchard typical of those grown in the 1700s in Herefordshire. The selections were made based on the following criteria:

- Quality of the fruit, that is, worth growing for looks and/or flavour.
- To provide dessert and culinary fruit over a long season.
- Currently available from nurseries.
- Availability as scions for grafting next winter and as young trees the following winter.

Sheila's endeavours were much appreciated, with an offer to come and 'open' the orchards in due course. The full list of apples, pears and peaches, with comprehensive notes, is on our web site. However, for those of you for whom the more general question is simply "What apples shall I plant", you can of course do worse than consult the MAN publication "Apples of the Welsh Marches" — see back cover.

APPLES

Devonshire Quarrenden Second early dessert
Pomeroy of Hereford Second early dessert
Keswick Codlin Second early cooker
Dr Harvey (Harvey) Mid season cooker
Pitmaston Pine Apple Late dessert
Warner's King (Originally known as King Apple) Late cooker
Ribston Pippin Highly prized late dessert
Catshead Late cooker
Herefordshire Beefing Late cooker
Golden Harvey Late dessert and cider
Ashmead's Kernel Late dessert, one of the highest quality dessert
Wheeler's Russet Season January to March/April
Lemon Pippin Late cooker but also dual purpose
Nonpareil Late dessert

PEARS

Early Season
Doyenné d'Été
Jargonelle
Williams' Bon-Chrétiene
Mid Season
Louise Bonne of Jersey
Doyenné Blanc
Napoleon
Swan's Egg
Bergamotte d'Automne
Late Season
Uvedale's St Germain
Forelle
Black Pear of Worcester
Catillac
Bellisime d'Hiver

PEACHES

Grosse Mignonne
Tueton de Venice
La Noblesse (syn. Noblesse)
Catherine

Why Hartpury?

We are delighted to include this fascinating article by Jim Chapman which gives valuable insight into the historical connections of Gloucestershire with perry pears.

The village of Hartpury in Gloucestershire took its name from the perry pear (*hard pear*), so, living there, it was perhaps natural that I should take an interest in perry.

A drink sometimes referred to as perry was produced in the early medieval period by steeping slices of the fruit in water (*depensé*) to produce a liquor that was allowed to ferment. It was drunk as a penance by the early religious! Worcester monks spoke of using both *wyld peres* and *grete tame peres* (the *Black Worcester*) for perry. The use of the *Warden pear* for perry was also recorded in the London area, a trade that John Norden noted as declining due to the growth of the fresh fruit market. Gerard (1597) refers to wild or hedge pears as being harsh and bitter, but suitable for making perry.

By 1662, distinct varieties of perry pears were recorded by Daniel Colwall writing about the part of north-west Gloucestershire around May Hill ‘..... it is pears it most abounds in, of which the best sort is that they name the Squash pear, which makes the best Perry of those parts’. He continued *The pears for perry are the Red Squash pear esteemed the best, the John pear, the Harpary Green pear, the Drake pear, the Green Squash pear, the Mary pear, the Lullam pear.* The Hartpury (Harpary) Green is therefore one of the earliest recorded perry pears that bears the name of an identifiable locality.

Just like the monks of Worcester, perry in Herefordshire was made originally from any pears that were available, either wild or cultivated. The introduction of the numerous continental dessert pears in the 17th century (a time when orchard planting was rapidly

expanding in Herefordshire) meant large quantities of less suitable fruit would have been turned into perry for want of a local market for the dessert pear. The Rev. John Beale (sometimes referred to as the father of the Hereford orchard) was a cider man, regarding perry as a woman's drink '*fit more for the hinds*', possibly because the perry he knew was made from dessert pears. Writing in 1656, however, he speaks of the neighbourhood of Bosbury being famous for a peculiar perry which had many of the masculine qualities of cider, *being quick, strong and retaining good vigour for many years*. He describes the fruit as so hard and coarse that even a pig will not eat it. This fruit he calls the Bareland pear. The Harleian manuscripts (No. 6726) provide the information that in the Upleadon part of Bosbury is a farm called Barlands, recorded as famous for a '*peare cider*'. Upleadon, sometimes called Temple Court, was a manor that belonged to the Order of Templars until their suppression. It has been suggested that some perry pears may include the Mediterranean-based *Pyrus nivalis* in their ancestry. Could the early Knights Templars have brought home the local pear on their return from defending the route to Jerusalem?

From these early pears, many local varieties were produced. Perry pears were often planted on waste or other land not suited to cultivation, by cottagers and smallholders as often as by farmers. Trees grown from seed were generally used. This local practice continued through the centuries. John Norse Morse of Newent produced copper tokens (to pay his workforce) that bore the legend *'several thousand young healthy and fine crab apple and pear stocks raised from the kernel*



Photo: Richard Wheeler



to be sold by J. Morse Newent Gloucestershire
1796'.

Once the trees came into production the merit of their fruit was assessed and they were either kept or top grafted with a proven variety. The result was the development of many local varieties, often restricted to individual parishes or even farms.

The periodic rise and decline in interest in perry is another story but, in the early 1990s, Charles Martell established the NCCPG* National Collection at the Three Counties showground near Malvern. This collection now contains about 70 varieties. My own interest started in 2000, when we tracked down and planted a *Hartpury Green* in the village churchyard. From these small beginnings, with Charles' help, I have collected over 110 varieties associated with the story of perry and, in addition to my own NCCPG collection, we are planting a 25-acre village orchard. Known as the Hartpury Perry Park, this charitably owned field will include all the pears we have traced, over 100 Gloucestershire apples and plums, and a visitor and training centre offering courses on the production of perry (and cider) — details at www.tasteandexplore.com. Part of the field is too wet for fruit and has been restored as marsh and reed bed.

