

Cherries Galore

It was cherries galore for members of the RHS Fruit Group during our visit to the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale on 16th July. Despite forecasts to the contrary, the weather was glorious, and we all enjoyed a splendid day out.

The morning was spent in the company of Ted Hobday and Jonathan Fryer, expert guides to the National Fruit Collection, who showed us some of the early plums in the collection. See pages 4 & 5 for full report.



Howard Stringer, Fruit Group Committee Member and cherry expert, together with Dr Joan Morgan, writer, enthusiast on all things fruit, and our guide to the cherry collection, in front of the fruit-laden *Nana* cherry in the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale, during our visit on 16th July

TASTE OF AUTUMN

Friday, 16th October – Monday, 19th October 2009

It is all change at the **Taste of Autumn** this year. Gone is the large marquee, in are *minispans* - the kind of individual tent-like spaces with canvas sides and top, that you may be familiar with from Chelsea and other RHS flower shows. As you will appreciate, this will require us to rethink our display and how we promote the Fruit Group to visitors.

Each minispan has a 3 metre frontage and is 3 metres deep, and as yet we have not been told whether we are going to be in an inner or end minispan. This means that although we may have a smaller frontage to the display area, we need many more photos, and any stories about your *Bramley* apple trees to make sure that we make best use of all the space we have. If you have any photos or stories that you can offer please, could you send them to me either electronically (juliaemitchell@hotmail.com), or hand them to me in person at the FG meeting at Wisley on 5th August or during the visit to Leckford on 13th August. If you cannot manage any of these then please phone me on 01372 276 511 and I will give you my postal address.

In addition to promoting the benefits of membership of the RHS Fruit Group, and celebrating the 200th birthday of the *Bramley Seedling*, we would like to offer visitors free tastings of our fruit produce – so any jams, jellies, chutneys, cakes, pies or wine would be gratefully received.

To do all of this we also need more helpers during the actual show days, Friday, 16th October – Monday, 19th October. So, if you plan to visit the Taste of Autumn event and can spare some time please contact me. It is great fun, and I am sure that we shall all have a great time!

Julia Mitchell

Following the Fruit group meeting at wisely on 24th March, we received this letter:

Thank you Committee for a splendid March 09 meeting of Fruit Group at Wisley, and for the helpful and informative talk on *Commercial Apple Growing* from Mr. Barwick. His remarks about Health and Safety needs were salutatory and reminded me of the carefree days of being a child in the 1940's when we were encouraged to climb trees at the beginning of the summer holiday so that, should we break bones, they would be mended in time to start school for the autumn term. We would learn our lesson and would be a great deal more circumspect in orchard and on farm! As a 'little brother' I never understood why I was the only one allowed up a plum tree in September until I discovered the brittle nature of the plum tree boughs. It was just my luck that I never broke any limb!!

Thank you Bob Sherman for mentioning about the Editor of 'The Garden' requesting any observations from Fruit Group members about growing 'exotic' fruit like goji berry, and also Julia Mitchell requesting any item about *Bramley Seedlings* for our 'Taste of Autumn' stall. I thought I would put goji berries and *Bramley Seedlings* together and the resulting pudding seemed to work!

I have called it 'Mr. Merryweather Pudding' – four *Bramley Seedlings*, 45ml goji berry juice, 60g breadcrumbs, 15ml butter, 85g sugar, 2 eggs and for a meringue mixture 45ml sugar. Peel and chop the apples, rub the butter into the breadcrumbs, add sugar and goji berry juice. Bind the mixture with the egg yolks and make meringue with egg whites and sugar, fold this into the fruit mixture and pour the whole into a baking dish. I cooked it for just under an hour on 180C and served warm with ice cream. Delicious. We await delivery from J. Parker of some goji berry plants.

Chris Abbott, March 30th 09

The Veitch Memorial Medal

The Veitch Memorial Medal is awarded annually by the RHS to persons of any nationality who have made an outstanding contribution to the advancement and improvement of the science and practice of horticulture.

