

Central Core Network Bulletin

Issue 3
Autumn 2002

Promoting the revival of orchards and local fruit varieties in Central Scotland

Burgeoning Interest!

Welcome to our third Newsletter—doubled in size to eight pages this time! Thanks to everyone who has contributed articles and alerted us to events taking place throughout Central Scotland.

With all this interest there appears to be a true resurgence in all things orchard and fruit-orientated. Please feel free to use future issues of this Bulletin to highlight your own projects and ideas—let's spread the word.

As the Network matures I hope it will be possible to include features on practical tree care, details about the old Scottish varieties—and of course a continuing exchange of information.

We need more people—and more funding ideas—to help us set up the promised surveys, displays and information packs: there's a lot to do. So please get in touch with your ideas—and articles for the next Bulletin.

NEWBURGH ORCHARD GROUP

Newburgh was once Fife's Orchard Town. Set amid some 25 acres of orchards, fruit growing was an important part of the town's original economy. Driving down the long high on treeless High Street belies the fact that behind the house frontages lie a wonderful array of private orchards; these can, in fact, be glimpsed if you take the train from Perth through Fife! Tradition holds that many of the old trees remaining in these local gardens were originally planted by the monks who founded nearby Lindores Abbey in the 13th century. Could this make them the oldest fruit trees in cultivation?

The newly formed Newburgh Orchard Group wants to celebrate Newburgh's fruit heritage by establishing a community orchard - as well as encouraging and developing the use of the current local fruit crop. At present much of this simply falls to the ground and rots. The aim is to preserve the old varieties which may well be unique to Newburgh, and grow them alongside the better known modern varieties we are used to seeing on the supermarket shelves.

To launch the group the first ever Fruit Fayre will be held on 28th September. There will be a display of locally grown fruit (hopefully named), information, locally grown fruit for tasting and toffee apples and pears for children of all ages!

Everybody is welcome to join us - we are hoping for interest from near and far, and of course, for a fine day!

EVENTS

WHAT EVENTS ARE YOU PLANNING?

Please let us know so that we can publicise them for you

Saturday 14th September: 11am— 5pm

Falkland's first Apple and Pear Day. Apples and events a plenty in the NTS' Falkland Palace Orchard, Fife. Telephone: 01337 957397. (further details in the Bulletin, page 7)

Saturday 21st-Sunday 22nd September 2002: 10am—4pm

Tree in the Park—Chatelherault Country Park near Hamilton
A weekend of fun things for all the family to see and do, all on the theme of trees—including fruit trees! Telephone the Ranger Service on 01698 426213 for information

Saturday, 28th September: 10am—2pm

Autumn Fruit Fayre - 'A Taste of Newburgh', St Catherine's Court, Newburgh, Fife. Fruit Tasting and Toffee Apples for all ages.

Saturday, 12 October (check date—tel. 01333 720271)

Apple Day—Kellie Castle, East Neuk of Fife

Saturday, 12 October (provisional only—check first!)

Apple Day at Craiggencalt, Fife—Cookery demonstration, children's events and a tour of the Farm Ecology Centre

Sunday, 27th October: 11am— 2pm

The Second Stirling Apple Day, Cornton Primary School (edge of Stirling). Advice from Willie Duncan, a play by the school children and a tree planting ceremony

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THE GARTMORE POMOLOGISTS

An article by Margaret Miller, Head Teacher, Gartmore School

GARTMORE SCHOOL ORCHARD

Gartmore Primary School is a small rural school on the edge of the Trossachs within the Stirling Council area. We have always enjoyed using the out-of-doors in learning and teaching, and have planted one of the most useful resources I know, an apple orchard in our school field.

In 1991 I received an invitation from Common Ground, (a charitable organisation which seeks to save, restore and promote our common heritage, including the wealth of British apple varieties) to celebrate National Apple Day. This sounded great fun, and in the course of a day of simple apple-related activities we planted four trees in our otherwise bare school field. Little did I know what would come from this small beginning!

We now have a school orchard of some 20 trees, mostly Scottish varieties: James Grieve, Stirling Castle, Oslin, Beauty of Moray etc, as well as two outsiders, Gavin and Liberty which are scab-resistant and crop well.

