



ORCHARD LINK *NEWS*

To Market We Go!

Once, going to market with a basket over your arm was the usual way of buying food. Locally grown, in season, you often bought your daily bread, milk, meat, eggs and vegetables from the farmers themselves. Now, when we shop in open all day, fluorescent lit supermarkets, where the food in your (wire) basket is more likely to have come from Tanzania than Totnes, via Birmingham where it's been processed, treated and packaged, markets seem a thing of the past.

For those of us who care about eating locally grown unprocessed and minimally transported food, the good news is that farmer's markets are making a comeback. In the South Hams, thanks to the District Council's initiative, we'll see our first; in a marquee on Kingsbridge Quay on Saturday 12th June. Inside, stalls will only sell food and drink produced within 30 miles of Kingsbridge. From then on, you can expect to see the market the second Saturday in every month and it's hoped that it will spawn markets in Dartmouth, Totnes and Ivybridge too.

For Orchard Link, the farmers markets could be an ideal way to sell locally collected eating and cooking apples to the public, with no middle man. We hope to have a stall in late September or October in Kingsbridge to see whether it works for us. I'll be giving more details of the date in the next newsletter – meanwhile if you'd like to help

INSIDE

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- ◆ Orchard Link goes to Market.
- ◆ Claim 10% discount off a new orchard and tree book.
- ◆ Combat the Codling Moth.
- ◆ How can you help the Devon Orchard Project save rare apple trees?
- ◆ Come to our Cidermakers Picnic. **FREE TO MEMBERS!**

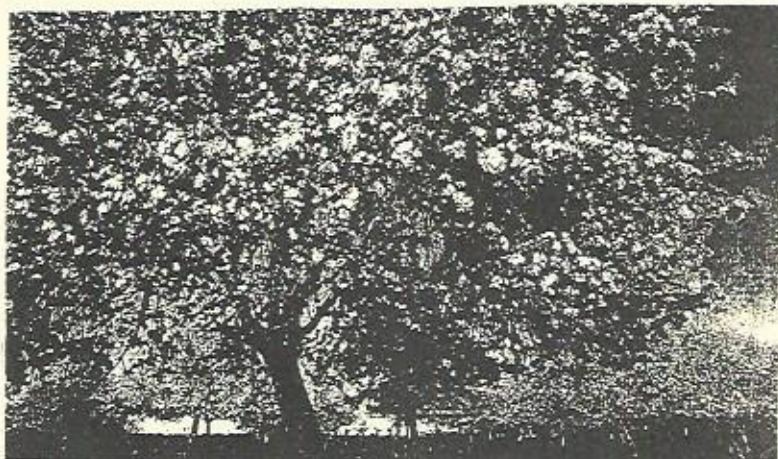


Photo by Archie Miles from his soon to be published book 'Silva' See page 2 for details.

us run a stall – call me at the number on the back page, and if you would like a stall to sell you own produce call Carol Trant at South Hams District Council on 01803 861267. Stalls cost just £20 and Carol is taking bookings now.

Bring back our Bags.

If you were involved in last year's collection – either as a cidemaker or if you had your apples collected, please have a look in your shed or garage, you may still have some Orchard Link collection bags! Although we bought several hundred tough plastic sacks last year (we hoped they'd last us for years!) very few were returned.

If in your search you uncover some of our bags – we'd be really grateful to have them back – just call Trudy on 01803 861140. If in the meantime, you've used some of them as bin bags – we promise we won't tell!

Read all About It!

Enclosed in your mailing you will see a copy of our new leaflet. We'll be giving them out at the Kingsbridge Show and our farmers market stall, but if you'd like more copies to pass on to friends with Orchards, call and let us know.



Teignbridge Orchard Survey

Last spring some of the tree wardens in Teignbridge District undertook a survey of all the orchards in their parish. Armed with 1:10,000 maps of their area they set off in search of old apple trees.

