

Central Core Network Bulletin

Issue 4 — Spring 2003

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

Orchards and Scottish Fruit Varieties Make News

Orchards and their fruit are increasingly being mentioned in the media. In January, for instance, I was interviewed for Central Core by Frieda Morrison for the Beechgrove Potting Shed radio programme. There was an excellent response which just proves how far and wide the interest goes—we had numerous enquiries from a wide area, including Morayshire, Glencoe, Aberdeen, Stirling and Wigtownshire!

Last autumn, too, the Newburgh Orchard Group made local headline news with its first ever fruit event. So successful was this that they quickly followed on with another event nearer Christmas—further details are on page six.

So—if you have a story that should be told about your orchard, or you have plans for a school or community orchard—please let us know. And don't forget to let us have details of any events you have planned for the rest of the year so that they can be featured in future issues of the Bulletin.

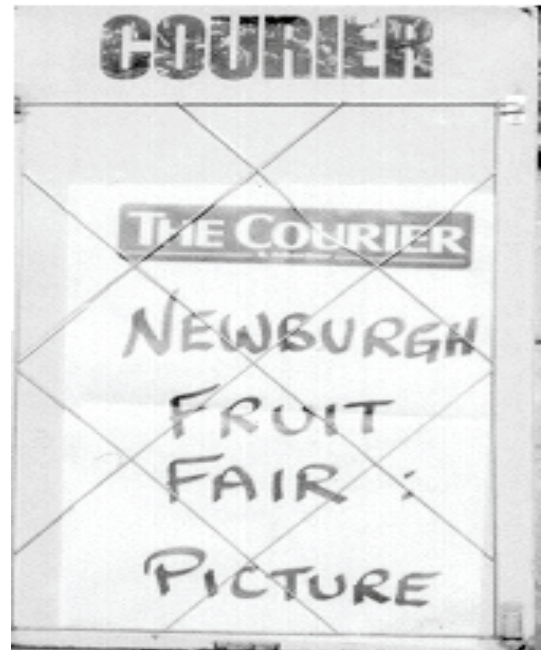
*Catherine Lloyd
Central Core Network*

EVENTS

WHAT EVENTS ARE YOU PLANNING?

Please let us know

so that we can publicise them for you



PLEASE JOIN US

Just a reminder!

If you would like to continue receiving this bulletin but have not yet paid a membership subscription for 2003, please forward £6.50 to the address on the back page.

Your support would be much appreciated so that we can spread the word and act as an advice network. The long-promised Orchard and Fruit Tree Survey is planned for re-launch later this year—so please stay in touch and take part in as many of the forthcoming training days and events as you can.

There really is much we need to achieve in the coming year, so please support us—a subscription would be a great start and much appreciated!

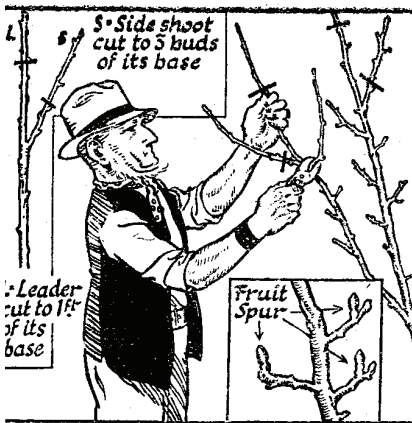
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PRACTICAL FRUIT GROWING IN SCOTLAND

Seasonal Tips by John Butterworth

Before we know it spring will be here so it is worth thinking about the jobs to do before then. Here in lowland Ayrshire, early varieties such as the culinary apple 'Emneth Early' (whose name may also be due to the fact that it produces fruit early in it's life), are normally coming into growth by early March. This is a good indication of the date by which planting and winter pruning should be approaching completion. I recommend publications by the Royal Horticultural Society for details of these jobs.



Planting

The 'counsel of perfection' for planting is before Christmas since some root growth occurs at that time which aids establishment, but of at least equal importance, in my view, are the condition of the ground and the planter, together with the fact that one may not wish to miss a season of growth by waiting until November.