We have planted a protective hedge of hazel, blackthorn and elder and over the years have learned to deal with problems of canker, strong winds, heavy rain and apple-scrumpers.

Many parts of the curriculum make use of these trees and their fruits. We use them in **maths** for measure and weight, in **science** to study the effects of weather, seasons, pollination and insect life, in **language** and **ICT** as we record their progress and compile and test recipes and games and in **social studies** as we teach about trade routes, modern markets and agriculture.

Perhaps most important of all is the development of **communicative** skills as each group of children who care for a tree pass on knowledge and skills to the younger members of the group.

A wonderful development for us recently has been the establishment of an e-mail link with a school in Booni, high up the Hindu Kush of Pakistan, which also has apple trees in its school grounds.

This year I was delighted to be asked to suggest apple activities for one day of School Grounds Week, and look forward to hearing from schools who have decided that an apple tree or two in the school grounds is a useful investment for their pupils' education.



CASHEL APPLE ORCHARD

In 2000 our Millennium enterprise project was to plant an orchard at Cashel on Loch Lomondside, the Forest for a Thousand Years.

We had to submit an application giving details of the provenance of the Scottish varieties we wished to plant to our sponsors, Marks and Spencer. Then the best site had to be selected, with pupils finding out about the prevailing wind, soil condition and drainage.

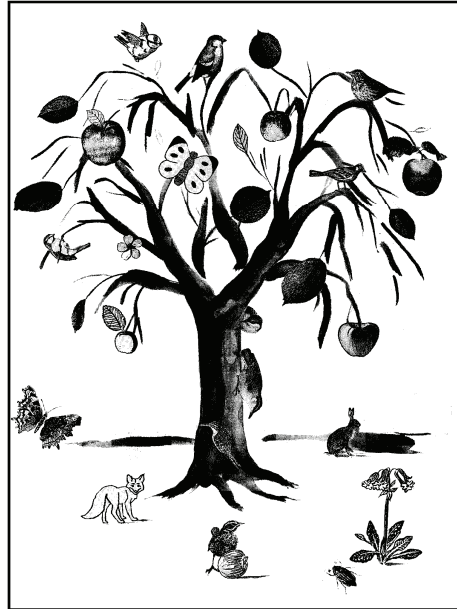
When the trees were planted the orchard was officially opened by the cutting of an apple by Gordon Jeyes, Director of Children's Services at Stirling Council.

This little orchard is thriving and I intend to develop activities using it, with other schools, particularly those in urban environments.

STIRLING APPLE DAY 2001

Last year, a group of enthusiasts from a variety of environmental departments of Stirling Council organised the first Apple Day in Stirling at the Smith Art Gallery.

We publicised it at the local Farmers' Market and attracted an eager queue of apple tree owners asking advice and getting their apples identified by our guest expert, Willie Duncan.



There were stalls and exhibits, activities for children and the day ended with a musical play, "Johnny Appleseed" performed by pupils from Gartmore and Strathyre Primaries.

It was a great success and one special result was the start of our database of apple trees within the Stirling area.

STIRLING APPLE DAY 2002

This year, on Sunday, 27th October, the Second Stirling Apple Day will be held at Cornton Primary School on the outskirts of Stirling from 11.00am to 2.00pm—everyone is welcome!

Our focus this year is on planting new trees, with expert Willie Duncan giving advice as he plants a Stirling Castle tree in the school grounds, apple identification, and healthy eating.

Pupils from Cornton and Strathyre Primaries will present a drama they have worked on together at 11.00am, Willie Duncan will plant the tree at 12 noon, and there will be apple trees for sale, activities and exhibits to interest children and adults. Refreshments will be served in the school hall from midday.

As we did last year, we will publicise the event with a stall at the Farmer's Market in Stirling on Saturday, 12th October.

Entry to this year's Apple Day is free and all are welcome to come along to share in celebration of our rich heritage of apples.

SCHOOL GROUNDS WEEK

Margaret Miller's Contribution for EARLY APPLE DAY

School Grounds Week 2002, organised by Grounds for Learning (GfL), runs from 16th – 20th September.