At present everything is very young and raw, but will be well worth a visit when the trees have grown — perhaps by 2050!

Jim Chapman

*NCCPG : National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens

Orchard Gleanings 2008

During the first day of the Autumn Fruit Show at Malvern, a visitor from Gloucestershire brought in three small apples for identification. Ray Boddington and I (MAN identifiers on duty that day) puzzled over the attractive oval apples with a scarlet flush, some russeting and distinctive large star-shaped lenticels, which reminded us of a delicate version of *Claygate Pearmain*. Though unripe, it promised a good aromatic flavour. It was clearly a high quality dessert apple, but we could not put a name to it. The remaining two undamaged apples were retained for further investigation. Searching through Hogg's "*Fruit Manual*" next day, I realised that the unknown fruit matched his description of the *Barcelona Pearmain*, also known as *Speckled Golden Reinette* and *Speckled Pearmain*, – a diagnosis confirmed by reference to the description and coloured illustration in the "*Herefordshire Pomona*". This was an exciting discovery and demanded further action.

A few days later, in a farm orchard in Gloucestershire, we were shown the tree which had produced the attractive apples. It was an ancient tree. Its hollow trunk had

been ravaged by beetles and woodpecker assaults, and much of its crown lost in gales, but the surviving boughs were heavy with ripening apples. The owners told us that the tree was already well grown in 1925.

According to the "*National Apple Register*", *Barcelona Pearmain* was first described in 1831 in "*The Guide to the Orchard and Kitchen Garden*" by George Lindley and "*Pyrus Malus Brentfordiensis*" by Hugh Ronalds. It is generally agreed that the variety came from the continent, though its country of origin is doubtful – perhaps there is a clue in its name? *Barcelona Pearmain* was held in great esteem by the Victorian pomologists. Robert Hogg described the fruit as '...firm, crisp, very juicy, and with a rich vinous, and highly aromatic flavour'. "*The Herefordshire Pomona*" states '*Barcelona Pearmain* is one of the best late dessert apples, and is also valuable for culinary purposes. It is in season from November to March, or even later if well kept. It is always a favourite fruit in the market.' With such a high reputation it seems strange that, by 1920, Edward Bunyard was reporting 'It is almost out of cultivation.' No later records of the variety have been found, either in show reports or other apple literature.

Last autumn MAN identifiers spent an estimated 240 hours puzzling over 398 samples of fruit brought to us for identification. The re-discovery of *Barcelona Pearmain* made it all worthwhile. It is intended that a descendant grafted from the Gloucestershire tree will be planted in the Paramor Orchard.

Last year the first of the young trees grafted from the *Gipsy King* orchard in Shropshire produced fruit, allowing us to confirm the identity of *Bringewood Pippin* (see Front Cover). This variety was raised in 1800 by Thomas Andrew Knight, of Downton Castle, from a cross made between *Golden Pippin* and *Golden Harvey*. The small yellow apples

closely resemble those of the mother (*Golden Pippin*). The fruit would be considered too small for today's market but it has a rich flavour and keeps in good condition until March. Knight is reputed to have owned several nurseries in this part of the country but so far I have been unable to find any link between the Knight family and the *Gipsy King* orchard.



Photos: Mike Porter

Bringewood Pippin

Both *Bringewood Pippin* and *Barcelona Pearmain* are reasonably well documented in the apple literature, which is more than can be said for several of our local varieties such as *Landore* and *Brithmawr*. Indeed this lack of information is a major reason for the compilation of our "*Pomona of the Welsh Marches*". There is now a proposal by the National Orchard Forum to set up a "Register of Local Apple and Pear Varieties". The way that this will be done is still under consideration but the register should help to promote information about these apples and pears and their contribution to local distinctiveness. The project should also aid the identification work of the National Fruit Collections (NFC). I expect that by now most of you will have heard that Reading University has won the contract to manage the NFC from April 2008. It is hoped that the new management will be able to extend the research and verification programmes, building upon the useful work begun by Joan Morgan, Alison Lean and co-workers at Brogdale.

Mike Porter

The *Herefordshire Pomona* CD and the *Vintage Fruit* CD are both still available – see back cover.

Photos: Mike Porter



Barcelona Pearmain

My favourite apple

What's yours? Everyone has one so we thought it would be fun to see who likes what, and why.
Sylvia O'Brien on the MAN committee has kindly offered to start the ball rolling with her choice.



Adams' Pearmain

What a difficult decision it was. Ten years ago I gave myself the job of choosing eight apple trees for a small orchard area in our new place near Crickhowell, and one of them, *Adams' Pearmain*, has stood out above all the others.

It has a delightful crisp and juicy texture, a slightly nutty, rich flavour, and keeps remarkably well until long after the New Year if it is given the chance. What is more, the fruits, which have an attractive conical shape and beautiful colour, are always in perfect condition and never seem to have any signs of bitter pit or other blemishes which have affected the rest of the trees from time to time. And that's not all – it is also prolific and crops regularly. Lets hope I am not tempting fate by committing such praise to print.

