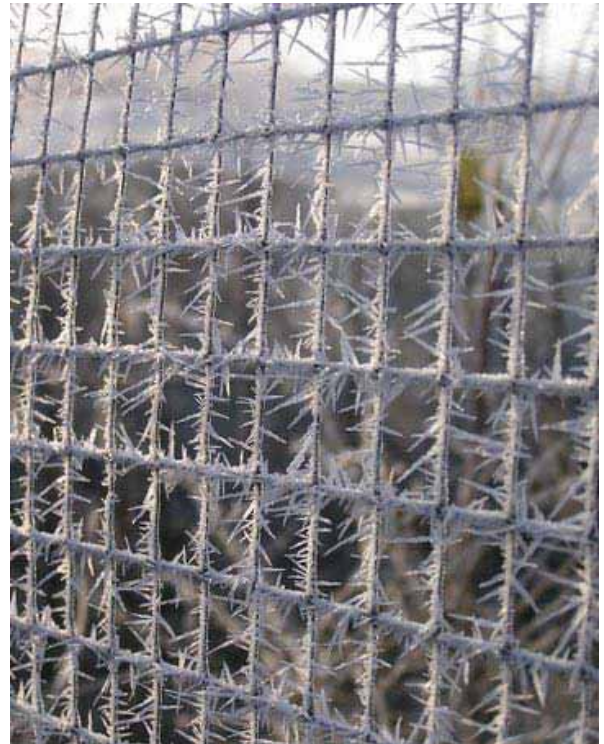


We know that a long period of winter chill is essential for a good crop of fruit - but were any of us quite prepared for the extreme winter of 2008/2009

Share your experiences with other members if you have photographs of your fruit trees or bushes during the winter of 2008/2009, or reports of how the extreme winter conditions have affected your fruit – for good or bad – please send them to alanmansfield@ntlworld.com, so that I can share them with the Fruit Group in future Newsletters.



Chris Hodgson took this photograph of frost on his fruit cage in Suffolk, 9th January 2009



Julia Mitchell took this photograph in Surrey on 6th February 2009. She says 'I am writing this whilst cut off from the rest of the world! No trains, no buses, over a foot of snow and no snowploughs or gritters. Am I in the wilds of Scotland – no I am within the M25. However it is 6th February and not as bad as 1963. Yesterday I made it to the end of the garden and took a photograph of my Bramley apple tree that may be used for the Taste of Autumn display.'

Read more about what Julia has planned for the Taste of Autumn 2009 on page 2.



Taste of Autumn 2009

Just before the snow came down I received a letter from one of our members, who is the great grandson of Henry Merryweather. Henry Merryweather was the person who took grafts from the original *Bramley's Seedling* and raised trees for commercial sale. So the Fruit Group can claim to have a direct contact with the development of the *Bramley's Seedling* apple!

Why is this important this year? Well 2009 is the bicentenary of the *Bramley's Seedling* apple and so this year we would like to have the *Bramley* (as it is commonly, and affectionately known) as the theme for our display at the Taste of Autumn, at the RHS Garden, Wisley, 17th – 20th October 2009. What we will need is photographs of *Bramley* apple trees and *Bramley* apples - so if you have photographs of your Bramleys – from the time you put them in, through to maturity; at blossom time and in fruit; in fact any *Bramley* related photographs, please let us know, we would love to use them as part of our display.

As well as photographs of your trees we would like your favourite recipes and any fruit produce - wine, pies, cakes, jams and jellies, chutneys, etc. Perhaps you have grown a monster *Bramley*? If you can get your largest apple to me just before the show that would be wonderful.

So far I have one volunteer to help on the stall, and we really need more. If you can give up a full day, half a day or any time at all, to let visitors know what the RHS Fruit Group does – and why they should join - please let me know. We do not have to answer technical questions (unless of course you are an expert), all we do is talk to visitors, encourage beginners and those who are thinking of growing fruit, and let them know that the RHS Fruit Group, is there for them, the beginner as well as for the expert.

If you think you can help in any way please contact me at the Wisley meetings or by e-mail (juliaemitchell@hotmail.com) or phone (01372 276 511).