A wide range of activities is planned for each day, although schools can of course choose to use the ideas throughout the year.

I was delighted to be asked to plan the programme for the last day, "Early Apple Day" –

which gives a chance to share some of the activities we have developed in Gartmore School for Apple Day.



Under Local and Global Citizenship, we look at the "food miles" which imported apples travel to our shops, the growing challenges facing a seed as we play the Pip to Pie game, and finally, pupils are encouraged to plant crab-apple pips to produce excellent pollinating and wild-life habitat potential.

Any school which has not considered taking part in School Grounds Week, but has had its appetite whetted, can still obtain an information pack from:

Grounds for Learning,
Airthrey Castle,
University of Stirling,
Stirling.
FK9 4LA

Email: gflscotland@stir.ac.uk
Web: www.ltl.org.uk/scot.html

NATIONAL APPLE DAY

Grounds for Learning would also be delighted to know that schools will celebrate National Apple Day on 21st October 2002.

MORE'S APPLE DAY

National Apple Day is still a highlight of Gartmore School's autumn calendar.

Each year we introduce a new activity, but many are old favourites and are looked forward to by all pupils.

At the end of the day we gather in the orchard with parents and friends and dress the trees with poems, messages and nuts for the birds.

STARTER PACK

The senior pupils and I have put together an Apple Day Starter Pack for schools, obtainable from Gartmore School for £2.50 (p&p included).

Each day of School Grounds Week is based on the letters GfL and the activities are designed to reinforce the World Health Organisation's definitions of health in 'Care for Self', 'Care for Others' and 'Care for the Environment', which also have a strong correlation with the 5-14 Health Guidelines.

On Monday, for example, the theme of "A Sense of Place" is explored through Grass-world, Feelings and Landscapes.

For Early Apple Day, we consider Gifts, Flavours and Local and Global Citizenship. With Gifts, we turn to traditions associated with Harvest-time when decorated apples were taken from house to house as signs of friendship and to bring good health.

Children can use apple printing to make wrapping paper, cards or picture frames. Garlands can be made with dried apple rings to enrich classrooms with their aroma, and traditional pomanders made using cloves and spices - long-lasting reminders of the season of mellow fruitfulness.

The second set of activities is based on the exploration of Flavour, with tasting activities to differentiate between flavours and textures, the making of "apple-hogs" – a firm Gartmore favourite - and recipes using raw and cooked apples.

For an idea of what is happening throughout the country, take a look at the Common Ground website at www.commonground.org.uk

GART-



NETWORKING NEWS

INFORMATION NEEDED!

In the true spirit of a "Network" requests for information have been received from:

- **Karen Dobbins, Countryside Ranger at Chatelherault Country Park (Tel. 01698 426213)**

"Our museums staff have sourced some historical info about the Clyde Valley Orchards which we will put together as a display. I'm now trying to link this in with the Healthy Living Agenda. Although there seem to be many projects promoting fruit at school and local community projects to promote fruit at low cost etc., we are short of contacts and further information."

- **Amanda Currie—E-mail: mdkv87@dial.pipex.com (or contact the Editor to forward a written reply)**

Do you know of any traditional Orchards in the Glasgow area which are possible to visit. I am currently planning a public orchard in the Gorbals Glasgow and need some visual research material. I hope you can help

If anyone can help, contact Karen or Amanda direct (quote Central Core Bulletin).

Post your enquiries here in the next issue.

FOCUS ON LOCAL VARIETIES

The "Bloody Ploughman" (1883, Carse of Gowrie, Perthshire) has the ability not only to entertain schoolchildren with its name ("the man who came to tell us about apples today kept swearing") it has a fascinating history and is a delight to look at with its ribbed, blood red conical fruit. It has a sweet and rather light flavour, somewhat tough skin and sometimes an element of scab, but it's a popular variety fruiting in September and October.

Thanks to John Butterworth—details gleaned from his book "Apples in Scotland" (previewed in the last issue).



NATIONAL ORCHARD FORUM

Discussions have been ongoing since 1999 as to the need for a National Association of fruit groups in order to provide a more powerful voice on matters of national

importance to the fruit movement. Its launch was delayed because of the Foot and Mouth outbreak, but plans are now being made to officially launch the Forum this winter.

