



ORCHARD LINK *NEWS*



USE YOUR FRUIT!

Don't waste a single windfall this Autumn! Hire one of Orchard Link's presses and a mill and turn your surplus apple into gallons of gorgeous pure apple juice or cider. See the enclosed information sheet for full details then call Ben Pike on 07792 664710 to reserve a kit.

And if you have eating or cooking apple to spare – why not sell them at one of Orchard Link's Farmers Market stalls? See 'What's On?' inside for details.

INSIDE:

Pressing days, pruning workshops and more-

Summer pruning tips

How you can be part of Orchard Link.

Orchard Link member at Trecarroll Manor's orchard- at the Annual Gathering on 12th July. The cherry tree has been netted in attempt to keep birds off the fruit. (photo- Jackie Sarsby.)

WHY YOUR ORGANISATION NEEDS YOU.

When you receive this newsletter, do you pause and think how and where it is written and produced? Do you imagine the hundreds of staff dashing around the Orchard link offices in London, or even a few people sitting in an office in Totnes being paid a decent wage? Well on both counts you would be wrong. For a long time, the Orchard link newsletter has been produced, almost single handedly, by Trudy Turrell, in her spare time. The only problem is that Trudy doesn't have spare time any longer. At the end of last year she gave birth to baby Freya:

those of you who have had babies will know that babies and spare time don't go well together. She has also gone back to work recently.

Despite all this Trudy is not giving up her work for Orchard link, just saying that she doesn't have the same amount of time to give. This brings me to the main theme of this article, which is that there is not some mysterious group of people running Orchard link on your behalf; Orchard link is a member's organisation, run by the members for the members. Of course this means that we would like your help, or you could say that we can offer you an opportunity to be involved in a project that you would enjoy. For working for Orchard link tends to be a great pleasure. You can do interesting and enjoyable work, and meet new people who share the same interest as you.

What needs to be done? Well, I can give you a list (and will in a minute!), but one thing to remember is that you can start a project of your own. There are many things that Orchard link would like to do but cannot because of lack of time. An example would be the exciting work waiting to be done in saving old apple varieties from extinction. Much good work has been done in the past, but, at the moment, there is no-one following this up, so that sadly there are still local apple varieties in danger of becoming extinct. I would be happy to point someone in the right direction to doing some valuable work. The list, well there is sticking down envelopes, writing articles for the newsletter, helping organise events, helping at shows and farmer's markets where we take the apple press, becoming a director, helping produce the newsletter, and many other things

As far as I see it, if Orchard link is to prosper, then members like you will have to become far more involved. Orchard link will be as good as the

input from its members. Until now that input has come largely from Trudy, with the help of a few other dedicated members. It is now time to cast our net wider, and hopefully for Orchard link to prosper

Ben Pike.

P.S. Due to writing this article, I haven't had time to continue the series on growing less usual fruits. This will be continued next issue.

For taking all our calls over the previous winter and spring, Ben really is an unsung hero. He is also taking on harvestline this autumn- this article does however explain why there is one summer/autumn combined issue this year! Trudy Turrell.

COULD YOU HELP AT KINGSBRIDGE SHOW?

On Saturday 6th September we shall be taking the large wooden press to Kingsbridge Agricultural Show. When we attended last years' show our press was the star turn at a special 'World of Wood' display and attracted lots of attention. There always seem to be a group of interested folk just watching the pressing or tasting the juice!

As well as being fun, the show is a real 'shop window', for Orchard Link and through it we gained quite a few new members and bookings for both presses. There's nothing like enthusiastic members to attract interest and support. So if you have a couple of hours to spare and could help with the press and on the Information Stall, please call us. As a 'thank-you' - we will pay for your entrance to the show and send you home with some delicious bottles of freshly pressed juice. Just call 07792 664710 for details.