For weeks on end *"The Book of Apples"* by Joan Morgan and Alison Richards, and the latest Frank Matthews catalogue were spread out on the kitchen table while I matched up pollination times, tried to stagger picking and keeping times, searched out particularly attractive blossom, studied tree shapes and habits, looked at the colours and tastes of the fruit and pondered about disease resistance and susceptibility. It would have been so much easier to plant a big orchard, but I just didn't know how to whittle down my selection of apples to four eaters, two cookers and two ciders.

I knew very definitely that I did not want any of the 'bog standard' apples and wanted something a bit different, but I also needed to make sure I was getting my money's worth — that I would have a good supply of apples for eating, cooking and juicing. The old Welsh varieties certainly interested me, but they would have to wait until I had another area ready for planting and my immediate kitchen requirements were met.

Clutching at straws, I started looking more closely at the names of apples on my very long list. I had a son called Adam. Right, *Adams' Pearmain* would have to go on the short list.

Now, as I revisit my choice, I am faced with a dilemma about the apostrophe and realise that the apple is not in fact the Pearmain of Adam! It appears that, according to Joan Morgan and Alison Richards, the apple was first brought to notice in about 1826 by a Mr R. Adams. Apparently he obtained some scion wood of this variety from Norfolk and gave it to the London Horticultural Society, although its origin may well be in Herefordshire where it was known as Hanging Pearmain. It was grown for market in the nineteenth century and London fruiterers are said to have paid a high price

for it because it always made a good window display.

The little orchard is ticking over nicely now and we are gradually planting up more trees, including those old Welsh varieties, in a field. No doubt I will be planting another Adams' Pearmain or two to keep up with demand.

Sylvia O'Brien

Spring News Sheet 2009

It's not too early to be thinking about this — items always welcome. We try and be as up to date as possible, including brief notices of spring and summer events. Details may be sent to the Editor at 1 Kingswood Road, Kington, HR5 3HE or, preferably, by email to: celia.kirby@btinternet.com or — for those of you who already have Sheila on your system — to sileitch@tiscali.co.uk. Ideally, items should arrive no later than the end of January 2009.

Members' Pruning Day

with Chris Fairs, 15th March, 2008

Due to a variety of circumstances, the original venue for the pruning day had to be changed and I offered my own small orchard of some 20 trees as a possible alternative. The trees, on MM106 or M111 rootstocks, were planted in 1997 and are now of a fair size. They receive some pruning attention every year but they have never seen anything like this year.

It is sometimes said that you shouldn't prune your own trees. I don't agree as it is a very satisfying experience and you can only get better at it by doing it. However, there is a point. Having bought the trees, dug the holes and planted them and then done the formative pruning, one takes pleasure in seeing them mature and fruit. And at this

point perhaps the relationship is such that you are a bit too gentle, concentrating on the obvious (crossing branches, etc.) but not so much on more substantial structures.

This all came to an end on the Pruning Day when ten of us were walked around the orchard by Chris Fairs (of Bulmers) who pointed out various pruning issues before demonstrating what, in his opinion, should come out. Under his watchful eye members snipped, cut and sawed branches which were finger width to three or four inches across. "He's not going to take that one out.....", I remember thinking to myself. But oh yes he was! The next day's pile of branches was something to behold, about three times as big as it would have been if I had done the pruning. But at least I can get my ride-on mower round more easily now. And in the end the trees will benefit.

The weather wasn't kind to us but we carried on fortified by a convivial lunch in the local pub. It was a pleasure to meet other members and we will certainly have more pruning days in the future — but not in my orchard!

Many thanks to Chris Fairs for giving us his time and the benefit of his considerable experience.

Peter Austerfield



Photos: Sylvia O'Brien



ORCHARDS OF WALES

The flier reproduced here gives more information about the recently formed web site mentioned briefly in MAN's Spring News Sheet. The site is expanding steadily and interesting questions and answers on various topics are appearing regularly.

CALLING ALL ORCHARD OWNERS

Are you looking for a professional to prune your fruit trees this winter, or want to know how to prune them yourself? • Need information on what varieties and rootstocks to plant, and where to buy them? • Like to get in touch with people who will want your spare fruit this autumn? • Want to share your own orchard information, photos and tips?

'Orchards of Wales' is for you!

Glasu's orchard project, Perllanau Powys, is coming to an end. But Glasu and the Orchard Doctors have set up a free Yahoo discussion group, Orchards of Wales, for anyone in Powys, the rest of Wales and border counties with an interest in orchards to have an opportunity to network with each other and share tips. You will also find information sheets on orchard management topics, links to other orchard sites and a contact list of professional tree surgeons in Powys who have received specialist training on fruit trees to help look after your trees.

T ymuno â'r grŵp, anfonwch e-bost at / To join the group, send an email to orchardsofwales-subscribe@yahoo.co.uk

Neu ewch i / Or go to <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/orchardsofwales>

Am ragor o wybodaeth, cysylltwch â / For more information contact
Sally Shiels, Glasu 01982 552224 www.glasu.org.uk



A Pomona of the Welsh Marches

Mike Porter reports on progress

Last autumn it was decided to omit the account of *Doctor Hare's*, as the only known tree of that variety does not match the description given in "*The Fruit Manual*". At the same time a decision was made to include three others - *Newland Sack*, *Puckrupp Pippin* and *Sam's Crab*. Accordingly, in the spring Margaret Gill executed watercolour illustrations of the blossom of those varieties. Further research was carried out during the winter and descriptions of the selected varieties are being written. Supplementary text and additional explanatory figures are also being prepared.