Wet or frozen ground cannot be prepared adequately, and the only option is to wait until things have improved. A one-month period of allowing the loosened soil in the bottom of the planting hole to settle is also desirable, though this can be simulated to some degree by careful firming with the foot. The planter must have adequate time to do a proper job, ideally with an assistant. This is a celebration, not a chore, and as Lawrence Hills, founder of the Henry Doubleday

Research Association (HDRA) said ..." this is a job that should never be hurried because no-one has anything more important to do with the ten or twenty minutes saved by scrimping".

Staking Trees

The question of staking can be confusing, but it is important to consider the individual site. Most sites in Scotland would do well to stake trees on any root-stock for the first 3 or 4 years after which those on MM106 and stronger stocks could be untied on sheltered sites.

Pruning

Winter pruning is mainly confined to renovation and 'regulatory' pruning of bigger trees, whereby diseased wood is removed, branches are removed from the centre of the tree to remove overcrowding and give access to sun and breeze, and crossing branches are removed.

Branches are cut back to another branch of at least one-third the diameter of that removed, in order to take up the sap and prevent excessive re-growth.

It is usually advisable to spread severe pruning over two seasons and to follow this up with removal of most or all of the re-growth from the cut limbs in August - otherwise there is a proliferation of young shoots.

Cordons and Espaliers

Another aspect of winter pruning is the reduction of length and thinning of old spurs (small fruiting side-shoots) on cordons and espaliers.

In general, the aim is to reduce these to about 3" in length from the main branch to re-commence an eight to ten year cycle. At the same time any unwanted

branches which have developed as a result of neglect should also be removed. In order to avoid a lack of crop the following year some spurs can be left until the following year.

Check Ties

Another small, but important job to do before spring is to check any ties, particularly where these have been made with non-stretchable material e.g. bailer twine (not a good idea except in an emergency). Stretchable ties may well need adjustment in order to avoid constricting stems and non-stretchable ties must be replaced to avoid permanent damage or even tree death.

TRAINING WORKSHOP

Saturday, 8 March 2003

10.00am to 1.30pm

Join John for a half day's practical demonstration of pruning and caring for fruit trees at Monimail Tower, near Collesie, Fife.

Learn the basic do's and don'ts of pruning old apple trees, what to look out for and how to do it yourself.

PLEASE BOOK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE - places will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Make your cheque payable to: "The Central Core" and post to: Greenbank House, West End, Abernethy, Perthshire. PH2 9JL

**Central Core Members: £10.00
Non-members: £12.00**

*If possible, please bring your own tools and wear suitable outdoor clothing and stout footwear.
Tea and coffee will be available.*

Monimail is easy to find— it is just off the A91 road to St. Andrews [16 miles from Dundee; 36 miles from Stirling; 40 miles from Edinburgh] - a map is available on request.

A GROWING PHENOMANON - THE RISE OF THE COMMUNITY ORCHARD

Murroes Community Orchard: An Unusual Woodland Orchard

Fred Conacher, the Tree Officer for Angus Council reports:

Tree planting is definitely a growth industry in the small rural community of Murroes in Angus. For the past year and a half members of the community have been working together to plant trees in the neighbourhood.

There are several projects on the go but the most advanced is a small woodland scheme in the local school playing field which doubles up as a park with football pitch.

A survey was carried out of the site and a design agreed with the school, Angus Council and the community. After a great deal of haggling with different funding bodies and grant rules a viable funding package was brought together. A temporary fence was installed by the Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT) and a planting date set during National Tree Week 2002.

Sure enough on a perfect day—windless, astonishingly dry and sunny—the Environmental Group successfully planted 690 mixed broadleaves.

What has this laudable community effort to do with fruit trees? Well, after reading about the Central Core Network and its hopes for the conservation of traditional old apple varieties, it was decided to find some space in the woodland design for some apple trees.

Generous donations from people in Murroes enabled the purchase of 12 apple trees. With the help of John Butterworth, six trees of three different varieties: Hood's Supreme, Oslin and Tower of Glamis, were purchased for the Primary School Woodland Project—the "icing on the cake" for this exciting little project.

The most useful gem of advice given by John was what not to plant next to apples. The woodland is a native mix of mostly broad-leaved trees and the guess was that the larger species should be avoided as neighbours, as they would tend to shade out the smaller growing apple tree. So it was no surprise to hear Oak, Ash and Sycamore were to be avoided.