Editor's note: 'Mr Bramley's apple' by Joan Morgan. This is a great article about the history of the Bramley's Seedling apple, that appeared in the March 2009 edition of the RHS *The Garden* magazine.

CAR SHARING

With this mailing is the booking form for the external visits we have arranged for 2009. If you would like to offer a lift or receive a lift from another member to these visits, or to meetings at Wisley or our regional meetings, then please let Corinne Bellaby know, and she will coordinate passengers and drivers.

Contact details: Corinne Bellaby, telephone 0118 973 4609 or 0797 136 192
e-mail Corinne@cbellaby.freemove.co.uk

MESSAGE FROM GERRY EDWARDS, FRUIT GROUP CHAIRMAN

In my New Year message at the beginning of 2008 I said that I hoped that the New Year would get the extremes of 2007 out of its system and give us a long, warm summer. How wrong could I be - the weather was even worse than 2007. Fortunately though we were very lucky in that our summer visit to Wisley and our visit to Cambridgeshire were both held on glorious days and that our visit to Kent at the beginning of September was drier than it had been just a couple of days beforehand.

The weather forecasters are now predicting that the summer of 2009 will be long and hot, and as they have got this long, cold winter 100% right and I am hoping that they are right again. Our gardens, fruit and our sanity depends on it.

Our two main visits away from Wisley in 2008 were to south Cambridgeshire in August, where we had a great day seeing heritage apples, and a wide range of plums and gages at Cam Valley Orchards and the vast kitchen garden and national collection of walnuts at Wimpole Hall; and in September to probably the best organic fruit orchard any of us have ever seen at Peter Hall's Poultry Farm. Both of our visits were outstanding days which were very well supported by our members. I was delighted that our summer visit to Wisley was also very well supported. Once again I have to thank Ale Valsecchi and her team for looking after us at Wisley because without them, and the input of Jim Arbury, the Fruit Group would simply not exist as we know it.

I was delighted to see that Fruit Group members exhibited in very good numbers at the July, October and November Fruit Shows - where FG Members Adrian Baggaley, Doug Palmer and Brian Fox did particularly well. I have to advise you that the 2009 Summer Fruit Competition will not be held at the Hampton Court Show but at the Tatton Park Show in July and it will be great to see an entry into the Competition from those members living in the area.

I think that the 2009 Fruit Group programme looks terrific - even if I say so myself - and I do hope that you will all thoroughly enjoy it. The programme includes a visit to the Leckford Estate in Hampshire, whose fruit farm produces the top quality apples and pears that you see in Waitrose, and this visit is coupled with tour the orchard and garden of Brian Fox - chair of the South West Branch - where you will be amazed at the quality and quantity of fruit that he grows. In addition, we are visiting Brogdale in Kent, where its fruit experts will show us round the famous collections. We have three visits to Wisley and you will find full details of these as well as our external visits later in this Newsletter. I can assure you that your Committee will endeavour to ensure that the RHS Fruit Group continues to provide all members with a programme which is challenging as well as entertaining, and once again I remind members to let me or any other Committee member know of any potential visits that you would like to see considered, any subjects for discussion at one of our meetings or perhaps an offer of a talk at one of our meetings.

Finally may I take this opportunity of wishing you good fruit growing in 2009 and I look forward to seeing you somewhere during the year.

Gerry Edwards, RHS Fruit Group Chairman

Comments on a dreadful year – 2008

Adrian Baggaley reports from the East Midlands

Spring was an overcast, rainy and distinctly chilly affair. The beekeeper's thermometer showing temperatures of 40 to 45 degrees F for weeks with little change. It was obvious that plum and pear blossom would not convert for fruit unless something drastic happened. By apple blossom time the temperatures had risen somewhat, but not drastically. The result was little or no plums or pears, but a good apple crop. The plums that did produce crops at low temperatures during blossoming were *Reeves Seedling* and *Giant Prune*, the latter, my hardiest variety, was loaded down.