The large scale OS maps dated from the 1950s and 1970s and most showed plenty of orchards clustered around farms and villages. The tree wardens' job was simple – to travel around trying to see all the orchards shown on the maps and record their current condition, assigning them to one of six simple categories. If the orchard was visible from a road, footpath or hilltop, then surveying was easy. If not, then the tree wardens could either mark the site as unsurveyed or go and ask the owner's permission to have a look. This also gave them a chance to talk to the owner and tell them about Teignbridge Council's Free Orchard Trees scheme and other useful information (like the existence of Orchard Link!)

When all the orchards on the old maps were marked up with a category, the tree wardens sent in their maps to the Teignbridge Tree Warden Co-ordinator, Mary de Lemos, to collate the results and make the all important comparisons between our 1990s orchards and those of the '50s/'70s.

Surveys were completed for 12 parishes. Sadly the results so far look fairly bleak...of 196 orchards marked on the old OS maps, 149 were surveyed and the results sent back.

These fell into the following categories:

- 17 – A = orchard still exists and looks well cared for.
- 26 – B = still there, but rather tumble-down with gaps.
- 30 – C = only a small number of trees remain (say less than one third of the original number)
- 66 – D = no longer an orchard
- 5 – E = site not visible/not able to get permission to visit
- 0 – F = newly planted standard-size orchard

This means that 45% of the orchards no longer exist, 37% are in a state of disrepair and a mere **10% remain in good order**. So here is some solid statistical evidence of the need to preserve and promote traditional orchards – in case you felt any more was needed! At Teignbridge Council Mary will be stepping up the Free Orchard Trees scheme this autumn and hopes to gather survey results from more parishes this year.



From Apples to Oaks

Our cover picture is taken from a soon to be published book celebrating trees in Britain. It is simply called 'Silva'. 'Silva' has been a three year project for writer and photographer Archie Miles, a man with a passion for trees. Working from his home base in rural Herefordshire, he has covered the length and breadth of Britain, photographing and researching for his book, which is essentially a cultural celebration of trees in Britain. From the contorted oaks of Wistman's Wood to the biggest British beech hedge in Perthshire; from rare whitebeams on remote Welsh crags to the elms of East Anglia; representing merely a taste of the great tree diversity explored within this work.

This book is divided into eleven different sections covering: woodland and forest evolution, native broadleaves, native evergreens, trees of wet places, hedgerow trees, wild fruit trees and orchard culture, folklore and medicinal virtues of trees, trees in art, trees in literature, wood crafts and industries, conservation and tree planting.

To assist with the text, several consultant authors have been engaged to write essays in their own specialist fields. The result is a splendidly illustrated, information packed, highly accessible work, which will inspire tree lovers everywhere. Of particular interest to the members of Orchard Link will be the section on wild fruit trees and orchards. This takes a look at our native wild stock, which originally spawned our vast array of domestic varieties; sets out a brief history of orcharding in Britain; takes a selective view of some of the most interesting fruit varieties and presents a history and description of the manufacture of cider and perry. As well as contemporary colour photography this section is

liberally spiced with old engravings and stupendous colour plates from some of the nineteenth century pomonas.

Silva by Archie Miles is to be published in September by Ebury Press. RRP £30.00. As a special offer signed copies of the book are available to Orchard Link Members at 10% discount and with free postage and packing. If you would like a copy to be reserved for you, simply send a cheque for £27 to Orchard Link, at the address on the back page by 30th September. Mark your envelope 'Silva'.

From Apples to Cider

Whilst on the subject of books, I recently picked up a copy of a new small book published by Bossiney Books entitled 'Farmhouse Cider and Scrumpy'.

Through excellent clear text and photographs (many taken at Countryman Cider's press, see their advert on the inside back page) – the process of turning apples into cider and juice is well illustrated. At just £2.99, this bright little volume explains all you may need to know about the basics of varieties, making and blending – and even offers recipes for including cider into wonderful summer and winter drinks from mulled cider to Sangria.