As was briefly mentioned in my last report (News Sheet 7, Spring 2008), the hunt for a true *Ten Commandments* has been peppered with setbacks. The first candidate, from Brogdale, proved false. The second, from Berrington Hall, turned out to be *Reinette Rouge Étoilée*, a continental variety probably raised in Belgium, but also lurking in local orchards. The third contender, brought along to the Cider Museum by David Jones, one of our members, from Bishops Castle in Shropshire, looks promising but further research is needed.

Why has this variety proved so elusive? Although *Ten Commandments* is described in "*The Fruit Manual*", it was perhaps never a popular apple. Hogg refers to it as "A Herefordshire apple of no great merit" – a comment not calculated to provoke a rush to plant orchards of the variety. *Ten Commandments* is only given a passing mention in "*The Herefordshire Pomona*", where it is included in the list of 'Local Varieties of Cider Apples' with a very brief description, an explanation of its name and the comment "The tree bears well and the fruit is thought to make good cider". The same entry appears in 'The Apple and Pear as Vintage Fruits'. Scarcely a ringing endorsement!

There are a few references to *Ten Commandments* in Victorian publications. 'Gardeners' Chronicle' reports that a party of members and guests of the Woolhope Club saw this variety in an orchard at Breinton in 1877. As Miss Ellis (the artist) was one of the guests, this may well be the apple featured in her preliminary painting for "*The Herefordshire Pomona*". *Ten Commandments* was exhibited, as a dessert

or cider apple, at the National Apple Congress at Chiswick in 1883 by the Cranston Nursery from Hereford, so it was available for sale here at that time. In a survey entitled 'Fruit-growing in Monmouthshire and South Wales' in the RHS Journal (1899), the nurseryman John Basham of Bassaleg reported that he saw this variety for the first time at Cwmcarvan in Monmouthshire in 1899.

Most of the evidence seems to indicate that *Ten Commandments* was not popular for cider-production. Perhaps it was grown mainly as a novelty because of its intriguing name, which is derived from the ten red spots around the core, a striking feature when the apple is cut across the middle. The same trait is seen, though usually less clearly, in some other varieties, and may have led to some of the confusion about names. A rather similar cider apple found in Somerset is also called *Ten Commandments* and described by Liz Copas in "*A Somerset Pomona*". If any readers have come across other versions of *Ten Commandments*, please let us know.



Reinette Rouge Étoilée, a counterfeit *Ten Commandments* lurking in local orchards. Illustrated by Margaret Gill for "*The Pomona*"

Graftwood Requests Spring 2008

Demand for graftwood fell this year – possibly a reflection on the general downturn in the economy, or maybe related to an increase in our charges. Graftwood is now priced at £2.50 per stick, plus postage and packing at cost. Most of the 16 varieties supplied this year were apples of local provenance such as *Cissy*, *Colwall Quoining*, *Crimson Quoining*, *Downton Pippin* and *Saint Cecilia*. A list of varieties which can be supplied will cost £1, and may be obtained from Chris Porter, Aberhoywe Farm, Cyffredin Lane, Llangynidr, Crickhowell, NP8 1LR. This service is available only to members of MAN.

Mike Porter

Cider Apple and Perry Pear Group

Last year produced a good cider crop for most of us. The sunny April allowed the bees to get to work pollinating the blossom and although the summer was poor the apples seemed to be unaffected.

At last we now have an expert on Perry Pears, so those members who are interested in this fruit will be able to get advice. His name is Jim Chapman and he has written a very good article about the history of perry and his work at Hartpur which is published on page 4.

The grafts of *Styre Wilding* have taken and are developing well as are the grafts of *Green Norman* and the mysterious 'Willow Norman'. So far nobody has come up with a possible identification for the latter. Regarding the

possible name of "Wellow"; there is a Somerset village of that name and I have contacted a local cider maker who has agreed to see if he can find out anything.

It is our continuing task to try and find 'lost' varieties and in addition, it is vital to find as many as possible of the varieties introduced subsequent to the publication of the early

pomonas, particularly those grown on the Welsh side of the Marches. Those of you who have ancient trees, the variety of which is unknown but was used for cider making, may have a variety that is of interest. We would like to hear from you. A brief description of the tree and fruit would help.

Richard Cheshire

The National Orchard Forum

This most useful site, at www.nat-orchard-forum.org.uk, features many items of interest to keen orchardists, including the latest Newsletter, Issue No. 11.

If you would like more details, write to the Editor, Ann Smith, NOF, 109 Orchard Way, Churchdown, Gloucester GL3 2AP, Tel: 01452 855677.

Ancient apple varieties in the Tarn

Last year, with great pleasure, we featured an item on Ray Boddington, key founder member of MAN. It is thus very pleasant to continue this tribute by including an article by his nephew Christopher, giving yet another 'angle' on the quest for interesting apples of antiquity.

Today I went to Puycelsi to buy apple trees for my orchard. I found *Janisole*, *Reinnette blanche de Tanus* (a small town not far from here), *Blanche d'Espagne*, also called *Coquette*, and *Reinette d'Espagne*, *Pomme poire*, *Banane d'Hiver*, *Reale d'Entraigues*, and *Pomme de l'île*. Although I arrived early, the queue reached the door, and some of my targets, *Api-etoile* (a ribbed apple like a rounded five point star, which originated in France in the year of the Gunpowder Plot), *Royale d'Angleterre* (a keeping apple, origin ancient and uncertain), and *Teint-frais* (a juicing apple with sour flesh) had already sold out. I chose *Orangette*, tender, acid-sweet and perfumed, *Milharanca*, a large red and green streaked fruit which keeps till April, *Court-pendu gris*, which dates back to before Agincourt, and *Canino des Clots*, a local variety from the Tarn, a 'pomme à couteau' – eaten with a knife.