This year, congratulations are due to Dr Joan Morgan who was given this acclaimed award at the recent Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. You may know Dr Morgan from her support for the RHS Fruit Group, as a judge at RHS Fruit Competitions or from her acclaimed and influential Fruit Forum blog

www.fruitforum.net, which is well worth a visit to keep you up-to-date with news and views on all things fruit. Dr Morgan trained originally as a biochemist, is well-known as

a writer, and lectures regularly on fruit history. She chairs the RHS Fruit Trials Sub-Committee and is a keen RHS show judge. She is the co-author, with Alison Richards, of *The Book of Apples* 1993, and the *New Book of Apples*, 2002, a definitive guide to over 2000 apple cultivars. During the recent Fruit group visit to the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale, it was mentioned that not only has Dr Morgan tasted and reported on each of the 2,300 or so apples in the national collection, but she has also cooked with every one of the culinary apples listed in the collection, and noted how each one tastes and performs. 'Fruit Enthusiast' is something of an understatement.



Other recipients of The Veitch Memorial Medal in 2009 were:

Jozef Van Assche, who began his career with ICI/Zeneca before joining the secretariat of the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS), which promotes the science, art and practice of horticulture worldwide. In 1994 he was appointed to his current position where his administrative and financial skills have enabled the ISHS to represent the interests of horticulturalists throughout the world.

David Wheeler, who founded Hortus in 1987 and contributes regularly to publications such as *Country Life*, *The Garden* and *Horticulture*. He has written a number of books including *Over the Hills from Broadway* and *Images of Cotswold Gardens*.

Cherries Galore and more besides...



Fruit Group visit to the National Fruit Collect at Brogdale, 16th July 2009, continued from page 1.

We were welcomed to Brogdale by expert guide Ted Hobday, who updated us on the structure of Brogdale and explained what we were to be shown during our visit. For those of us who do not know, the National Fruit Collection is one of the largest fruit collections in the world and is located at Brogdale Farm, near Faversham, Kent. The University of Reading has now taken over responsibility for the curation and maintenance of the National Fruit Collection. Project partners, the Farm Advisory Services Team (FAST), are responsible for the maintenance of the Collection. Public access is organised by Brogdale Collections, who are developing the site as a visitor attraction.

The National Fruit Collection includes over 3,500 named Apple (2,300), Pear (550), Plum (350), Cherry (300+), Bush fruit, Vine and Cob Nut cultivars, there are 2 specimens of each cultivar. The collection is owned by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and is part of an international programme to protect plant genetic resources



for the future. Put simply, the National Fruit Collection exists as a living gene bank, and must be one of the greatest resources for horticulture in this country, if not the world.

The morning was spent in the company of Ted Hobday (shown right in photograph) and Jonathan Fryer (shown left in photograph), expert guides to the National Fruit Collection, who took us round the plum collection to

look at how the crop was developing. Like many other parts of the country, it looks like being a bumper crop of plums at Brogdale this year. Although it was still very early for plums, we did find that *Edda*, *Della Punta* and *Gilbert* were ripe, but members tasting them concluded that there would be better-tasting plums when we reach the main season in a few weeks time.

After a splendid lunch, we were taken through the collection of cherries by Dr Joan Morgan who described the characteristics of the different cherries as we passed under the trees, Jonathan Fryer was also with us to add his expertise on cherries. The cherry collection includes sweet cherries, sour cherries, duke cherries and mazzards, and this visit gave us a great opportunity to not only see trees with branches literally dripping with splendid fruit, but to also taste the difference between the different cultivars. It was also a rare opportunity to discover that there is more to cherries than the dark varieties that we see imported from Europe. I found it particularly interesting to see some of the old white cherries that are no longer grown commercially.

We must all thank Howard Stringer for organising such a wonderful visit, and thank Tom Hobday, Jonathan Fryer and Dr Joan Morgan for their time and generosity with their knowledge and expertise which they gave to us freely.