Chancing on a beautiful forest garden whilst visiting Dartington the other day, I learned that it had been created by Martin Crawford, who also heads up a specialist tree organisation. Here he explains

THE AGROFORESTRY RESEARCH TRUST.

The Agroforestry Research Trust is a registered charity, which researches into all perennial crops, which can be grown in temperate climates, including fruit and nuts. Our main interest with the more common orchard fruits (apples, pears, plums etc.) is to research into varieties which require low inputs (i.e. Are disease resistant etc.) and are suitable for growing in organic systems. We also produce various directories giving information about all varieties commonly available, so that the best choice can be made by folks for their particular growing and climatic conditions.

We are also researching lesser-known or little-grown fruit and nut crops, for example elders, June berries, persimmons, almonds, sweet chestnuts, hazelnuts, walnuts and various small fruits. We have trials of many of these in progress, with promising results from some already. Results and updates of recent information are published in our quarterly journal, *Agroforestry News*.

Of particular interest of members are a Directory of Apple Cultivars...Directory of Pear Cultivars...Plums: Production, Culture and Cultivar Directory...Cherries: Production and Culture...Fruit Varieties resistant to Pests and Diseases...

Martin Crawford, Agroforestry Research Trust, 46 Hunters Moon Dartington, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 6JT phone/fax 01803 840776. Web site: www.agroforestry.co.uk

Email: mail@agroforestry.co.uk

In future newsletters Martin will be explaining more about the Trust and its work.

Meanwhile, there's a chance to look around and learn about Dartington's forest garden on 14TH September, see What's On?.

Sweet Treat

Try this recipe for claufotis – a French recipe using batter. Lovely with those first cooking apples, it also works well with plums or cherries.

Recipe for 6 people: 1kg dessert apples, peeled and thinly sliced

For topping: 60gms plain flour
60 gms caster sugar
3 eggs
350ml milk
20 ml cooking oil
20ml brandy
20gms-unsalted butter

Put flour, salt and sugar into a bowl. Whisk in the eggs one at a time, then slowly add the milk, still whisking, until a smooth paste results. Stir in the oil and brandy. Leave to stand and prepare the apples.

Pour the paste into a buttered 20cms flan-tin, press in the apple slices and bake for 40-45 minutes in an oven pre-heated to 175 C. The dish is cooked when the point of a knife inserted into it comes away clean. Remove from the oven and turn out when

A TASTE OF CIDER

Those who came to last years Annual Gathering in East Devon will remember meeting cider maker Derrick Rugg. Having made and drunk cider for many years, Derrick has now published his own musings on the subject in a charming booklet. I found it a most enjoyable read and an insight into farming life, which many remember but has all but disappeared.

Below, we share an extract with you. For your own copy of "Cider with Derrick" send £2.50 to Derrick Rugg at 10, Kings Avenue, Ottery St Mary, Devon, EX11 1TA and he will post you a copy.

First Tastings

I must have been between three and four years old way back in 1932 or 1933, when the first memory of cider was planted in my mind. I was sitting one evening in the farm kitchen at Guddiford Mills, a smallholding near Kentisbeare. My younger brother Dennis and I were engrossed in the happenings around us.

There was a generous fire held back by the bars of the range, and Grandfather Goff was sitting at a white wood table opposite, that was covered with the dark brown oilcloth of those times. "Granfer" had his pint mug very handy and his tin whistle in the apple juice before each tune he played.

Ruddy-cheeked and possessing a great deal of "boy psychology", Granfer would wink occasionally at his rapt grandsons, and I can bring back his exact instructions: "Gae the youngsters aaf a teacup of zider." Two china tea cups were taken down from the hooks of the dresser, and Jack Salisbury, the little man who "lived in", boasted of "gurt vellers" he had "bested" at Honiton Fair; after which he laughed

in a hearty manner that seems too much effort for folk these days.