Central Core is keen to support such an organisation, but if anyone else wants further details for their own group, contact Linda Blenkinship on 0113 2828324 or e-mail her on lindablenkinship@yahoo.co.uk

TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

Correspondence from Kate O'Farrell, Common Ground — www.commonground.org.uk

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) can be put on fruit trees in England, although there are exemptions for commercial orchards and for pruning for horticultural purposes.

Unfortunately it seems the regulations do not extend to Scotland yet. TPOs in Scotland currently follow the procedure decided in 1975. They are, however, about to be amended after a review of the procedure - and hopefully fruit trees will be included.

As soon as news is forthcoming from the Scottish Executive Enquiry Reporter Unit we will publish further news.

Blossom Day 2003

Some time ago ex-Kellie Castle gardener, Kathy Sawyer proposed holding a Blossom Day to celebrate spring. Her idea was to invite local school children to the garden to learn about bees and pollination and to choose an area of blossom. They would be invited to return periodically over the summer to watch the fruit form. A final return in the autumn on a designated Apple Day to their adopted patch would allow them to pick any resulting fruit.

As this goes one further than Apple Day, is anyone planning such an event that we could publicise in the next Bulletin?

THE WIDER PICTURE

The Soil Association's Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Project

The Soil Association has secured funding from the Lottery Community Fund to run a 3 year project to promote and create Community Supported Agriculture schemes. It aims to develop the relationship between farmers and the community that consumes their produce founded on an understanding of mutual support. There are many exciting examples of this relationship from whole farms supplying produce to their local community - to renting a row of vines or having shares in an orchard or woodland.

What are the benefits of CSA?

CSA gives **farmers and growers** the fairest return on their products. The farmer is part of a community and is no longer isolated. **Consumers** benefit by receiving fresh, locally produced food on a regular basis. Education about where food comes from and how it is produced is also a strong feature of these schemes. Most CSA schemes welcome members to come along to open days and even help with harvesting.

Who is eligible?

The project will work across the UK and although information and advice on CSA is available to all, particular emphasis will be given to low-income farmers disadvantaged as a result of foot and mouth disease, BSE, swine fever, flooding and/or agricultural recession, plus disadvantaged communities.

What support is there?

The Soil Association has the resources to work closely with a number of farms and communities to help explore and develop initiatives. A number of CSA awareness workshops and training events will be held around the country. Farmers considering the CSA approach can be linked with existing schemes, and a number of demonstration CSA farms are being developed. Annual conferences will provide an opportunity to network with other CSA farmers and communities to exchange best practice.

What does it cost?

Eligible farmers and community groups will receive support with no charge. CSA workshops and training events are available to all, subject to space, although a small charge may be asked of those falling outside the project's criteria.

Who do I contact?

The CSA project co-ordinator is based at the Soil Association head office in Bristol although a new Scottish S.A. office is being set up in Dunblane. In the meantime, contact Greg Pilley on tel.: 0117 9142425 or e-mail: csa@soilassociation.org. Further details on the website—www.soilassociation.org



WECAN! Food for Fife Initiative

Meanwhile in East Scotland, an exciting community initiative was launched at Craigencaft Farm, Kinghorn at a “Food for Fife” event last spring. Fife has a proud agricultural history and today local people have the vision, skills and tenacity to create community action for local, healthy food—including local fruit.

Members of WECAN! (Working for Environmental Community Action Now!) brought a group of people together to help make the county the community food capital of Scotland! The soapbox session of the day turned into an extended, lively, enthusiastic exchange of information. In some cases, participants’ networking reaped instant rewards as new connections were made and possibilities established.

A summary of some of the topics raised is reproduced here as it makes inspirational reading. If you would like further details, just check out the WECAN! website: www.wecan.org.uk.