Alan Mansfield

If you would like to join the Friends of the National Fruit Collections at Brogdale and become one of the supporters and guardians of the Collections there is currently no charge for membership, although donations are greatly appreciated. To register as a Friend go to: <http://www.fruitforum.net/inforequest.aspx> , e-mail: nfcfriends@hotmail.co.uk or write to Friends of NFC at Brogdale, c/o The Secretary, PO Box 264, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3UY.



Enjoying a memorable day looking at cherries in the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale

Report on the Fruit Group meeting at Wisley, 24th March 2009

The Fruit Group year got off to a great start with our first meeting at Wisley on 24th March. After a warm welcome, our Chairman, Gerry Edwards, gave a moving tribute to FG Committee member Peter Smith who died on New Year's Eve. Gerry then brought us up-to-date with RHS news, confirming that, this year the Summer Fruit & Vegetable Competition will be held at the Tatton Park Flower Show 22nd – 26th July, (full report next Newsletter). FG Treasurer, Tony Benham gave his financial report – the good news being that income from book sales have broken even and any further sales will contribute to FG profit.

Bob Sherman, vice-chairman of the FG asked for anyone growing unusual edible fruits to contact him to help with his survey into the range of fruits that are being grown.

Gerry then introduced our main speaker: Peter Barwick, a commercial fruit grower, who has worked in fruit from 1958-2008, at East Malling 1962-63, and at Blackmore estates for the past 20 years, where he was Director of Orchards.

'Apples don't just grow on trees'

Personal opinion and observations from a lifetime spent in commercial fruit growing.

Peter prefaced his talk by saying that in his experience, whether you are planting 5 trees or 25,000 trees, the same principles apply. Here are brief notes on his talk, which was broken down into distinct parts:

Rootstock

Peter noted that pre-war large, vigorous rootstocks were dominant, but post war it has been the semi-vigorous MM109 that has been most used by commercial growers. Rootstock research continues with a view to developing new rootstocks that have increased cold tolerance, can cope with water logging for longer periods and with periods of drought, are resistant to phytophthora. He tipped us off to look out for the new MM116 which will fall between M9 and M106.

Varieties/genetics

Peter thought that *Gala* will overtake *Cox* in terms of volume grown in the UK in next 5 years, and whilst the *Bramley* has been around for 200 years, the (current) problem is that consumers do not know what to do with them. Supermarkets just want *Cox*, *Gala* and *Braeburn*. He noted that *Gala* was bred in New Zealand in 1934, but has only really come into the UK in volume in the last 10 years, being attractive to growers because it produces 30-40% more crop per hectare than *Cox*. For a chance of commercial success new varieties they must be precocious, disease resistant, and good looking – varietal choice (currently) being all about marketing – not taste.

Forms/systems

Commercial growers are under pressure from 'Health & Safety' to bring down the height at which fruit is grown. This is moving production from larger trees to tree forms that can be planted intensively, 1000+ trees per acre, and picked easily. This means a trend towards columnar types that can produce 10kg+ of, say, *Braeburn* per tree. Peter reported that growing costs are rising, estimating that the current commercial cost of planting is £8.50-£9.00 per tree – just for posts, wires and guards; plus, new systems are also very 'hungry' – they must be fed and watered. Peter noted that the key times to water, for amateur growers as well as commercial growers, is the 6 weeks around blossom time, and the 6 weeks before harvest.

Chemicals

Conventional vs. organic remains a 'hot topic' in commercial growing. He commented that growers find it difficult to maintain fertility of soil over the 15-20 years of a commercial planting without fertilisers, and



that most believe that disease control is difficult without chemicals. Also, in his experience, Peter has found that pests return in significant numbers as spraying is reduced. But chemicals and spraying also add to the cost of growing fruit, so there are commercial pressures to reduce chemical input. There is a move to do all chemical work post-harvest, so that there is no residue in fruit.

Labour

Availability and skills are the two main issues relating to labour, and both relate directly to the cost of picking, noting that it takes as long to pick a small apple as a large apple, so skill is an important factor.