Four of five cats dozed across the stool that kept up the ash pan, and along a ledge of by the oven; and as the small measure of cider took effect on two beginners in the art or science of cider drinking, I recall that I felt "muzzy," and the rather effeminate "pink" of the brass-faced, long-cased clock, at intervals, only just knocked me away from sleep.

Round about nine o'clock the party began to break up: "Ev ee got a kiss for Gran." Homeward we trudged, back over Guddiford Hill to our council house at Silver Park, Kentisbeare.

That was my introduction to farmhouse cider, and there were many evenings that ran to the same sort of schedule until there came a day when Dennis and I were judged "man enough" to carry firkins* and stone jars into the hayfields.

"Turn the tap on and then off!" Granfer instructed. "That will get rid of the little flies that get up the tap." We were told make sure the tap pointed back to the cask, and hold a palm underneath the tap for a moment or so to check that all flow had stopped.

On the way to the thirsty haymakers my helpmate and I would take out the cork and sip the brew, and be cursed at if any worker felt his refreshment should have arrived earlier.

In those days, at hay time, hoeing and harvest, all "labour" was needed and sought, and so I was soon leading horses, making loads, treading ricks, turning sheaves for rickmakers, and experiencing back-breaking pain as I strove to keep up with men hoeing turnips, Swedes or mangolds.

But when you were a helper you were entitled to be a drinker, and gurgled your turn at the stone jar that was kept in a shady place. The first drinks would tend to "get hold" of anyone, but the toil and sweat seemed to take away such effects soon enough. Growing into the teens, boys' jobs were replaced by men's jobs with horses, I have made cider and racked cider, and I know that good farm cider is wholesome and agreeable refreshment.

A CORKING IDEA

If you attended the Devon County show earlier this year, you may have come across sparkling Ashridge Cider- a cider 'bubbly' which has not only won a first prize at that show, but has also scooped a first at the Bath and West.

Surprisingly, Ashridge is a very new enterprise and Jason Mitchell, who runs it came to cidermaking almost by chance. Jason took on Ashridge Farm near Modbury, which is blessed with several mature cider orchards and was previously owned by keen cidermakers. Seeing several tons of fruit laying on the ground in his first autumn at the farm, Jason continued the tradition of cidermaking- rather than see the fruit go to waste.

It was not long before Jason (who has a degree in biochemistry) became interested in producing a quality product, and so he turned his cider into sparkling vintage cider, using the 'methode champenoise' practised in France. The process is very intensive and takes about 2 years to produce the sparkling drink. 2001's vintage is now ready to drink and is selling well. We at Orchard Link would raise our glasses too to hear of the success which one enterprising orchard owner has made of traditional orchards and their products.



Derrick Rugg hands over a bottle of his precious brew to Charles Staniland at last years Gathering at Middle Clyst William. (photo; Jackie Sarsby).



IS THIS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER?

If you have still to renew your subscription for 2003, it might be. Orchard Link relies on membership for its core funding and as we do not currently receive grant aid from any source, your subscription really is important. Remember too that only paid up members can hire our presses and mills or can take advantage of discounts on courses.

Don't miss out- continue to be part of your organisation. Membership costs just £15 per year, so if you've forgotten, send yours today! Thank you.

WHAT'S ON?

September

Saturday 6th – Orchard Link pressing and stall at Kingsbridge Agricultural Show (all day). Helpers please.

Sunday 14th – Guided tour of Dartington's forest garden. 10.30- 4pm. Bring a picnic lunch. Call Martin Crawford on 01803 840776.

October

Saturday 4th – Orchard Link apple pressing and stall at Kingsbridge Farmers Market, the Quay, Kingsbridge. 9am-1.30pm
Helpers Please!!

Saturday 12th Avon Mill Garden Centre, Loddiswell. Autumn Festival. We have attended this busy craft and food event for the previous 2 years with the large press- but we need helpers if we are to do so this year. Please call Harvestline if you have half a day to spare and can be involved.

Saturday 18th – Don't miss the Bere Ferrers Apple Festival – see the article on this page.