Of course, what we didn't realise in spring, was that these weather patterns would continue through the seasons that followed. Season ran into season with little change in the weather, cold wet and cloudy, a few growing days each week, maybe one, sometimes two. The apple trees did their bit, they laid on a crop against all the odds, but in the end when it came to picking they knew not what season it was and refused to give up their crop. Apples stayed glued to the trees for weeks after their normal picking time. As a result, any attempt to pick usually meant that the spur came away as well, as the apple stalk was so firmly attached. In effect you pick next year's fruit as well, damaging the tree into the bargain. Through autumn the defoliated trees hung on to their crop, *Red Flastaff* wasn't that red, *Crowngold* wasn't gold and *Delblush* didn't have a blush. The balance of sugar, acidity and flavour were seriously affected, most varieties were acidic.

The worst affected were the upright trade mark cordons i.e. *Katy* and *Fiesta*, neither were worth picking, no colour or flavour. In contrast the pyramid *Fiesta* did produce some nice flavoured fruit. That apart the only varieties that shone through on flavour were *Winter Gem*, a bumper crop of *Blenheim Orange*, *Red Devil* and *Limelight*, the latter two being around three weeks later than usual, which, with the aid of a cold store, were in tip top condition for our Lowdham Apple Day event in late October.



In our tasting trial, *Red Devil* and *Limelight* were the most popular. Another variety I included in the tastings, just to provoke a reaction, was a rather coarse textured very large Swedish dessert apple called *Aroma*, and surprise, surprise, some people quite liked it. To me it was half-way to a cooker.

It was noticeable that among the apple pests, capsid bug damage was greater than usual; this shows as corky raised blisters or trails around the fruit and was quite wide-spread.

My *Glou Morceau* pearlets had quite large bites taken out of them which I assumed was winter moth. But from his description, David V Alford, in his book 'Pests of Fruit Crops', points the finger at capsid bug yet again. The damage was still obvious as depressions when the crop was picked in November.

The only pear variety to be unaffected by the prolonged atrocious weather was *Beth*, as usual it produced a crop, fruit size was up, and there was no problem with flavour. This year we extended the *Beth* season to three weeks, we pickled the excess fruit as an experiment. The fruit was not bad at all, so next year we may try other varieties like *Conference* and *Concorde*.

Most of my pear varieties refused to set a crop, for reasons stated previously. Those that succeeded were *Marguerite de Marillat*, *Comice* and *Williams*. Surprisingly, in a year of everlasting rain and much scab, the moth-prone Williams were spotless, a week after picking they turned a beautiful straw yellow, these fruit ended up in the Northern Fruit Group award-winning display at the Harrogate Show.

This year for some reason, my pears generally had thick skins, russetting didn't come into it - the skins of *Conference* and some *Comice* were like coarse sand paper. In regard to flavour, when eating a *Comice* you very quickly found out which side of the pear had been facing south (deliberate omission of the word sun).

'Horses for courses', not normally a gardening expression, but conclusions can be drawn from this year's awful weather and the results. The apple varieties mentioned i.e. *Winter Gem*, *Red Devil* and *Limelight* all out performed other apples other than *Blenheim Orange*, for flavour. *Beth* outperformed all other pear varieties for flavour. It is interesting to note that these apples are all new varieties and *Beth* is a relatively new pear variety of so my question is: why indulge in older varieties just because they are old which may not work? *Winter Gem*, *Red Devil* and *Limelight* apples were all raised by amateur breeder Hugh Ermen of Faversham, Kent. *Beth* pear was bred by East Malling Research.

Despite the conditions described in this report, fruit grown by Adrian Baggaley was awarded first prize in many classes at the RHS Autumn Fruit and Vegetable Competition in October 2008. Particular note should be made of his first for Class 11. A collection of 9 dishes of apples and pears; the award of the E J White Trophy and the Most Meritorious Single Dish of Apples Desert or Cooking for his Class 49. Peasgood's Nonesuch; first and the Most Meritorious Collection of Apples for his Class 14. Apples, 6 desert cultivars; first and the Most Meritorious Collection of Pears for his Class 59. Pears, 4 desert cultivars; first and the Most Meritorious Single Dish of Pears for his Class 65. Doyenne Du Comice.