Storage

Storage is an important factor in managing the availability and seasonality of fruit. Apples, when picked commercially, are put into large 'bins' for storage. Peter commented that speedy movement into cold, atmosphere controlled storage is vital, for very hour delay in putting bins in cold store equates to the loss of one days storage for the fruit. The biggest carbon footprint in growing apples, he says, is storage.

Marketing

The trend towards the insistence from major retailers that they deal primarily with 'marketing agents' who act between grower and supermarket, has had the effect of keeping selling prices low, as most growers no longer deal direct with supermarkets, and many agents do not adequately represent individual growers.

Despite some of the frustrations and difficulties that Peter has had to deal with as a commercial grower, he still believes that there is a good future for British fruit growing.

Alan Mansfield

Fruit Q&A

Questions raised by FG members at the 24th March meeting at Wisley, answers provided by members present. Please note that the answers given are advice only, based on experience. Members providing advice cannot be held responsible for any failure!

Q: Is *Red Windsor* a worthwhile apple to grow? And which varieties do you recommend?

A: Peter Barwick, there are lots of old varieties around, but commercially we concentrated on 4-6 main internationally-know names; in the future, the red clone of *Pinovar* could become popular, it's a very good apple, also *Estivale*.

Q: What is the best way to store apples?

A: Peter Barwick, first, only attempt to store varieties that store! i.e. do not try to store *James Grieve*, *Beauty of Bath*, etc. Second, pick fruit before it is ripe. Commercial growers store fruit in volume in gas and temperature controlled environments, for the small quantities that amateur growers are likely to get involved with: pick sound, perfect apples, do not wrap, place in open wooden box or tray in a dark, cool, airy environment that allows ethylene to disperse - this is a gas produced by the maturing fruit that induces ripening and must be dispelled during storage.

Q: Can biennial cropping on apples be reversed?

A: Peter Barwick, yes, wait until the June drop, then thin spurs to '2s' (two fruits) – this reduces seed numbers, you need to thin to reduce the total seed count on the tree, but don't worry, this will not reduce the total weight of the crop; also, irrigate well and prune regularly.

Jim Arbury, biennial cropping on *Laxton's Superb* and *Miller's Seeding* is very difficult to reverse, but pruning will help.

Apple Genealogy

FG member Stuart Logan provides an insight into this fascinating aspect of fruit growing.

A new series of 'Who do you think you are?' on the BBC tapped into the heightened interest in genealogy. As someone who has been researching their family history, in a fairly desultory fashion, for the past few years; I watched the programmes with great interest.

Before the advent of broadband-internet, the research involved many journeys to drafty vestries and their church's attendant graveyards; or tedious hours spent in the public records office. Nowadays much of the groundwork can be done from the comfortable chair that sits in front of my computer. However, this only works if someone has taken the trouble to transcribe the old hand written records into a database.

Inevitably, once one traces the family line back as far as the middle of the 18th Century, it becomes increasingly difficult to find documentary evidence. Only the noble families had the means, or the inclination, to record details of their antecedents. Frustrated by lack of progress in human affairs I began to wonder if records for the past history of plants were any more complete. So I began to delve into the background of things that we grow in our garden.

As it was the season for apples I'll relate a pomological chronicle. Not surprisingly, researching the background of any given apple variety bears many parallels with human genealogy. Firstly, it gets harder to trace ancestors the further back in time one goes. Secondly one is totally dependant on assiduous record keeping by people who are long dead.

Luckily, many named cultivars of apple were bred by patient growers who kept exemplary records. They had to do this because fertilising apple A with the pollen of apple B eventually produced a seedling C. That seedling had to be grown on for several years before the grower got any fruit to sample. Then once the vagaries of nature had done their worst: to frost the blossom; put worms in the fruit or cover them in disease, the fateful day of tasting arrived. Would the fruit be sweet, juicy and crisp or dry harsh flavoured and a poor keeper? Much trial and even more error were involved but the names of these men live on in their successes: *Laxton's Epicure*, *Tydemans Early*, *Potts Seedling* or even *Cox's Orange Pippin*.