History of the Clyde Fruit Industry

In a past copy of the Dumfries and Galloway Orchards Network newsletter, one of the Harrogate-based Northern Fruit Group members, Phil Rainford, reported on his investigation into the old varieties of Scottish apples found in Clydeside.

He recommended the 1996 book "Discovering the River Clyde" by Innes Macleod and Margaret Gilroy. The book describes the orchard and bush fruit industry of Lanarkshire in the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. It also draws on an account of the area's orchards and fruit fields in "Clydeside", a book written in 1924 by A MacCullum Scott.

There's a little more information about Lanarkshire's plum orchards in Kevin O'Kane's article on page 5 of this Bulletin. If anyone is already researching the fascinating history of this area, please let us know so that we can share your findings!

Apple trees need plenty of light, air and south facing warmth so the south edge of the woodland looks the best. The real surprise was that Hawthorn and Whitebeam should be avoided as neighbours as they are prone to 'fire blight'!

With its first woodland-orchard planting undertaken, plans are now underway for the next project - again with its own macro orchard. Watch this space!

A Preview of the Murroes Community Environment Group's next project -

Brighty Mill Dam - a 'pathway' lined with fruit trees

This will involve the restoration of an old mill dam and the creation of a pond with some native woodland planting around it.

Traditional varieties of apple trees will be planted along the public right of way that passes the pond through the farm.

Grant monies are in place but getting the digger contractor on site proved difficult. More news in a future Bulletin!

Millgate, Cupar, Fife

The Central Core Network was officially launched at the Millgate Community Orchard two years ago and Ann Lolley publicised her new "Taste of Fruit" CD. Local councillors helped plant the new apple trees with pupils from Castlehill Primary School.

The last report received confirmed that the little orchard was thriving. Further details will be included in the next Bulletin.



Is there a tradition of Wassailing Orchards in Central Scotland?

This was the question I posed during BBC Radio Scotland's "Potting Shed" programme on Old Twelfth Night—a traditional day for Wassailing orchards further south.

The word 'wassail' is from the Anglo-Saxon "be of good health". To wassail someone meant to drink their health and a wassail bowl of hot ale, spices, sugar and roasted apples—to which eggs and thick cream were sometimes added—was often passed round at Christmas-time. The Scottish version - the "Het Pint (consisting of hot spiced ale, sugar and whisky) - was traditionally shared as soon as the clocks had ceased striking midnight on New Year's Eve.

Such practices were continued out into the community with the wassail bowl being carried from house to house during the Twelve Days of Christmas. The grand finale—in England's westcountry at least—was on Twelfth Night itself when the apple orchards would be wassailed with cider and songs, and the firing of guns up into the trees to frighten away any evil spirits and to arouse the sleeping trees out of their winter slumber.

In Normandy local people used to carry out a similar ceremony, but with the added touch of tiny bonfires of dry hay being lit under the branches of the trees and everyone throwing a lighted torch against the apple trees!

Other fruit-bearing trees used to be wassailed as well as apples. Herrick says:

*"Wassail the trees that they may bear
You Many a plum and many a pear;
For more or less fruits will they bring,
As you do give them wassailing"*

So—is there a tradition of celebrating our fruit trees in Scotland in a similar way? And if there is, does it take place during the winter, or—as in Somerset during the 17th century—are orchards feted at mid-summer instead: "by making fires in the fields to Blesse the Apples"?

Answers on a postcard please!



NATIONAL ORCHARD FORUM

The Central Core Network is now a member of the National Orchard Forum and will play its part in raising awareness of orchards and traditional fruit. Any Orchard Group is welcome to join the Forum— just contact Linda Blenkinship on 0113 2828324 or e-mail her on lindablenkinship@yahoo.co.uk. Please mention "Central Core".

THE ORIGIN OF THE APPLE

Last April, the New Scientist journal interviewed botanist Barrie Juniper about his two expeditions in the late 1990s to the Tien Shan mountains of Xinjiang province, China.

DNA analysis of samples there show that modern apples share genetic sequences with only one Central Asian species—*Malus sieversii*. The fruit was carried west along the Silk Road to the Romans who in turn brought it to Britain.

Juniper believes that the earliest apples were small, hard fruits with edible seeds that were spread by birds. Over 10 million years of selection by forest animals such as deer, wild pigs and bears, the fruit became attractive to mammals and the seeds became hard and poisonous, able to pass through the guts of these animals.