If you'd like a copy of the book, we have a small stock at Orchard Link, simply send a cheque for £2.99 to Orchard Link and we'll send you one, post free.



Summer Orchardling Advice Why Maggots fall for the Tender Trap

This issue we take an in-depth look at the codling moth, a story of sexual deception and attempted robbery (of your apples!).

The codling moth lays its eggs between June and August on stalks and leaves close to the apples. It is then only a short journey for the caterpillars, (small and white with brown heads) to shuffle along to the nearest apple. Once there they tunnel into the apples, have a good feed while living in the core, before (usually) shuffling off again to find a nice flaky piece of mature bark to hide under for the winter. So if you find your apples eaten away in the middle with a fairly

neat entrance and exit tunnel you know codling moths are rampant in your orchard.

Your main chance of defeating this pest is in June, once the moths have hatched out, but before they have started to lay their eggs. The female moths give off a volatile chemical called pheromone in an attempt to lure a sex-starved male. Pheromones can now be synthesised and are used in pheromone traps. Sadly for us, not enough males are usually lured into the traps to make a large difference to the eventual number of caterpillars, except on isolated trees. However the traps can act as a very useful indication of when the time is right to spray, which can otherwise be difficult to gauge accurately.

Your choice of spray would depend on your attitude towards chemicals and organic gardening. Suitable insecticides are primphos-methyl, permethrin, bifenthrin or fenitrothion. They are all contact insecticides, which unfortunately can also kill bees, so spraying in the evening, when bees are less active is preferable. Derris is an organically acceptable spray, which should be applied 7-10 days after the moths have been caught in order to catch the young caterpillars before they enter the fruit.

Lawrence Hills, the doyen of organic gardeners, suggest the following, slightly Heath Robinson method, perhaps suitable for those with plenty of time! 'Both sexes can be caught before they have laid their eggs with traps hung in the trees through June and July. Collect jam jars, pour about 1 inch of a mixture of one part black treacle, to ten of hot water and cover these with pieces of the coarsest mesh nylon curtain net you can find, ¼ inch mesh secured with rubber bands. Hang these in your trees conveniently low for refilling with a small spouted can. These will exclude bees, wasps, and larger moths which could jam the traps.'

Millennium Planting – Are you nuts?

I'm sure by now all readers will have heard of some sort of tree planting scheme in their area, to commemorate the millennium. The NFU have their scheme promoting avenues, various millennium greens are planned, and small community woods and orchards are appearing. All hopefully good for wildlife, communities and on a personal note, nurserymen. Can I just look at all this good work at a slight tangent and introduce a few elements that combine both traditional and modern philosophies, whilst still being pertinent to orchards?

Standard grazed orchards are a type of parkland or wood pasture. In modern jargon they represent a type of agroforestry. Why not extend this concept beyond the normal restrained bounds. Centuries ago fruit trees were often planted in field hedges. So if you're thinking of planting a few trees in a hedge they don't have to be the bog standard ash, oak etc. What's more don't constrain yourself to the usual common fruits. Try nuts or some of what the fruit and veg merchants call 'Queer Gear', like medlars and quince.

If you're planting woodland, try fruit and nut trees along the margins. I had one customer last year who was planting out a large acreage of plantations of commercial timber species. However all along the main access rides the margins were planted with fruit trees and cobnuts. It looks pretty, it tastes nice and it is excellent for wildlife. The other thing to remember is that we are too keen to compartmentalise. Trees grown for fruit can still produce a crop of timber or firewood at the end of their life. Equally, timber trees can produce valuable fruit or nuts eg cherries, walnuts, chestnuts.

Kevin Croucher, owner of Thornhayes Nursery. Kevin's advice may be best suited to newer hedges rather than ancient hedgerows, where non native crops may change the balance for wildlife and the landscape. Yours in a purist mood - Ed.