To illustrate the point we can look at an apple with a distinctly local connection. During the Victorian era Welford Park (on the A4 just west of Newbury) was owned by a Captain Carstairs. His gardener from 1860 to 1908 was one Charles Ross and it was he who crossed *Cox's Orange Pippin* with *Peasgood Nonsuch*. The resultant seedling was a large dual purpose apple which resembled its more famous parent. Originally it was named after the president of the RHS, Thomas Andrew Knight, but at Carstairs request the apple was renamed, in favour of his gardener, when it won the Award of Merit in 1899. The *Charles Ross* cultivar (shown right) is still readily available today.



The unusually named and less famous parent was raised by a Mrs Peasgood of Stamford in Lincolnshire. Nonsuch is an old word meaning a paragon or something without parallel. It is a handsome and highly esteemed culinary apple grown from a seed sown in 1858. We know that the female parent was *Catshead Codlin* but, as so often happens in genealogy, the father is unknown. The offspring won a first class certificate from the RHS in 1872.

Catshead is an ugly cooking apple, sometimes known as *Pig's Snout*. It is large, angular and mostly green, although the colour changes to yellow/green when ripe. It was one of the great varieties of the past and was known even in the 17th century. H.V. Taylor mentions plantations of very old trees growing in the Severn valley and in Lincolnshire. In his celebrated book '*Apples of England*' he says '...it was good for dumplings and local sale but too ungainly for the larger market.' It is thought to be derived from the old *costard*; a word from the middle ages, synonymous with the human head, but more of that later.

The more celebrated side of Charles Ross's family begins with *Cox's Orange Pippin* but here too the male line is indistinct. We know that its dam was a tree of *Ribston Pippin* and that the original *Cox's* was planted at Colnbrook Lawn near Slough in about 1825. It was raised from a pip sown by a retired brewer Richard Cox (1777 – 1845) and this original tree was destroyed in a storm of 1911. However on the same site, even in 1933, two grafts from the original had grown into huge trees. The trees were subsequently marketed by a Berkshire nurseryman, Charles Turner, but remarkably enough didn't receive awards from the RHS until 1962.

Ribston Pippin also got a belated award in that year having waited for nearly two centuries. The original tree was grown at Ribston Hall near Knaresborough in Yorkshire. It blew down in 1810 but continued to fruit until its death in 1835. Its fruit were highly prized late dessert apples, with firm flesh and a rich aromatic flavour. Seed for its culture is known to have come from Rouen in France but sources vary between 1688 and 1709 for its arrival date. What its French parents were is not recorded.

So, just as in human genealogy, we get back to the seventeen-hundreds and run up against a dead end! By 1826 the newly formed RHS had collected 1,205 cultivars at its Chiswick Gardens but 100 years before that, many varieties were of local origin and not widely available. What we do know is; in 1629, John Parkinson an apothecary, gardener and herbalist wrote '*Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris*'. In it he mentions 54 varieties of apples including *Catshead* and the *French Pippin*. Prior to that in 1597 John Gerard published his *Herball* but he makes no mention of the varieties we are trying to trace. However, he does record the *Costard* and two old French varieties from Calville, just 25 miles from Rouen. Could these be connected with the *French Pippin*?



Calville Malingre one of the old French varieties

Research into anything from long ago is always limited by the paucity of documentation. We live in an age where there is an unremitting blizzard of information. Consequently it seems incongruous to us; that so little of the past appears to have been recorded. Yet as we acquire the ability to probe more deeply into genetics, who knows what a treasure trove of information we shall uncover.

Stuart Logan, grows fruit in Berkshire and provided the photographs as well as the words for this article

Thoughts on pollinators

by Tony Gentil

There has been a lot of publicity in the media over recent months concerning the plight of the hive bee. In the last few years stocks of hive bees have been decimated by the spread of the varroa mite. A more recent blow has been the mysterious onset of a problem known as 'colony collapse disorder'. The government was heavily criticised for considering withdrawing some of the funding for bee research, so much so, that they relented and pledged an extra £4.3 million to safeguard and undertake more research into the health of bees. All of which gives credence to the belief that hives have been important both as pollinators and producers of health giving products.