A SCHOOL ORCHARD HARVEST OF A DIFFERENT KIND

Margaret Miller from Gartmore School reports:

"Last year was a very poor year for apples generally and the trees in the orchard at Gartmore School produced barely enough for a taste at Apple Day.

We did, however, create another harvest in an interesting enterprise project. Our PTA, staff, pupils, parents and friends of the school produced a cookbook, "APPLE HARVEST" featuring apples in a range of tasty recipes. Pupils' contributions include poems and descriptions of apple activities and crafts.

We celebrated the launch of the book with a sampling session of some of the recipes. Copies of the cookbook, priced £3.99 + 50p postage, are available direct from Gartmore School, Gartmore, by Stirling. FK8 3RJ"

**Check out the Common Ground website
for information about School or Community Orchards:
common.ground@uk.org**

URBAN ORCHARDS—Eating our Landscape!

We welcome Kevin O’Kane, a Landscape Architect and Naturalist, as a new member to the Central Core Network. Kevin wrote a fascinating article for Reforesting Scotland’s journal back in 1998 on the subject of Urban Orchards. The following is a distillation of that article—with thanks to Kevin and RS.

“Imagine in a few years’ time you are working in the centre of Edinburgh and you go into Princes Street Gardens and pick an apple off a tree for lunch. This may seem like a pipe dream, but if you lived in India this is what you can already do as a quarter of all urban trees are fruit trees. Even in Prague and Stockholm open spaces are full of apple, pear and plum trees.

An Established Idea

The concept of urban orchards is not new. Norwich was described in Tudor times as “either a city in an orchard or an orchard in a city”. In medieval times fruit trees flourished in the gardens of Edinburgh, Aberdeen - and London. Last century the chocolate makers, Cadbury, planted an apple tree in every one of their workers’ gardens.

More recently, council tenants successfully campaigned to set up the Apple Tree Court Project at Pendleton, outside Manchester. Their tower blocks were due for demolition, but alternative action led to the surrounding area becoming an oasis instead containing a duck pond, wildflower meadow, small native woodland, allotment space and a multi-species orchard. The founder of the Arid Lands Initiative, Tony Milroy, found a parallel with the desert communities of the Yemen where he spent four years working with residents of a desert city. For 3,000 years the desert has been kept at bay through a three-tiered planting approach with trees, shrubs and ground cover plants. He maintains that in ecological terms the British inner city is a desert— we need to re-learn the techniques of sustainable household agriculture and apply them to places such as Pendleton.



Major Elements in Urban Regeneration

Urban orchards play such an important part in the regeneration of our towns as they encompass a variety of areas such as urban forestry and agriculture, as well as education, heritage and health. More and more schools—both urban and rural—are planting orchards in their school grounds, or are becoming involved in planting and looking after a local community orchard.

A Part of our Cultural Heritage

Fruit trees and orchards are an important part of our heritage—after all we’ve been growing apples in the UK since Roman times and can boast the widest variety of any country: around 6,000. More than 40 varieties are known in Scotland—the most northerly recorded being the Coul Blush from Easter Ross.

Because of poor transportation, apples unique to specific areas evolved and each variety has a fascinating history: the White Melrose was exclusively grown around its namesake Scottish border town; the Galloway Pippin was cultivated in

Wigtownshire; the Tower of Glamis was peculiar to the orchards of Clydesdale and the Carse of Gowrie beside the Tay.

Pears were more widely grown in medieval times and seven varieties are recorded in Scotland, together with two varieties of plum. The Clyde Valley was once one of the best orchard areas in Scotland—plum orchards can still be seen from the Hamilton to Lanark road. John Butterworth has identified twelve 3 to 4 acre plum orchards near Lanark alone and plums are still harvested and sold, although not on a commercial basis. Clydesdale is a good orchard locality for two reasons—there is a much lower rainfall in the area (approximately 800 mm a year as against 1120 mm in Glasgow) and also because the landowner, the Duke of Hamilton, encouraged the growing of fruit.

Healthy Living

Urban orchards are appealing in that you can eat the fruit—a direct connection to your locality: a case of eating your landscape! Here is a ready and free source of nutrition for city dwellers. The concept of public orchards—where picking the fruit is free and accessible—is backed by the British Medical Association.