Puycelsi is a pretty hill village on the Route des Bastides. Surrounded by ramparts and crowned by its spire, it is approached up a long slow hill from the valley. Halfway up is

a large wooden shed, home of Le Conservatoire d'espèces fruitières et des Vignes anciennes. The Conservatoire was set up in 1986 by the Prefecture of the Tarn, a department of Midi-Pyrénées in the south-west of France, to safeguard and strengthen the biological heritage of Midi-Pyrénées, consisting of varieties of fruit trees and vines grown locally, many of very ancient origins. The Conservatoire is supported by the regional government and the National Institute of Agronomic Research.

The objects of the Conservatoire, which is one of several established across France, are to safeguard the genetic diversity of the local plant species threatened by extinction, to evaluate and identify the varieties collected and to promote the regional biological heritage by educational, cultural, economic and scientific programmes.

They currently have six hectares of orchard with 550 (yes five hundred and fifty) varieties of apples, 90 of pears, 50 of plums, 30 of cherries, 50 of peaches and 115 of vines. I

have a small field, about two hectares, and have gradually been creating an orchard. I have planted about 50 trees over the last fifteen years. About half are fruit trees including about a dozen varieties of apple trees and a few each of pears, quinces, cherries, persimmons and plums, including mirabelles and greengages (*reine claudes*), all of which do well here in the Tarn, also some peaches and apricots, which do less well as earlier blossom makes them vulnerable to our usual flash of late frost. The rest are mostly nut trees, including walnuts, almonds and hazel and a small grove of truffle-oaks, which are all slowly coming to maturity. There are also a couple of small copses of wild blue plums, mirabelles, green figs and sloes.

Each year the Conservatoire has a two day sale of ancient varieties which opens at 9 on the Saturday morning. I was told that when the staff arrived at 8.30 this morning the yard was already full of hopeful buyers, so next year I shall be there at eight!

Christopher Boddington

Summer Fruit

Last summer, when the editorial committee had just finished putting the newsletter to bed, I was in the garden picking loganberries and musing about what might appear in this year's newsletter. It was a good year for loganberries, in fact my best since moving to Herefordshire. The blackbirds and thrushes obviously had not found them because normally they strip all the ripe fruits away. The blackberry at the other end of the bed (which is very attractive as it is both thornless and parsley-leaved) has never — touch wood — had a problem with depredations by birds.

I suppose I should have a fruit cage but it is a bother putting one up — I do not have the time and they are quite expensive. For gooseberries though, it is another matter and each year I lash up a temporary cage from old tent poles. But, as Kipling said, that is another story.

The loganberry came from my mother-in-law. I tip-layered her plant many, many years ago and have repeated the process each time I moved house. So it's an old variety, not the more recent thornless one. Not that the thorns are viscous spikes, just that there are lots of them. And they get into the skin and, my, do they irritate. So I normally wear gloves when tying the loganberry canes into the training wires.

I have two sets of four wires, about a foot apart, running down the bed. One year's canes are trained down one set and the next year's canes go down the other set. I use lots of cheap plastic split rings which do a superb job. About late September, when all the fruit has been picked, I cut out all the old canes. They look quite tired then and can be easily distinguished from the new canes with their pinky mauve stems. I should limit these to about 6 to 8 canes each year but I do hate cutting out strongly growing stems — they grow up to 15 feet long — so I tend to keep about 10 canes.

Multi-cropping

Apart from weeding around the base of the canes and throwing on two or three large buckets of compost in winter (when I remember) there is no maintenance required. The bed itself, underneath the training wires, is planted with rhubarb. (I should have put the lowest training wire a

bit higher but it is not really a problem). With a bit of a squeeze, there is room for 12 crowns between the blackberry and the loganberry.

At the moment only 11 'slots' are filled with seven different varieties. What a pity that when I visited Harlow Carr (the RHS garden in Yorkshire which holds the National Collection of Rhubarb) they were redeveloping the collection because I have found it difficult to source named varieties. (As webmaster should I be making better use of the RHS plant finder?) Identification of rhubarbs must make identifying apples appear easy.

Identification of rhubarb varieties must make identifying apples appear easy

By the time the rhubarb comes up in spring the daffodils are past it — all around the bed I dug out a six-inch wide trench and

planted daffodils. These are 'picking daffs' for the house rather than decorative daffodils for garden display. Now that they are coming up strongly (a scattering of Growmore in the trench must have helped) I am beginning to cull the main crop daffodils in favour of *earlies* and *lates*. Nice as they are, Mary does get overwhelmed by two buckets full of *King Alfreds* and look-alikes. Some of the *lates* have a lovely scent, not something I normally associate with daffodils.

By now my picking basket was full of deep red loganberries. The individual fruits are long and keep their core (so are classified as blackberries rather than raspberries despite being a cross between the two), making them heavy fruits. They are somewhat tart in flavour when ripe, which I enjoy. I finished my musing thinking that it might be a good idea to write something for the next MAN newsletter about summer fruit. Perhaps I should.....