Gathering in the Harvest

During the winter and spring we've been giving a great deal of thought to Orchard Link's collections service for the Autumn.

Learning from our first year, we hope to provide a more simple streamlined system for those of you who wish to sell your apples through us. Soon we'll be sending you full details of the scheme. In late summer we hope to open 'Harvestline', a phone line dedicated to the apple collection service - giving you an easy point of contact for arranging the collection and sale of your fruit.

Basically the system will operate as follows: If you have apples in your orchard (at least 6 sacks) contact Harvestline (or until set up Trudy Turrell on 01803 861140 or George Lacon on 01548 821668). Then we'll either visit or discuss your orchard. We need to know:

- What type of apples you have: cider, dessert or cooking?
- Roughly how much fruit you expect.
- When it will be ready for collection.

We'll deliver collection bags to you and will later arrange to collect them from your gate around a certain week in the Autumn.

The fruit will be sold to local cider, juice or preserve makers. The manufacturers generally pay Orchard Link for the fruit after Christmas and as soon as we receive payment you will receive a cheque for 50% of the value of your fruit.

All you need to do is to call us and to arrange to pick and bag the fruit by the agreed date. If you can't pick it yourself see the suggestions below in 'How to be a Local Hero'.

If the apples in your orchard just rotted away last year - now's the time to start thinking about turning 99's windfalls into cash!

Do Some 'Housework' Before the Harvest

As you sit back and enjoy the sunshine it seems as though everything in the orchard is taking care of itself, and up to a point it will, however this is an early reminder that if you wish (and I sincerely hope you do) to harvest your fruit you will need to do a little preparation to make the job easier in the autumn.

1. In August and early September, consider how you will keep the grass (and especially nettles!) down around the trees, to enable you to easily find and pick your fruit. You'll need either to let sheep graze, before any fruit falls, or strim or scythe around each tree under the canopy.
2. Check that you can easily get sacks of apples in and out of the orchard to your drive or gateway where we can collect them. Do you need to cut a path through long grass or move things about a bit, so you can maybe get a wheelbarrow through?
3. Make sure you have contacted Orchard Link in good time and that you have arranged for us to drop collecting bags off to you.
4. Organise someone to do the picking. If you are unable to do it yourself, see 'How to be a local hero' for ideas!
5. Sit back, relax and wait for the fruit to ripen!

How to be a Local Hero

If small green apples are starting to form all over your trees, your thoughts may be turning to this Autumn's harvest. With Orchard Link's help, I hope that this year your fruit won't be going to waste.

Although the 'fruit' may still be tiny, now is the time to start thinking about **how** it will be picked and bagged ready for sale. In the past picking may have been the major stumbling block to harvesting your crop, this year think positive and

consider the problem early. As I see it you have three options!

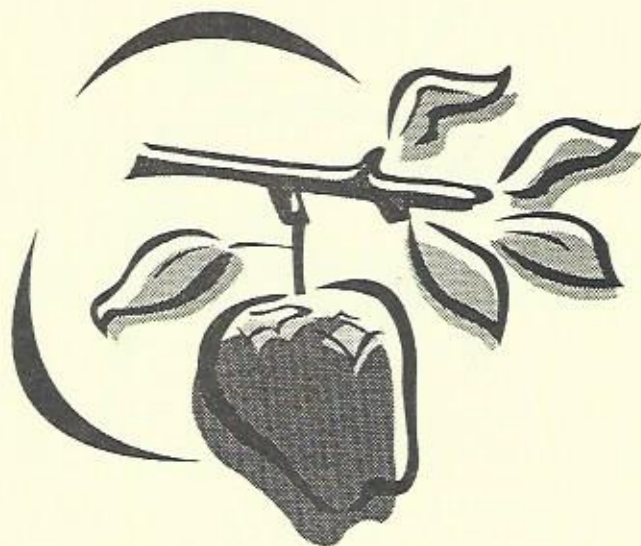
1. Pick them yourself or better still rope in the family/friends and make it a fun day or weekend. Provide some food and drink to keep the troops going and plan it early, so it will go in everyone's diary.
2. Pay somebody locally to pick them for you. Ask around, ask neighbours children who may like some extra cash or ask Orchard Link. We'll be advertising for pickers then collating a list of local people who want to do casual picking. We'll also offer you guidelines on pay etc. Whatever you do, pay by the bag not the hour, and don't leave arranging pickers till the last minute!
3. Turn your 'headache' into a village fundraising event and give your crop to a local good cause. Why not approach the local school PTA, youth group (youth club, scouts etc), the rugby or cricket club, or church roof committee, and offer the crop free to them if they'll pick it? Orchard Link can pay the group direct for all the apples they collect. The group concerned can turn the day into a fun event, with a picnic, competition for who picks the most or a treasure hunt/orchard games to keep the children amused. It may become an annual event, a regular feature in the local calendar. As all these groups need time to consider, plan and advertise any event to their members, by now you know what I'm going to say, book early to avoid disappointment!