- Near Dunfermline there is existing land where it would be possible to plant an orchard on grafted short stock. Such an initiative would have potential links to other orchard projects. Scottish Power has already cleared the land, there’s local interest and “if the kids scrump apples – great – the project’s working”. There are already good existing links with the local schools.
- Also in West Fife there is a possibility of a walled garden being restored. The first stage would involve a kitchen garden project that would engage people on low incomes.
- Fife NHS Health Promotion is likely to play a supporting role in these kinds of projects, feeding such local projects ‘back into the system’ – especially into the Food and Health policy. Present priorities include the under-5s, schools, communities and food availability expertise, advice and literature backup.
- Inverkeithing Healthy Living Centre is a newly formed initiative supported by the Health Board and Fife Council. They are interested in food culture and cookery skills – for instance, teaching young single mums ‘how to cook’. They would like to establish a food co-operative that locally sources produce at cost price.
- The Fife Health Alliance influences policy Fife-wide. Priorities at present include school meals, influencing the family diet, fruit for nurseries and developmental work in communities.
- Contact Point Therapy Centre is concerned with food, health, diet and preventing isolation of people with mental health issues. They would be keen to see the establishment of a barter local food economy.

CONTACTS

The Royal Horticultural Society's website gives free access to "The Plantfinder", together with a list of Award of Garden Merit plants. Check out further details on: www.rhs.org.uk or contact them direct at RHS Garden, Wisley, Woking, Surrey. GU23 6QB. **Fruit ID Service**—ask for details before sending any examples.

Brogdale Horticultural Trust, Faversham, Kent. ME13 8XZ. Tel. 01795 535462. Home of the National Fruit Collection. **Fruit ID Service**—ask for details before sending any examples.

The main supplier for Scottish varieties of apples is John Butterworth. Contact him at Butterworth's Organic Nursery, Garden Cottage, Auchinleck Estate, Cumnock, Ayrshire, KA18 2LR (tel. 01290 551088); web page—www.webage.co.uk/apples/

Information on School Orchards—contact either Margaret Miller at Gartmore Primary School, Gartmore, by Stirling; e-mail: maggie.miller@virgin.net, tel. 01877 382 343, or Ann Lolley (see later entry).

Interested in setting up a Community Orchard? Check out the national details by contacting Common Ground on www.commonground.org.uk.

For local advice contact either Ann Lolley on annlolley@hotmail.com, or tel. 01334 657490, or Catherine Lloyd: cathlloyd@ukf.net.

Advice regarding management of orchards: in Fife and Kinross a FWAG Landwise Orchard Management Guide may be available—contact Shirley Macgowan on 01334 656546 or fife.kinross@fwag.org.uk for further details.

Or throughout Scotland—contact Fife-based Patrick Bowden-Smith (tel. 01333 330541; e-mail: CBowdenSmith@aol.com). As he runs an orchard management business he will quote for any work he proposes.

Please mention "The Central Core Bulletin" when you contact any-

Cider with Mark (and Peggy)!

In a good year a mature apple tree can produce half a ton of fruit. There are many common varieties, most of them edible, although not with particularly delicious tastes. Although there are a good number of uses to which these apples can be put, they often remain largely unused.

However, Mark Waterson, in Perthshire, has found a different use and may well be leading a revival of a craft well known south of the border, but not particularly usual in Central Scotland.

As a one man band—and accompanied by his horse Peggy—he gathers a supply of apples each year and pounds them into a fine mush using a half wooden barrel and a big stick. Then this is all transferred in a sheet of coarse fabric to a curious 'sculpture' of a nine foot tall beech stump which has a rectangular section cut out of the middle. In the bottom sits a stainless steel tray, through the top of which runs a 3" diameter screw salvaged from a fire engine ladder extension unit!

When the rectangular frame is full, the overhanging material is folded over the top to create an envelope—four inches deep of pulp. The frame is then removed and a wooden platform consisting of several thin slats connected with cross pieces is placed on top. The frame goes on top of this and another package of pulp is built. In the jargon of cider makers, these are known as "cheeses".

Once several cheeses have been stacked, a selection of planks is placed on top. Skill is required in preparing the cheeses and setting everything in the right place so that the force exerted by the screw is applied properly. If it's not, the cheeses can slide out or collapse to one side.



Armed with a spanner, Mark turns the screw, gaining extra purchase by putting a metal tube over the handle to make a longer lever. The pure, fresh apple juice is collected in the tray and then put into a 40 gallon barrel with a pound of sugar per

gallon and left for a year or so. The residue pulp left in the cloth is fed to Mark's goats and horses as an autumn treat.