Richard Wheeler

Marcher Apple Network Accounts for year ended 31.07.07

EXPENDITURE

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Land purchased and fees | 35514.90 |
| Orchard & machine maintenance | 723.59 |
| Pomona project | 1022.20 |
| Library & equipment | 304.37 |
| Misc. payments | 803.89 |
| Purchase/sale trees (2 yrs) | 610.50 |
| Admin. expenses | 3653.38 |

42632.83

INCOME

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Subscriptions | 1904.00 |
| Donations | 36123.49 |
| ID & speaker fees | 848.00 |
| Purchase/sale books | 1451.45 |
| Misc. receipts | 1445.52 |
| Deficit for year | 860.37 |

42632.83

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31.07.07

LIABILITIES

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Accumulated fund | 57803.58 |
|------------------|----------|

ASSETS

| | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| Goods for sale at cost | 7718.00 |
| Machinery cost less 20% p.a. | 1340.00 |
| Planting materials | 418.00 |
| Exhibition materials | 350.00 |
| Computers cost less 25% p.a. | 100.00 |
| Library & reference books | 1295.00 |
| Land at cost | 35000.00 |
| Bank balances | 11582.58 |

57803.58

57803.58

MISCELLANY

The MAN Library of books, articles and other rare publications is archived, maintained and updated as an important service for MAN members. For full details of our holdings, please consult www.marcherapple.net/Libr.htm

Library additions

(1) *A Nursery catalogue: Special List of Fruit Trees. Grown and offered for sale by Stuart Low Co., Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Mddx. Dated 20 Dec. 1935.*

A photocopy of this catalogue was kindly provided by Paul Selfe, one of our members who is doing an orchard survey in his home parish in Herefordshire. The front page has a picture labelled New Apple – *Howgate Wonder* (Award of Merit) The catalogue was sent, in December 1935, to owners of an orchard near Leominster.

We have a few nursery catalogues from the period between the two world wars, and they are most useful in providing the names of fruit which would have been planted in this period. This Stuart Lowe catalogue copy is even more useful in that it has been marked with lines alongside some of the varieties in the 'Collection of the nursery's recommended apple varieties.' The marked names are the late desserts and early, mid-season and late 'kitchen' varieties. 28 cider apples are listed separately, and 6 are marked.

An old orchard still survives at the address to which the catalogue was sent, and has been in the same family for three generations. We shall be looking at this orchard this year, with identifications aided, we hope, by the varieties marked. A photocopy is going to Richard Cheshire, who may be able to find some survivors of the planting.

A cider orchard in Glasbury, planted with trees supplied by Bulmers about the same time, in the 1930s, is now losing trees each winter. Having a copy of Bulmer's planting list, kindly supplied by Chris Fairs, enabled me to locate two styre varieties which Charles Martell had been trying to find for

his Gloucester collection. Some members may remember that tale which was written up in Newsletter No. 5, back in 1999. Old catalogues and records of past plantings are a treasure trove of information and MAN would love to hear of any such material which we could photocopy and add to the library.

(2) *Community Orchards Handbook* Donated by Common Ground, with an appreciative note saying "Many congratulations on the wonderful work MAN is doing. We do hope this will be useful."

This handy A5-size book, with illustrations, will certainly be a most useful addition to our library. Appendices include Orchard Groups and support organisations; National Contacts; Nurseries and Equipment; Fruit Identification; Funding: ideas and sources and a brief guide to nature conservation designations. The wealth of information will make it a very useful reference book to many orchard owners, or would-be owners, as well as those concerned with Community Orchards.

Wicked walnuts?

I attended Sue Clifford's talk on *The Apple Source Book*, as Glasu, at short notice, offered two spare complimentary tickets to members of their Strategy Committee. No one else was available to take up the offer and I had enjoyed the similar event held at the previous Autumn Hay Festival and so went again. Common Ground was founded by Sue and Angela King, together with Roger Deakin who, sadly, died recently. There is so much to learn from Sue's presentation. This time I noted that she mentioned that walnuts should not be planted in orchards as they have a deleterious effect on fruit trees. Later, George Monbiot, at one of his three talks 'In the Green Corner', on global or environmental themes, mentioned this fact too, in passing.

Our orchard at Tredomen is on the site of an old cider orchard and one cider tree remains. In the middle of the field, is a very old and now moribund walnut tree. The young apple trees nearby look much healthier than the walnut, but it would be interesting to learn more about this problem. There is never enough time at the hour long events for all the interesting questions the

audience want to ask, even when George's 'conversations with the audience' gave a brief outline of a theme and the rest of the hour was spent answering some fascinating questions, but there was no time to find out what dire emanations are sent out by walnuts! Answers please from our knowledgeable members.

Mobile cider press

Each year, just before our editorial sub-committee gets down to the proof-reading of the Newsletter, I take a break and pay an annual visit in June to the Gower Folk Festival, held at the Gower Heritage Centre at Parkmill. This time, during a stroll around the fascinating exhibits, I came across a mobile cider press. The attached notice read as follows:

"An interesting development in Victorian times was the travelling cider press. The cider maker would be a local farmer or smallholder, although there are references to other trades in local directories and the like. Perhaps the most unusual were the undertakers, making their own cider to serve at funeral breakfasts (at a cheaper cost to them).

The travelling cider maker had a very short season of operation, working in a set round, from village to village and farm to farm, perhaps spending as long as two or three days at one place, then moving on.

The work was charged at a piece rate — around the turn of the century the usual price was a halfpenny or a penny per gallon. The cider maker only came to a farm once each autumn, and so all the fruit had to be milled at one time, whether it was ready, over-ripe, or still green."