Crush Apples for Kosovo

If you're likely to have only a few small bags of surplus apples this Autumn, too few for Orchard Link to collect, John Watson at Riverford Farm would like them.

Every year John presses local apples for apple juice which he sells outside the Riverford Farm shop, all proceeds go to Oxfam, this year the proceeds will help Kosovan refugees. Over previous years John has raised an amazing £2000 each year from the sale of apple juice and elderflower cordial!

Apples can be left at the wooden Oxfam stall outside Riverford Farm Shop (off the main Totnes -Buckfastleigh road just past Riverford Bridge). Or if you'd like to come and help or just see the apples being pressed you can join in any Saturday afternoon from October onwards. Call John Watson 01540 830650 for details.



Having Dinner with Dan

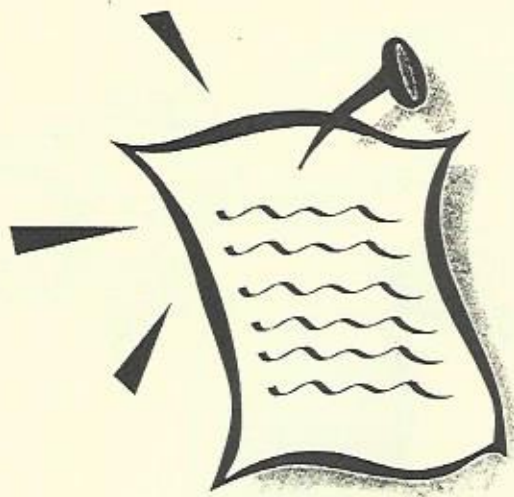
Last month on a wet Monday night Cathy Fitzroy and I drove to the Double Locks pub by Exeter Canal for supper. Not normally what I do on a Monday; we had arranged to meet Dan Keech, Common Ground's new Community Orchards Officer - who was on a whistle stop tour of the Westcountry.

In the tenth year of its orchard campaign Common Ground appointed Dan to support the many community orchard schemes countrywide. Having worked on 'Flora Britannia' Common Ground's amazing survey of British wild plants and local peoples' names for and uses of them, Dan is used to meeting people with a passion for landscape, trees and their own place; and it seems to have rubbed off well on him.

He told us of community orchards from Cornwall to Fife, city farms where children who had only ever seen apples in supermarkets, helped to tend their own orchards, to those collecting information on the ancient varieties of apples in Ireland.

Interested in Orchard Link and how it works, Dan told us that we are the only apple collection and marketing service of its kind in Britain! Although some organisations have managed to link their apples into organic vegetable box schemes, no one runs a collection service like ours! So let's learn and exchange ideas and hopefully he can spread the Orchard Link idea elsewhere. Next time we'll meet for a cider Dan!