The taste of the resulting juice is substantial and refreshing. Most other apple juices are treated in some way to prevent them from fermenting. All the ingredients for alcohol are in this juice—organic matter, sugar and yeast.

The cider produced is an ever-changing substance. Even when ready to drink it can suddenly start to ferment and be undrinkable again, only to reappear in a more sophisticated form months later. When there are several barrels together, only one might react like this but overall the longer it is left the more refined the taste becomes.

A cooking apple will produce a sharp taste and an eater with its extra sugar to turn to alcohol gives an earthier flavour. Blended together they give a more balanced cider.

Most of Mark's cider is very dry—and becomes drier with age. People used to drinking 'original farm-produced cider' rather than the commercial drinks we are so accustomed to in the supermarket will enjoy the drink, but beware, it's appley flavour belies its 8.5% alcohol level.

The adventurous can purchase Tay Cider by the gallon from Lynton Farm, Stanley, on the banks of the River Tay, eight miles north of Perth. Or look out for Mark at the various Orchard Days that are springing up in the area.

NEW COMMUNITY ORCHARDS—THE ALLOA EXAMPLE

New orchards are springing up throughout Central Scotland. The Murroes Community Council north of Dundee in Angus is planning an orchard using old heritage varieties. There will be more news about this project in the next issue, but in the meantime, in Clackmannanshire, a community orchard is being set up in Alloa.

It's early days, but funding was obtained from landfill tax credits to pay for a feasibility study. This is now complete and has been used to secure £100k funding from the Alloa South and East Social Inclusion Partnership. Match funding is now being sought and it is hoped to appoint a project co-ordinator in due course—a total of £830k is needed to complete the whole project though! The objectives include:

- Shared Community Environment
- Create a community amenity, a meeting place and a source of community pride.
- Recreate garden, pathways, hothouses and create a new play area

The aims are to:

- Create jobs and training opportunities for local people
- Improve health in the area

- Support local groups in environmental projects
- Strengthen the local economy
- Increase community capacity

There is scope for local people to be trained on New Deal or Training for Work programmes. Community enterprise schemes, tool and equipment provision, community composting, community café, healthy living initiatives are all to be considered. The project will certainly be contributing to meet residents' training and employment needs.

Growing schemes will help raise environmental issues within the community. There is a walled garden easily accessible for horticultural education and training initiatives. A community composting initiative will raise awareness of waste management issues. Local fruit and vegetable

production will link to healthy living initiative and local processing and sales.

The 'healthy living' focus will offer scope to develop dietary awareness and lifestyle changes. Access to outdoor leisure and social activity will help ensure mental well-being and reduce weight problems and heart disease. This links well with the aims of the newly-established Forth Valley Food Links whose aim is to promote more sustainable local food economies by linking local producers with local communities. The Links staff are already working actively with the Orchard Steering Group.

All in all, an exciting project. If you would like further details, contact Linda Jenkins, Health Promotion Officer, Development and Environmental Services, Clackmannanshire Council, Lime Tree House, Alloa, FK10 1EX. 01259 452585. email: ljenkins@clacks.gov.uk.

Coupled with a specific mention of orchards in the consultative draft of the "Garden, Allotments and Community Orchards Habitat Action Plan" of the Clackmannanshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan, there really is a revival of new orchards in Central Scotland!

*For details of the
Clackmannanshire Local
Biodiversity Action Plan,
contact Lynn Campbell on
01259 452639*

Another Fife Celebration of Fruit

Falkland Palace was once the much-loved country residence of Mary Queen of Scots. She and the Stuart kings and queens stayed in the Palace when they hunted deer and wild boar in the surrounding Fife forest.

In 1970 the first Conservation Area in Scotland was established at Falkland—covering 4.5 hectares (11 acres) it embraces the Palace and its gardens and orchard.

It is in this central village orchard that Falkland will hold its first

Apple and Pear Day in mid-September.