'Most Meritorious' certificates are awarded by the Worshipful Company of Fruiterers for fruit that they consider to be of outstanding quality.



Those of us who attended the Fruit group meeting on 4th November 2008 were intrigued by the presentation by Hugh Struth and Tony Gentil on the use of a garlic spray on fruit trees, for building resistance to pests and diseases and stimulating growth. In this article, Tony Gentil explains why he is so impressed with this product.

Withdrawal Symptoms

Tony Gentil, fruit consultant, and grower in Cheshire.

When I started my career in horticulture in 1960 it soon became apparent that chemical controls for pests and diseases played an important part in good crop husbandry. At college we students were taught, and learned how to use, a battery of products such as Nicotine Shreds, Parathion, Lindane, Dieldrin, Burtolin, Maleic Hydrazide and DNOC. Spraying programmes were instilled into us so that we could reproduce the information when taking exams.

But then, over the years I noticed an interesting pattern emerge. When a chemical was first introduced it was hailed as a panacea for all manner of problems, then after about five years the guidelines for its use were more circumspect. "Don't use it now for 'a', 'b' and 'c' – but it's OK to use it for 'd'". Another ten years down the line and the chemical was withdrawn because of 'problems'. Over and over this has been the case.

In recent years the trickle of chemical withdrawals has turned into a flood. The concept of growing things organically without the use of artificial chemicals has gone from being the preserve of well-meaning 'hippies' in open-toed sandals and driving Citroen 2CV's to become acknowledged as the only responsible way forward.

It was with this background in mind that ten years ago I met Hugh Struth at the prestigious Four Oaks Show for commercial horticulture held annually near Jodrell Bank in Cheshire. Hugh manufactures a range of products based on garlic. During our discussion I explained who I was and that we grew an extensive range of hardy fruits, including about 400 varieties of apples. Hugh asked me to trial his products and give him feedback, as this was an area of horticulture where he had little data.

I tend to be a little cavalier in my approach to horticulture and will experiment with all sorts of ideas. I'm a great believer in the notion that in horticulture there is only one rule worth remembering: the rule is that in horticulture there are no rules. This is based on my observation that for every rule that is supposedly written in tablets of stone you will find someone who does just the opposite and gets excellent results.

Hugh Struth's garlic products are sold as prophylactics – they improve the health of the plant and enable it to fight off pests and diseases. When I opened the first container of Garlic Barrier it reminded me of a chemical that we used to use, years ago on a chrysanthemum nursery. The chemical was called Poliverdol. It was a thin, sticky solution based on seaweed. We used it to control red spider mites on all-the-year-round chrysanthus. Poliverdol's action was based on its ability to 'glue' the mites to the plant so that they could not move and migrate to infect new areas of plant tissue. It also gummed-up the mite's breathing pores and suffocated them.

At the time I was having problems with red spider mite on peaches and nectarines in the poly tunnel. I had tried using the predator Phytoseiulus for two years with little success. I felt it was time

to kill or cure because the infestation was getting progressively worse. I applied Hugh's Garlic barrier at full strength with a hand-held sprayer - the recommended dilution rate was 1:100. The result was to cause some partial defoliation of the trees but total annihilation of the red spider mites. On another occasion there was a developing spread of woolly aphids on one of the apple trees in the collection. The standard recommendation for control is to paint each colony with turpentine, a most unsatisfactory technique. One again I resorted to Garlic Barrier at full strength and got an immediate kill with no effect on the tree or its leaves. These are just two examples of how I have 'incorrectly' used Hugh's products as a pesticide. I also use garlic sprays on vegetables to deter attacks by pests such as slugs, snails, large and small white butterfly, carrot root fly, cabbage root fly, and nematodes. My theory is that these pests home in on their host by smell. The garlic products confuse them and put them off the scent.

My results are essentially anecdotal, but extensive academic trials have been carried out in other parts of the world. For example, Dr. Michael Evans of the Department of Horticulture at the University of Arkansas has found that garlic extracts at strengths of 10% was both fungistatic and fungicidal, controlling such soil borne fungal genera as *Phytophthora*, *Pythium*, *Fusarium*, *Rhizoctonia*, and *Thielaviopsis*. These are major causes of fungal diseases in plants.