Saturday 25th Apple pressing at Totnes Farmers Market, in the Civic Square. (9am till 1.30pm). This is our first time at Totnes and there will be special publicity for Orchard Link- so do come and be part of the morning.

November.

Saturday 1st. Apple pressing at Kingsbridge Farmers Market (Details as 4th Oct.)

Sunday 23rd Learn to prune at Berry Pomeroy, with Charles Staniland. £10 for the day or £8.50 to Orchard Link members. To book places call 01364 653169.

Note that there will be another day course with Charles on **25th January**. Booking details as above.

BERE FERRERS APPLE FESTIVAL

Come and join Orchard Link member Brian Lamb, who is helping to organise the Bere Apple Festival from 2pm-5pm. It will be an opportunity for apple growers to participate in a number of events including selling apples, trees, cider, juice – whatever. We are planning all sorts of events including identification of apples, grafting and pruning demonstrations, apple juice making, an apple tree disease clinic and an opportunity to taste different varieties of Tamar apples. We are hoping that commercial growers and nurseries will be present.

There will also be displays on kindred topics involving a number of organisations that give support to the apple owner and industry and we are at present negotiating for the display of old maps of orchards. There will be lots of competitions including for the children and you will be able to purchase a variety of apple products from the ovens of the ladies of the Bere Ferrers Women' Institute.

Already we have the support of the Tamar Valley Service, The Tamar Orchard Volunteers and Orchard Link! Besides the road there are bus and rail links using the Tamar Valley line from Plymouth to Gunnislake.

A day not to be missed!

If you can help or would like to be involved, contact Brian on 01822 841309.



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Sunday 10.30am - 4.30pm

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SUMMER PRUNING

If pruning in summer seems a bit of a misnomer to you – we repeat here the wisdom of horticulturist Peter Blackburne-Maze who wrote in the recent National Orchard Forum newsletter.

Why Summer Prune?

There are several benefits. First, the removal of long, leafy shoots allows much more light and air to reach the developing fruits. It also improves the chance of fruit in the following year by ripening the new shoots and fruit buds. The removal of many leaves means that less transpiration takes place so that much more water is available for maturing fruits. The removal of its growing point greatly reduces the growth of a shoot so more 'energy' goes into the fruits than into sustaining new shoots, which will be pruned out later in any case. It also removes the tenderest part of the shoot – the very part that is most susceptible to invasion by pests and diseases, especially mildew and greenfly. Finally, wouldn't you much rather be pruning in the summer than in the teeth of a winter gale with a drip on the end of your nose?

The time at which to summer prune

This will vary according to what part of the country you live in. Broadly speaking, you would summer prune in the south in late July. The actual time at which to prune depends on the stage of growth rather than the calendar. The base of the current season's shoots should have started to get woody and will be of about pencil thickness. The terminal bud will also have formed and growth will have stopped. That is the time to summer prune. If you do it earlier, secondary growth will be produced that will be killed in the winter. If some shoots have not reached this stage, leave them for a month or so and then look at them again

What do I actually do?

Only the current season's side shoots are summer pruned. Even the current new leader growths are pruned in the winter. Those, which originate directly from a main branch, are cut back to three leaves beyond the cluster at the base (about 3in. long). Those that are growing from a spur or a previously pruned shoot are cut back to one leaf (about 1 in.). Now you can't get much easier than that, can you?

KEEP IN TOUCH

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Or

Tq9ltd@hotmail.com

Or

benpike@talk21.com.

To hire the presses and mills call Ben Pike on 07792 664710 (our original harvestline number will be on until after the harvest season, but will divert calls to Ben. Nicola Herbert who has run harvestline and the hiring will still be helping at events, but has taken a well earned rest from the hiring of presses. Thanks for all your hard work Nicola!



Freya-spare time gobbler- at the Annual Gathering! (photo- Jackie Sarsby