It promises to be a full day's event with games, story telling and music, hot chestnuts and organ grinding; barbecues and cakes. There will also be wildlife and mask making, magic and face painting. To top it all off, there will be a special appearance of the Central Band of the British Legion.

Separate admission rates are available if you don't wish to tour the Palace and its gardens—

Adults - £1.50: Children 75p; or there will be free admission with a Falkland Palace ticket.

For further details, telephone the National Trust for Scotland on: 01337 957397.



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KEEP IN TOUCH!

Please join the Network so that we can spread the word throughout Central Scotland and link in with the many other initiatives throughout the UK.

Send a cheque (payable to "Central Core Network")
to the address above

1 year's membership £5.00
3 years' membership £15.00

BOOK REVIEW - THE APPLE SOURCE BOOK

Common Ground publishes amazingly refreshing books—over the years a veritable stable of "thoroughbreds" has been amassed. Before the organisation moved on to championing fields and rivers, two little books were published: "Apple Games and Customs" and "The Apple Source Book", subtitled 'particular recipes for diverse apples'. Such is the book's popularity that it has been reprinted twice since its original publication in 1991.

Although basically a recipe book there is much that this little book covers in addition. However the note on the cover sums it up: "You could make an apple pie every day for 16 or more years and not use the same variety twice, eating your way from "Stirling Castle" to "Exeter Cross" in the company of the 'Reverend Wilks' and 'Bess Pool'! Writers, chefs and gardeners offer old and new recipes, widening our horizons to the wealth of apples which we could be using to enrich both our culinary and cultural landscapes. Sources of apples, fruit trees and lots of ideas for action to save our orchards make this book much more than a matter of taste!"

One recipe from the book is for *Cheese and Apple Tartlets*. Scottish apple variety champions Craig and Christine Pillans suggest using any of the following Scottish apple varieties in the recipe: **James Grieve, Hawthornden, White Melrose, Tower of Glamis, Galloway Pippin, Stirling Castle, Bloody Ploughman and Coul Blush.**

Line patty tins with short crust pastry and prick all over.
Half fill them with chopped apple and sprinkle with sugar.
Bake in a hot oven until the apple is tender and the pastry is beginning to brown—about 10 minutes.

Remove from the oven and sprinkle a layer of grated cheese over the top, returning the tart to the oven and baking until the pastry is cooked and the cheese is golden brown—approximately 5 minutes.

Serve hot or cold.

With the resurgence of Scottish cheese varieties, too, this could be a truly local dish!

This lovely book makes a great stocking filler or, with its companion book "Apple Games and Customs" great books to pop into a home-made hamper of local foods. Available from Common Ground (£4.95 plus p&p). Ask for an order form—Gold Hill House, 21 High Street, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 8JE (Tel. 01747 850820/ Fax 01747 850821).

"A Taste of Damsons"

A 62 page booklet (£3.25) providing the history of damsons and lots of recipes for hot and cold desserts, main dish ideas and recipes for punch, wine, port and gin. There is also a section on freezing, bottling and pickling.

Copies from the Westmorland Damson Association, Christopher Preston, Yew Tree House, Underbarrow, Kendal. LA8 8AY (tel. 01539 568393)

AN ORCHARD TO VISIT

Fyvie Castle, near Turriff, Aberdeenshire (NTS) is a magnificent castle with a lot of history. The grounds and loch were designed as landscaped parkland in the early 19th century.

A century earlier a walled garden was set up. This has now been redeveloped as a celebration of Scottish fruits and vegetables, specialising in soft fruits and seasonal vegetables. It is also establishing a comprehensive collection of Scottish apple varieties, including Bloody Ploughman, Cardross, Maggie Sinclair and East Lothian Pippin.

Open until 27 October (Sat. to Wed. 12 noon to 5pm; grounds open daily all year until sunset). Tel. 01330 844651 or 01651 891266

With thanks to Mark Waterston and Margaret Miller for the use of their photographs.
Black and white illustrations by permission from Common Ground from *The Common Ground Book of Orchards*
Thanks to all contributors—keep the articles and news coming please!



Nine varieties of British apple are available in our supermarkets - yet over 6,000 varieties actually exist.
Help promote the sale of local fruit by asking the Manager of your shop to stock more British varieties.