Trudy Turrell



What's On

During the summer, there are not a great deal of courses and events. Unfortunately the Orchard Issues Day at Eggesford was cancelled, apparently only a few people had applied to attend – I hope we can organise something similar later in the year. I've included some events organised by the South Hams Organic Gardeners Society (SHOGS) which may be of interest. Call Jill Davies 01548 853220 for further details of any SHOGS events or if you'd like to join. The Tamar Valley Orchards Volunteers have a number of interesting day courses – including pruning cherry trees; call them on 01579 370411 or 01822 833804 for details of any of their events listed below:

- ☐ **Saturday 19th June** – The care and management of young trees – Tamar Valley
- ☐ **Wednesday 23rd June** – 7 pm see page 5 for details. SHOGS
- ☐ **Wednesday 7th July** – Plant Problem Clinic, followed by Dig & Drink – SHOGS
- ☐ **Saturday 10th July** – Community Involvement Day, Come and help in the Tresillian Garden, 10am – 4pm
- ☐ **Saturday 10th July** – The restoration and pruning of cherry trees – Tamar Valley
- ☐ **Wednesday 14th July** – Visit to Dartington Market Garden then lunch at the White Hart Bar, 10am Kingsbridge or 11am at Dartington. SHOGS
- ☐ **Wednesday 21st July** – Help plan some Autumn events with SHOGS, 7pm.
- ☐ **Saturday 25th July** – Budding day (learn to propagate new trees by budding) at Great Potheridge, Near Merton, North Devon Contact Dartington North Devon Trust, 4 Taw Vale, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8NT for details.
- ☐ **Wednesday 4th August** – Surplus produce exchange and social, SHOGS.
- ☐ **Wednesday 18th August** – Surplus produce exchange and social, SHOGS.
- ☐ **Saturday 21 August** – Orchard Management Tamar Valley



Don't Forget Apple Day! – 21st October

This is the 10th National Apple Day – In North Devon, you can experience Apple Day at Rosemoor (the RHS gardens) near Great Torrington on Sunday 17th October or visit Eggesford Garden Centre on 23rd and 24th. Meanwhile Staverton and Landscope folk are planning for a bumper day for October 2000! Full details and a round up of all Apple Day events will be in our next newsletter.

See us at the Show

Last year we attended Kingsbridge Show – our first ever. The stall generated lots of interest and enquiries, so this year we'll be there again. Come and meet the team and sample some local apple juice and cider made from last year's crop. We'll probably have some interesting apples on sale too!

Kingsbridge Show is on Saturday 4th September at Stumpy Post Cross off the main Totnes to Kingsbridge road – about a mile before the town.

You are invited to a Cidermakers Picnic Sunday 12th September.

A special event for Orchard Link members.

Come and meet other Orchard Link members and find out how your apples are turned into fine cider and juice at Heron Valley Cider near Loddiswell.

Meet at 11.15am for a guided tour of Heron Valley Cider by expert cidermaker Steve Bradley. Sample the apple juice and cider which he makes then enjoy a delicious Ploughman's lunch with cider in fields overlooking the River Avon.

This event (tour and lunch) is **FREE** to Orchard Link Members (maximum 2 lunches per family). Non members are welcome for £5 per head, the cost of which will be deducted from the membership price if you join.

You can also buy some cider and juice to take home – at wholesale prices!

To assess numbers for catering you must **book** places in advance. Simply call Trudy at the number on the back page

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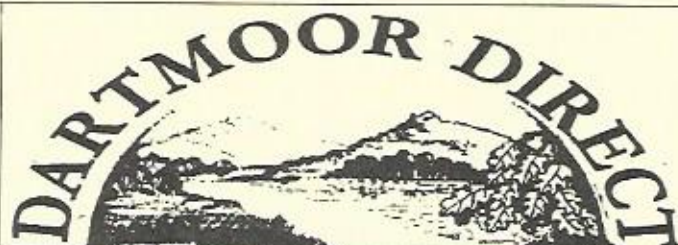
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Ian Upton, Tel: 01395 222112



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read on – Jill Danes of the South Hams Organic Gardeners Society explains....