The iron plate on the cross beam reads WORKMAN & SONS, Slimbridge, Gloucestershire. AWARDED R.A.S.E. FIRST & SECOND PRIZES FOR CIDER MAKING PLANT PLYMOUTH MEETING 1890

There is still a pretty potent award-winning cider brewed at Y Felin Ddwr, Parkmill, sold by the flagon (2.5 litres). Situated near to Three Cliffs Bay, and closed to the public for the small Folk Festival, this old mill site, similar in concept to the Acton Scott Working Farm Museum just south of Church Stretton, is well worth a visit.

Sheila Leitch (MAN Librarian)

Current members of the Marcher Apple Network Committee

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sir Andrew Large | President |
| Dr Peter Austerfield..... | Chairman and Director |
| Ray Boddington | Hon Vice-President |
| Tom Froggatt | Company Secretary & Treasurer |
| Mike Porter..... | Director |
| Richard Cheshire | Cider Apple and Perry Pear group |
| Diggory Kempton | Membership Secretary |
| Dr Celia Kirby | Editor |
| Sheila Leitch..... | Network Coordinator & Librarian |
| Nicky Matcher | Publicity Officer |
| Sylvia O'Brien | Project Officer |
| Chris Porter | Archivist |
| Marie Ward | Secretary and Events Organiser |
| Richard Wheeler | Webmaster |

Do you know...

the difference between traditional cider from the 'borders' (i.e. Monmouth, Gloucestershire, Hereford, Shropshire and Wales) and that from 'down west' (Devon, Dorset, Somerset and Cornwall)? Dorothy Hartley, in her classic 1954 *Food in England*, describes it thus:

Briefly, in 'border' cider, the apples were rolled over by heavy rough stone wheels which crush the pips, releasing their almond flavour, and the pulp then packed into loose, thick mats of horsehair and pressed in iron and stone screw presses, on the whole rather more swiftly than in the larger wooden presses used 'down west'. 'Down west', the apples were packed between straw layers like enormous many tiered sandwiches, and the pressure put on more gradually in wooden presses. The final pummace of both types is equally dry, but the west-type is full of flattened straw while the 'border' pummace is solid apple.

The 'down west' school maintains that there is "a power of minerals raised up from the soil into the straw" and the apple acid "searches this out" so the cider is enriched by the golden corn straw. The 'border' purists contest that if that is so, the natural acid of the apple is "neutralised and deadened by the straw, while the action of the stone on the apples also releases the aroma which is in the substance of the skins.

In summary then, 'down west' ciders are smooth while ours are flavoursome!

The Herefordshire Pomona Fruit Sections

In *"The Herefordshire Pomona"* almost all the variety descriptions are accompanied by a woodcut of a vertical section. (Only the crabs, medlars and quince illustrated on plates 75 and 76 are without sections). But *Foxwhelp*, which begins the Pomona with the stunning illustration on plate 1, comes with not one but three sections. These three sections are vertical just as all the other sections. Two sections are an outline showing the shape of the apple whilst the third includes the interior detail.

In *Vintage Fruit* there is but one section for *Foxwhelp* — the section showing the interior detail. (I will let you into a secret — the section on the *Vintage Fruit* CD is a scan taken from *"The Herefordshire Pomona"* rather than *Vintage Fruit*). And it is from the introduction to *Vintage Fruit* that we discover that all the woodcut sections were produced by Dr H G Bull himself.

Now way back on 28 September 1876 Robert Hogg had offered to help in the project which produced *"The Herefordshire Pomona"*. In the summer of 1877 the project was under way and was announced to the public at large. But there was a need to build up a body of subscribers to fund the



project. As it happened Hogg was the editor of the *Journal of Horticulture and Cottage Gardener*. In the issues for August 16 and 23 1877 the letterpress for *Foxwhelp* appears as an inducement for readers to subscribe. (I think Hogg was cheating using *Foxwhelp* as an example. The letterpress for *Foxwhelp* runs to three whole pages whilst virtually none of the other varieties exceeds a page. *Ribston Pippin* is the only exception which comes to mind). It is interesting that a year before publication of the first part of the Pomona the letterpress for *Foxwhelp* had already been written. I wonder if the plate had been painted then as well. But that is a digression. The point for this story is that in each of the two magazines there are two sections — so we have four in all. And the one section not in *"The Herefordshire Pomona"* includes a semblance of a horizontal section so I have reproduced it here for you.

Richard Wheeler

Biodiversity in Orchards

There are more interesting 'things' to find in orchards than just fruit

In Newsletter No. 11, Ray Woods wrote an article "Mistletoe and the case of little fleas having lesser fleas and so *ad infinitum*". There you were all asked to look out for dying mistletoe, which is a partial parasite, being itself parasitised by a fungus, the non-sexual stage of which is named *Sphaeropsis* and causes the khaki discoloration of the leaves and then the death of the plant.



This is the Golden Eye Lichen Teloschistes chrysophthalmus, a lichen found recently on a twig of a fallen apple tree in Herefordshire. Thought to be extinct in Britain, it has now also been seen in Devon, Cork and Guernsey.

Ray now asks for us to watch for another fungus and a lichen (see above) while Norman Lowe, Moth Recorder for Brecknock Wildlife Trust, on a recent visit to my old orchard where one centenarian *Blenheim Orange* supports a large amount of mistletoe, unaffected as yet by the fungus, asked me to watch out for leaf damage by a moth larva. I asked Norman for details and a picture so that members of MAN with interests in natural history may search for it (children are marvellous at spotting insects, spiders and the less obvious fauna). Climate change is already causing the unexpected to appear in many places, so keep your eyes skinned!