Perhaps we should look to California to a housing development designed 25 years ago. 240 houses were designed round a series of cul de sacs where the main idea was the plants used in the design should not be simply “decoration” but a source of food. Allotments, vineyards and orchards were all incorporated, as was a beautiful avenue of almond trees. The crops are harvested by the residents who also pay an annual fee to employ full time gardeners and an administrator. Here in the UK developers building houses on an old orchard site designed the development so as to save as many of the trees as possible, ending with most new homeowners having an established fruit tree in their front or back gardens!

Enhancing Urban Biodiversity

Our cities are in serious need of environmental regeneration. We see a regular image of grey post-war housing surrounded by expensively-mown sterile grass. The occasional young tree dots these prairies, but they tend not to be big enough to encourage birds to nest and they are often non-native species which discourages the rich diversity of invertebrates, lichens and fungi.

Many initiatives are now starting up in Scotland and urban forestry has become accepted by most councils and government organisations. A million trees have been planted around the housing schemes of Glasgow and the Craigmillar “Plantathon”, involving Reforesting Scotland’s Woods for All Project has been a major driver in Edinburgh. Neither is urban agriculture a new concept—we’ve been tending allotments in our cities for generations. It all helps create a sense of community.

Hopefully one day we may actually see a public orchard of James Grieve in Edinburgh!“

Autumn Fruit Fayres and Apple Fests— Newburgh Orchard Group's Busy First Few Months

Fife's Newburgh Orchard Group (NOG) was set up last Easter to resurrect the old orchards and orchard history for which the village is renowned – and to ultimately put Newburgh back on the map as a tourist fruit town. In the future, NOG's ambition is to buy land to create both new community and commercial orchards.

Autumn Fruit Fayre

The group was officially launched at the end of September 2002 with a colourful Fruit Fayre held in Newburgh's High Street. A week was spent collecting fruit from private orchards and NOG successfully filled the entire forecourt of St Katherine's Court with apple, pear and plum displays.

The fayre demonstrated the diversity and variety of fruit that exists in the village - including rare varieties such as the pear *Lindoresi*. Local people were invited an informal 'show and tell' session – an opportunity to compare fruit from their own orchards or have it identified. Children were treated to toffee apples and homebakes were also available.

Over a hundred visitors to the fayre proved how much interest and excitement there is about the orchards in this part of Scotland. Many people just wanted to buy bags of home-grown apples!

So successful was the event that NOG were a little unprepared, but came away with many ideas for future events. It was obvious that those who saw the fruit displays were astounded at just how much variety there actually was and how little was known about them.

Winter Fruit Fest

The success of the Fruit Fayre was quickly followed by a second event to maintain momentum and interest. The 'Winter Fruit Fest' in mid-December saw NOG selling fruit trees such as wild cherry and crab apple, together with hazel, rowan and silver birch. Carefully wrapped in Christmas paper with gift tags which gave planting and growing instructions, they made ideal Christmas gifts.

A small collection of fruit recipes were sold, as were Christmas wreaths. A glass of mulled wine and a mince pie were given to every person who bought a raffle ticket - and on the cold and damp day that it was - this offering quickly became the highlight of the event!

Over £200 was raised which will allow NOG to organise other events throughout the year.

Further Information

If anyone local to the area would like to buy one of the potted trees – or obtain a



copy of the recipe sheets (which includes the mulled wine recipe!) - contact Mandy Horner at The Old Draper's House, 154(b) High Street, Newburgh, Fife, KY14 6DZ. She will also add anyone interested to the NOG mailing list to be kept up-to-date with future events.



Fruit Trees for a Family in Vietnam

*World Vision, the Christian charity, will send fruit trees to needy families in Vietnam. Four trees for £10 will help improve diet, health and long-term income for a family. Contact World Vision, 599 Avebury Boulevard, Milton Keynes, MK9 3PG
Tel. 0845 0757574 Or order online at www.great-gifts.org*

TRADITIONAL APPLE PRESSES FOR COMMUNITY USE

In 1999 a group of enthusiasts set up the Shropshire Apple Trust in the Ironbridge Gorge with the aim of building a traditional twin-screw cider press and to organise a large community Apple Day.