As you may know there are two existing allotment areas in Kingsbridge. The one at Treble Park is a thriving area with well used and tended plots. At Rack Park the plots have been unused for some time and are falling into decline. As there have been no recent applications to use plots on this site the council are looking at various alternatives for its use. At present these are for housing or a cemetery.

We feel that there is a trend where people are returning to growing their own food and that it would be a pity if this resource was lost. If enough people applied for allotments then the council would be obliged to find land for them anyway. Does anyone want an allotment!? Another alternative is for us to put forward a proposal for this area such as for a community orchard, permaculture demonstrations or whatever.

We are holding an evening get together on June 23rd, to walk around the plot and discuss each others ideas. If you are at all interested, please come along. Meet by the Creeks End at the end of Quay car park at 7pm, to walk to the site and we will return to the Creeks End for refreshments!

Devon Orchard Project Bears Fruit

Established by a group of local people interested in saving old and rare varieties of apples trees, the Devon Orchard Project has made some exciting achievements Hilary Cooke tells their story.

Everything in the orchard at Beenleigh is blooming and burgeoning, and the Devon Orchard project rootstocks are not exception. We planted sixty last year, 30 M25s and thirty MM106s. Last August we budded twenty six of them with wood from Yarde Farm, Marlborough, a beautiful grade one listed medieval farmhouse with an old orchard. We used varieties like the Totnes Apple the Pocket Apple, Devon Russet and Shareham Large, putting a couple of each variety onto the two different types of rootstock. Most seem to be doing well.

Early this year, we grafted most of the rest of the rootstocks, using graftwood from varieties that included Harragon Payne, Greasy Butcher, Queen Anne, Glass Apple and Doll's Eye. Most of the varieties we have been dealing with are desert apples and one or two are not on sale commercially. For advice and direction on budding and grafting we are much indebted to Alan Barnes who has been a model of patience with our inept thumbs and blunt pocket knives.

We also grafted the last remaining tree on the South Brent Island Trust. The small island in South Brent

now used by the community. We plan to grow on the new trees and return them to the island to expand its orchard.

The Devon Orchard Project 'mother orchard' is now in place, properly planted up at Larcombe near Diptford. Another eighty rootstocks are also in place there ready for us to bud this summer and graft this winter.

The first Annual Devon Project Christmas supper was held in April in the New Inn at Moreleigh and was much enjoyed by all. We thank George Lacon for organising it. Also many thanks to Trudy Turrell of Orchard Link for her continued enthusiasm and support.

Finally a plea for volunteers willing to come and do a bit of budding, grafting, weeding or planting and also for interesting graftwood which comes from local known apple trees.

Hilary Cooke, Devon Orchard Project.
Tel 01548 821112

OYEZ! OYEZ!

Orchard Link News is written and produced by Trudy Turrell of Orchard Link and the Coast and Countryside Service, with contributions from others. As well as keeping you up to date with orchards issues in Devon we'd like to hear your views and ideas. Why not use this newsletter to make links with other members?

Orchard Link – We're Here to Help You

The Orchard Linkline system is still running and we are happy to deal with any orchard or Orchard Link enquiries.

- * Call Trudy Turrell for general Orchard Link enquiries plus details of orchard grants in the South Hams at the Coast and Countryside Service, Follaton House, Plymouth Road, Totnes TQ9 5NE. Tel: 01803 861140 Monday – Friday (office hours) or
- * Call Ben Pike of South Hams Orchard Services with your orchard enquiries eg managing your trees, pruning, pests and diseases etc. Tel: 01803 868962 (evening are often best but the answerphone is always on).

Thank You!

Our thanks go to the Coast and Countryside Service and Leader II for their support of Orchard Link and this newsletter