Sheila Leitch

Help wanted to find a rare moth on mistletoe

The rare moth *Celypha woodiana* is only to be found feeding on mistletoe and British records seem to be centred on Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. We would very much like to get more records and especially to see if it can be found in

other counties such as Brecon and Radnor where it has not yet been recorded at all.

The small green larva mines in the leaves of mistletoe from the autumn. At first the mines are very inconspicuous, but by the middle of April it can be seen as a small crescent-shaped mark. However in late April and early May it enlarges the mine, making an inflated blister in the leaves. These are initially pale but by the end of May the larva leaves the leaf to pupate on the bark or in amongst lichens and the blister goes dark brown, after which the leaf falls off.

The adult moth is rarely seen and the best time to record the species is therefore by looking for the mines during May. So if anyone does find such a mine could they please either get in touch with their County Moth Recorder or contact Norman Lowe on 01874 658453.

Photos: Robert Homan



Early mine of Celypha woodiana on mistletoe in late April or early May



Mature mine in late May

A fungus to look out for and cherish

The Government recently announced additions to its biodiversity action plan list of species. Amongst them was the apple tooth fungus *Sarcodontia crocea*. Something for MAN to get its teeth into I thought but as I knew nothing about it, was unsure as to what we could do. Out of the blue I was contacted by Judy Webb who had recently found the apple tooth fungus in an old orchard in Oxfordshire. She was able to tell me it forms golden yellow encrusting patches or lumps

with mini stalactites or downward pointing 'teeth' on cut rotting branch ends or inside a rot hole — usually at head height and usually on trees in sun. To begin with it smells of pineapple, later smelling strongly of rotting fruit. It is extremely rare (only 14 recent records from Britain) and is only found on apple.

The fruit bodies can be found between June–Sept. If a fungus looks like this but is on other trees, or at other times, it is not this fungus!



As it only feeds on the dead heartwood it is not a threat to the tree. Hollow apple trees live perfectly well and withstand gales as well or better than solid trees. So look out for it and its unusual smell. Please preserve and cherish any tree with it and please let us know if you think you have found it so we can check and confirm its identity.

Ray Woods
Plantlife Wales

Available from the Marcher Apple Network

The *Herefordshire Pomona* CD contains copies of all the 77 coloured plates from *The Herefordshire Pomona*, originally published by the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club of Herefordshire in 1885. The corresponding sections and text descriptions of the 432 varieties of fruit illustrated on the plates are included, as are the lists of local cider apples and pears and the lists of

varieties which the Woolhope Club recommended for planting.

The *Vintage Fruit* CD contains 290 separate descriptions of cider varieties and 107 descriptions of perry pears, all taken from hard to obtain reference works, namely *Pomona Herefordiensis*, also known as Knight's *Pomona*, complete with its 30 colour plates,

The Apple and Pear as Vintage Fruits by Hogg and Bull illustrated by 12 colour plates from *The Herefordshire Pomona*, the research papers by Ray Williams and others in *Perry Pears* and 'Cider Apples and their Characters', and *Bulmer's Pomona*, including its 35 colour plates.

Prices £16.00 per copy, including postage and packing in the UK.

Apples of the Welsh Marches describes 54 old varieties of apples cultivated in the traditional orchards of the West Midlands and the neighbouring parts of Wales. Twenty-four further varieties are described, which, though not in most cases originating in the Marcher Apple Network region, have been grown here extensively in the past and are still to be found in local farm orchards. Price £5.00 inc p and p in the UK.

Full Colour Postcard Reproductions Seven plates from *The Herefordshire Pomona*, in postcard format (6" x 4"). The front features the plate and the reverse is printed with names of the fruits illustrated. There are three plates of apples, two of pears and one each of cider apples and perry pears. Price £2.00 per pack, plus 50p post and packing for up to two packs, thereafter PLUS 15p per pack.

Back Numbers of the MAN Newsletter

If you are new to MAN (or if MAN is new to you) you may wish to catch up with the past and purchase some or all of the Newsletters 1 to 12 (Volume 1). Many of the articles contain advice and ideas which have stood the test of time and still make an interesting read. Copies of last year's issue of *Apple and Pears* (Vol 2. No. 1) is also available.

Prices Nos 1 to 6 (1995 to 2000) £4.00: Nos 7 to 12 (2001 to 2006) £7.00: All 12: £10.00, all including p and p in the UK. Vol. 2, No. 1 is £2.00 incl. of p and p.

What's on?

A list of regional apple events is included with this issue of the newsletter but note that

www.marcherapple.net/diary.htm

contains the most up to date information.

APPLES AND PEARS

AFALAU A PÊR Autumn 2008

is the Newsletter of the Marcher Apple Network

Charity No 1095151

Company No 3787303

Regd Office: Ashford Miill, Ashford Carbonel, Ludlow, SY8 4BT

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MAN Library List An up to date list of all the publications in the MAN Library, managed by Sheila Leitch.

PRICE £2.00 inc. p and p in the UK.

To Order Preferably download an order form from www.marcherapple.net/books.htm or write to Diggory Kempton, the Membership Secretary, Marcher Apple Network, Brook House, Hopesay, CRAVEN ARMS, Shropshire, SY7 8HD.

Cheques should be made payable to Marcher Apple Network. **Wholesale price list on request.**



Marcher Apple Network