Here in south Cheshire on our smallholding we grow a wide range of fruit and I'm often told that our success at harvest time is due to the fact that we keep bees. Based on my observations I'm not convinced that our hive bees can take much credit for the pollination of our fruit.

There has been an interesting episode over the last month or so. The weather here has been wonderful, with many warm days of glorious spring sunshine. Our hive bees have responded to this and have been diving in and out of the hives in frenzied activity. We have two hives situated only a few yards from our polytunnel in which we grow apricots, peaches, nectarines, along with grapes, figs and salad crops.

The apricots started off the flower display with a mass of pink blossom. So on warm days I opened the sliding doors at both ends of the polytunnel creating an access 8 feet wide and 7 feet high at each end. The furthest apricot away from the hive entrances was 65 feet. On regular visits to the polytunnels when the hives were fully active I never saw a single hive bee anywhere near the flowers. This was despite the fact that the apricots were in a direct line of flight from either of the hives. What I did see, however, was visiting bumble bees, possibly queens recently emerged from hibernation, and more importantly several large hover flies all busily working the apricot flowers.

I wondered if the bees hadn't spotted the apricots so I cut off two flowering twigs from the most prolific, *Tomcot*, and placed one outside each hive entrance in bottles of water. The hive bees flew past the (flowering) twigs as if they weren't there.

One of the standard pieces of advice to promote the pollination of early flowerers such as apricot is to take an artist's brush and hand pollinate each bloom. On a ten acre site, with a lot of work to do, such a technique is not at the top of my priority list. So I left this job to the local native population of insects.

Now, a few weeks later, all the apricots have swelling fruitlets with something like 200 on the *Tomcot*. The peaches and nectarines are showing considerably more potential fruit –no thanks to my hive bees!

I have just been rereading the delightful '*Fruit Salad*' written by a hero of mine Raymond Bush and published in 1947. In Chapter 17, entitled 'Bee Heresy' he says 'Mr Gamble, the BBC bee expert and I once had a bit of a tussle over the rival merits of the hive bee and the bumble bee. Mr Cross, the Horticultural Officer for Norfolk, kept from actual fisticuffs and probably saved me from a black-eye. After our broadcast several letters came on to me, all to the effect that I was not only wrong but positively wicked to suggest that any fruit blossom could possibly be pollinated by any insect or bee except the hive bee. Only from a few entomologists were my views sustained and was comfort forthcoming.'

I have a great affection for my hive bees and enjoy their company and their associated gift of honey, but I'm not sure that they realise that they live in the middle of what is virtually a ten acre fruit supermarket.

Tony Gentil, April 2009, growing fruit in Cheshire

Pollinating peaches

May I add my own observation on pollinating peaches this year. I have been growing a fan-trained *Peregrine* peach for a number of years; it is fan-trained across two 6' fence panels.

I have never had more than one or two small fruit – despite a good deal of blossom, but I have tried a range of different techniques for pollination:

- 'Natural pollinators' i.e. leaving the flowers to their own devices and waiting for insects to do the job, otherwise known as the lazy option, very hit and miss, dependent on temperature and availability of insects
- The tip of my cat's tail – fun, but not very effective – no matter how much the cat may have wanted to help
- Soft make-up brush – appeared to be good, but in practice seemed to be a bit too large for the delicate parts of the peach flower
- Artist's brush – tried this year (2009) and have had a wonderful fruit set



The first peach flowers opened at the end of March and flowering continued throughout April. My technique was to watch the weather, wait for a warm, dry day and look to make sure that there was actually some loose pollen being produced by the flowers. Carefully, I used the tip of the artists' brush to transfer pollen from the anthers to the stigma of each flower. I repeated this over several days as different flowers opened and matured and the weather was conducive to this

activity. The result – a very high fruit-set, and now the dilemma of thinning, as there were more fruitlets than the tree can carry to maturity. There was a natural fruit drop at the end of May and in early June I removed any of the small fruitlets that did not look as if they would develop, any damaged fruit, fruit that faced the fence and took any fruit clusters down to singles. I carried out a second thinning mid-June, more than halving the total number of fruitlets, leaving one or two on each branch, 6"-8" between each fruit. By now I was down to a total of about 25 fruits from the hundred plus that had set. This seemed very drastic, and I could visualise the peach crumbles reducing before my very eyes. Fingers crossed now for rain to help the fruit develop, and sun to help it ripen.