Their dreams have been realised. In addition, they welcome other communities using their press and other equipment for other Apple Day events. It provides a central focus of activity with the various other apple and craft demonstrations.

Manually operated equipment has many advantages. It is robust and almost maintenance free, requires no independent power supply and above all encourages group participation. All ages come together for such events and suddenly the event becomes a festival!

The use of a fruit press as the centrepiece for a community event encourages people to bring their own apples to press for juice of cider. There is usually so much fruit lying around in the autumn which just goes to terrible waste, so such a "service" brings a community together where everyone—particularly the children - comes to understand how juice is provided by being directly involved. Fruit doesn't always have to come from the supermarket shelves! Everyone can learn more about the different varieties of apples—and additionally, isolated people in a community have the opportunity to meet others in an informal setting to enjoy a real sense of purpose and fun.

The juicing process utilises a twin-screw Press made of green oak and salvage metalwork, and a salvage scratting mill.

The apples are 'milled' and layers of 'cheese' (the fruit pulp) are then built up. Then, by the simple turning of a couple of hefty screws, and squeezing the pulp under a great baulk of timber, the pure juice can be watched pouring out of the press.

Equipment can still be found in architectural salvage merchants or through vintage fairs—but for £1,200 (excluding press clothes and racks, plus delivery) the Shropshire Apple Trust can supply a

"Mummy Press" which is a smaller port-



able 1/4 ton press. It can be easily carried in pick-ups and trailers and will make up to 10 gallons of juice per pressing. Press cloths and racks can be purchased from Vigo Ltd in Devon (www.vigold.com).

The press has terrific public appeal and is ideal for 'Apple Day' events, 'Farmer's Markets', Community & Orchard Groups.

For further information, prices and details contact:

**Michael Pooley on 01952 433229
or michaelpooley99@hotmail.com**

**or visit their website
www.shropshireapple.co.uk**

REAL CIDERMAKING ON A SMALL SCALE

Michael Pooley and John Lomax have been cidermakers for more than twenty years. Their teaching courses and demonstrations of the craft throughout the UK have acquired a national reputation and they have now combined their expertise to produce a book on the subject.

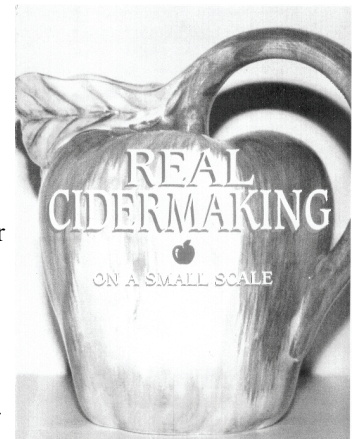
There are chapters on preserving apple juice for drinking, cider vinegar and the making of perry from pears—as well as cider-based recipes. The book also includes a set of plans for building your own cider press using hardwood or good quality softwood.

Central Core Bulletin readers are welcome to purchase the book at £6.95, including p&p. Contact the Shropshire Apple Trust or check their website (details above).

INFORMATION NEEDED!

Argyll Varieties

Does anyone know anything about the apple varieties found in Argyllshire? Scott McCombie of the NTS Ranger Service at Achnacon, Glencoe, has 10 old trees that need work done on them. If anyone can help Scott, please contact Central Core in the first place.



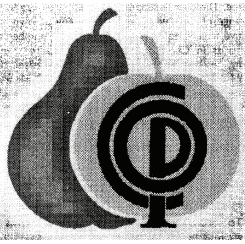
Post your enquiries here in the next issue.

The Orchard Revival—Where Are We Now?

A Report on the Cheshire Conference— Catherine Lloyd

The original conference had been delayed because of the Foot and Mouth Epidemic, so it was with quite some relief to finally drive down to Cheshire to meet all those people I had heard about, but never met.

The meeting was held in Norton Priority Museum, near Runcorn—at first glance an unprepossessing area of dull countryside surrounded by a web of motorways and industry. The arrival in a dusty car park did absolutely nothing to prepare me for the history that was about to unfold all around me!



The Cheshire Orchard Trust's logo

Eight hundred years ago Norton Priory was home to a community of Augustinian brothers. Much of their beautiful building was torn down to make way for a grand 18th century house—which in its turn has utterly disappeared from the landscape.

The ghosts of both eras lie tantalisingly in the surrounding gardens. The fantastic 2.5 acre walled garden was built in 1757 and features an orchard of named historical varieties. It includes quinces, walnuts, medlars, pears and apples—most of them set amongst grass, but some are cordoned. Rose beds and huge herb areas are enhanced by sculptures of geese and pigs. A magnificent tunnel arch consists only of named apple varieties—and at the time of my visit last October was both fruiting and flowering!

Such was my introduction to an historically-rich area of Cheshire that turned out to be a major orchard region in the past—there are already 32 varieties of apple known in Cheshire! In the surrounding rural areas it is still common to find each cottage garden has its own plum, pear and apple trees, and most farms had a productive orchard.

A lively and proactive “Cheshire Landscape Trust” is succeeding in raising awareness of this history. Its Cheshire Orchard Project, for instance, offers funds for setting up school and community orchards. Via the Parish Tree Wardens they have planted 40 orchards (500 trees) since 1994. We’ve got a long way to go in Scotland to catch up with such dedicated enthusiasm.

History of Orchards in the Landscape

Terry Lily, a retired lecturer from the Manchester Metropolitan University, reminded delegates that fruit growing was a very old craft. At Petworth House in Sussex, there is a quote in old records dating from 1376 confirming the purchase of fruit trees for an orchard: “2s8d for 2 gross apples—251 apple trees, 24 pear trees and tar to paint around the tree trunks to stop rabbits”.

It was common—especially in the 18th century and possibly earlier—for fruit to be grafted onto ‘wild trees’ in hedges; throughout the UK now there are still remnants of these old hedges—Cumbria is famous for its plum hedges, Norfolk its apple hedges. Are there areas like this in Scotland, I wonder?

Anecdotes

Tony Gentil proved that our interest in the how fruit varieties are named can lead us on a merry dance. A Cheshire apple “The Bee Bench” has proved to be very difficult to explain. He came up with all sorts of possibilities, but had to leave it up in the air, offering only a possible explanation of the apples (which are small green and very sweet) being left to ripen in the shelter of old bee skep ledges (bee benches); if anyone knows better, let me know!

Another amazingly named pear is commonly called Toadback, but research has led to its original name, the Bergamot Bufo which is an old French pear known in Anjou in 1600. Did the Cistercians bring it to Britain in Norman times perhaps? It is at risk of being lost in England as it is a hard, sour pear—may be it was used to make perry or perhaps verjuice? Again, if anyone knows, let Central Core know so that we can pass on the information.

And to close this section, at Styal Mill, a NT property in Cheshire, recipes for dying textiles include the Hazel Pear which was used in the past for this purpose. Perhaps the Toadback had a similar use that we are now not aware of?

***“Malus” was the everyday
word that the Romans
used for the apple.***

The Future for Integrating Orchards into 21st century life

Elsewhere in the Bulletin we have mentioned Cadbury’s “apple tree in each garden” policy. In England at least, it is now beginning to happen more widely. An LA21 project in Frodsham, Cheshire, is putting the fruit trees back into “Orchard Close”, a new housing development.

In some areas a slightly different approach is being used. School orchards are being planted and the children encouraged to get involved in caring for them during school time. Then a year or so later, a community orchard in the same area is proposed, with the children and their parents being asked first. If deemed a good idea, the children are then involved in planting the new community orchard and the wider community encouraged to join in. In this way, vandalism is hardly ever a problem.

The resurgence for orchards on a wider landscape level is now under way in Cheshire at least. The Mersey Forest (Forestry Commission), with the Cheshire Landscape Trust, is re-establishing an orchard at a farm that abuts the forest. Orchards are being specified in LA21 Plans—safeguarding the old and planting new.

Continued on page 9

Cont..... Orchard Conference

Developers and garden centres are being encouraged to 'think fruit trees' and to display them at showhouses in a variety of settings—from a 'wildlife corner' resplendent with wild flowers, fruit tree, nestbox and garden seat, to a patio with barbeque, windowboxes of herbs and a pot or tub with a local variety fruit tree in it.

Crewe University has included a Millennium Orchard on its campus and involved everyone from the Principal and staff and students in preparing the ground, planting the trees and caring for them afterwards.