Alan Mansfield, July 2009, growing fruit in Hertfordshire

Dates for 2009

Wednesday 5th August, Wisley, 1.00pm (RHS) guests of the Fruit Department.

Thursday, 13 August, Leckford Estate, Hampshire and chance to visit the garden of Brian Fox, chairman of South West branch of the Fruit group. (RHS)

Saturday, 18 August, visit to RHS Rosemoor, AM talk on soft fruit by Jim Arbury, PM update and walk round fruit garden with Peter Earl (SW)

Sunday 23rd August Visit Adrian Baggaley's private fruit garden Meet at the 'Four Bells' Inn in Woodborough 12.30 for 1.00pm start. (M)

Saturday 19th September Meeting at Abington Lodge Barn, Northampton 11.00 am.

Roger Merryweather to talk about "My Family's connection with the Bramley apple and the Merryweather Damson"; **Peter Nalder** on the work of South Court Environmental and its survey of Apple Orchards in the County of Northampton; plus visit to **Wilson's (Bramley) Orchard** in Northampton. AGM will be held just before lunchtime. (M)

Saturday, 26 September, visit to Charlton Orchards, near Taunton. All day event, looking at apples, pears and plums; also, juice tasting. (SW)

Thursday 22nd October Visit to Weston's Cider 2.00pm Orchard viewing and the cider/perry/juicing making process. Cost £6 per person, to include the 'free tastings'. (M)

Tuesday 10th November, Wisley, 1.00pm (RHS)
Terence Reed – "Warm and temperate fruit"
Peter Collett – "Bramley Tree"

Other Events

22nd – 23rd August, RHS Rosemoor Local Produce Show, SW branch will be supporting fruit exhibition and advisory desk

9th - 12th October, Europom 2009, Belgium

13th – 14th October, Autumn Fruit and Vegetable Competition, at the RHS Lawrence and Lindley Halls, London.

16th – 19th October, A Taste of Autumn at RHS Wisley.

Sat 24 Oct 2009 - Sun 1 Nov 2009 A Taste of Autumn at RHS Harlow Carr.

Sat 24, Sun 25 Oct 2009 A Taste of Autumn at RHS Hyde Hall

13th – 14th November, Late Fruit and Vegetable Competition, at RHS Wisley.

For information on the bicentenary of the Bramley Apple please visit www.bramleyapples.co.uk

Branch contacts will have details of all regional events, costs etc.

RHS Fruit Group (RHS)

For more information contact:

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For more information contact:

Brian Fox, Chair, 01264 357229

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Northern Fruit Group (N)

For more information contact:

Hilary Dodson, Chair, 01943 464325

The Regional Branches extend a warm welcome to all members of the Fruit Group. No matter what your geographical location, members may attend any event organised by Regional Branches.

YOUR COMMITTEE

Chairman: Gerald Edwards

Vice- Chairman: Bob Sherman

RHS Fruit Department Representative:

Alessandra Valsecchi

Treasurer: Tony Benham

Committee members: John Beswick (Midlands),

Peter Collett, Hilary Dodson (Northern Fruit

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The RHS Fruit Group Newsletter relies heavily on contributions from members. Many thanks to all of you who have submitted articles, apologies if they have not appeared in this issue. We always need short articles of 100-150 words to fit around longer articles. If you have anything that may be considered for publication, please hand it to me at a Fruit Group meeting or send it to: Alan Mansfield, PO Box 74, Hertford, Hertfordshire, SG13 7UG. Telephone: 01992 550175 Ideally, copy should be in electronic format emailed to:

fruitgroupeditor@rhs.org.uk

Deadline for next issue: 31st August 2009

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