The health, social and economic interests are being highlighted. There is even a role in just satisfying the need for countryside enhancement which can be seen from just driving or walking by—people's spirits are raised by the sight of apple blossom in the spring and a tree laden with fruit in the autumn.

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 anyone.

FACSIMILE RARITIES FROM THE LANGFORD PRESS

The Fruit Manual—1884 5th Edition

Robert Hogg

A facsimile copy of this highly sought after classic republished in a limited edition of 1,000 copies by the Langford Press: September 2002.

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The United Kingdom

M W G Smith

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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.. You will receive regular bulletins, advice notes and advance notice of events and courses.

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1 year's membership £6.50
 3 years' membership £16.50 (save £3)

BOOK REVIEW -
EARLY SCOTTISH GARDENS—A Writer's
Odyssey by Sheila Mackay—ISBN 0-7486-6254-5

This latest book from journalist and author Sheila Mackay, published in 2001 by Polygon at Edinburgh, is described as an evocative study that will inspire the reader to undertake their own explorations of the gardens of Scotland.

It's a beautifully crafted book—a personal tour of some of the most interesting gardens in Scotland, including Culross, Edzell, Pitmedden and Kinross. It ranges from medieval monastic gardens, to the 'pleasance gardens' of the 17th century and on up to the 18th century 'improvements'.

And what does any of this have to do with orchards? Well, I was surprised to see a mention of the "perfume gardens and orchards" in St Andrews in the year 1538 and the "orchards and fruitful gardens" mentioned as growing in Morayshire in 1578. So many people these days think that orchards are something enforced on the Scottish landscape only in recent history—that they were only grown on an industrial scale to support the jam factories springing up to feed an ever-growing rise in population.

Scotland's first gardening book, John Reid's "The Scots Gard'ner (1683) was a book for the small gardener and his wife, not for the grand landscaped estates. It carefully records advice on orchards and fruit trees ('the man's province') and flowers, culinary plants and herbs ('tended by women'). A random example of the book's Calendar "shewing in each moneth when to performe the particulars, what garden dishes and drinks are in season" gives for the month of May:

"Coleworts and other herbes, sage, leeks, parsly, thuyne, marjoun, sorall, spinage... early cherries, strawberries near the end of the month, cyder, metheglin, liquorish ail, etc."

The author highlights one of my favourite Scottish gardens—at Culross Palace in West Fife. The NTS have carefully created what they think was grown in the steeply sloping garden during the 17th century. An orchard in one corner, enclosed by a wicker fence, features many of the original varieties and is grazed beneath by Scots Dumpy chickens.

In the northernmost part of Scotland, at Tongue House, the author's Mackay forebears planted a garden in 1678. The smaller garden, now a drying green, is supposed to have been an orchard.

So next time someone says "but surely fruit trees fare better in the south", bear in mind Sheila Mackay's findings that orchards and the many Scottish varieties of apple, pear and plum are long-term residents here!

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CONTRIBUTE!

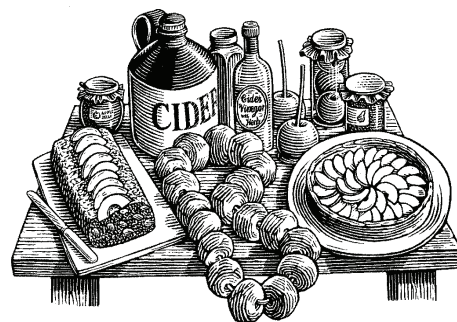
Share news about

- your favourite orchard,
- orchards to visit,
- details about your local community orchard
- information about your school orchard.
- products you make or obtain from the orchard - apart from the fruit itself, of course!

In future issues further practical advice will be included, book lists featured, and details of events and courses to attend. There will be another "Focus on Varieties" - and a recipe section. And that's not forgetting advice on how to manage your fruit trees with wildlife in mind, and fun ideas to inject into a community or school orchard, etc. etc.

With thanks to NOG and Michael Pooley for the use of their photographs.
 Black and white illustrations by permission from Common Ground from *The Common Ground Book of Orchards*
 Many thanks to all contributors, including the editor of the National Orchard Forum Newsletter.

Please keep the articles and news coming!



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.