Clearly, garlic has a lot going for it, and I intend to carry out more detailed trials in the years ahead. Oh, and a couple of final points. Firstly, spraying garlic extracts onto food crops does not make them taste of garlic when eaten by humans, and secondly, I don't have shares in Hugh's firm, Aston Horticulture, so I have financial axe to grind.

If you have been intrigued by this report, you can find out more about Garlic Barrier on the website www.astonhorticulture.com

Orchard On the Move

At the FG meeting on 4th November 2008, the other main speaker was our own Peter Collett.

Peter outlined how, over the course of the two years 1994 to 1996, he moved his mature orchard – 40 trees at the time – cordons, espaliers and fan trained trees. The move was planned like a military campaign. First, trenches were dug to act as holding beds until the new plot for the orchard had been prepared. During March and April 1994 every tree was lifted and 'heeled-in' in these trenches, together with compost and fertiliser to keep the trees healthy. The summer of 1994 was particularly hot and the fruit required regular irrigation while it waited to be moved. In contrast, 1995 turned out to be too wet for the preparation of the new site or for planting, so the trees stayed in their trenches – but did not seem to be too troubled by their temporary quarters as they produced some excellent fruit. By the spring of 1996 all of the groundwork and preparation had been completed on the new orchard site, all the wires and posts were in place, and the trees were moved to their new home. Some did not look too happy to start with, but they soon grew to love their new home. So much so that by the autumn of 1997 they had produced what Peter described as 'A wonderful crop of fruit'. Peter noted that it was the *Arthur Turner* apple that appeared to be least troubled by the move, flowering and fruiting in the trench with no apparent problems. Peter's talk was as witty and entertaining as ever, and illustrated with his own excellent slides. I think that we all learned something about the resilience of fruit trees and that, if need be, fruit trees can be moved with few problems so long as they are well looked after.

Alan Mansfield

Fruit Q&A

Questions raised by FG members at the Wisley meeting 4/11/2008, 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. When should apples be 'summer pruned' to prevent regrowth?

A. Brian Self suggested that we would not go wrong if we followed the advice given the book 'The Fruit Garden Displayed', as he believes that it gives the best description and details for summer pruning. He added that weather conditions and the part of the country will have a part to play in deciding when to prune, but in general some time around the first two weeks of August should be OK for most apples in most parts of the country.

Ale Valsecchi added that every year is different, and to wait until the terminal bud had formed, this means no more leaf growth and so is the optimum time to prune. She noted that pears are generally summer pruned earlier than apples.

Q. Is it too late (now in November) to prune plums?

A. A unanimous yes, as disease could enter the pruning cuts at this time of the year – wait until growth starts next spring.

Q. Is root pruning worth trying?

A. Root pruning, by digging up and replanting, does seem to have an effect on fruit trees, by shocking the tree into vigour and the production of fruit. A similar effect can be achieved by cutting into the soil with a spade, about 12" from the trunk of trained apples and pears.

Peter Collett explained that he prunes the roots of his cordon trees by cutting down one spade deep, 18" away from the trunk, in May. This, he said, appeared to bring the trees into fruit earlier.

Q. How do I deal with raspberry runners that appear away from the row?

A. It was suggested that raspberry runners can be contained by inserting sheets of corrugated plastic on either side of the row. Alternatively, just keep pulling out these suckers which, if healthy, can be used to plant up a new row somewhere else.

Q. When is the time to tie-down pears to train them?

A. Ale Valsecchi explained that this should only be done when the growth is flexible, and that if the wood was too hard – as it would be now in November – it would be too late, and damage could occur.

The *Pinova* apple

Howard Stringer, fruit grower in Surrey, sheds some light on the stunning apple featured in Bob Sherman's report on the Fruit Group visit to Poultry Farm: FG Newsletter #38, October 2008, he writes:

The picture in the October Newsletter showing that wonderful row of *Pinova* apples was a sight in itself.

I looked up its characteristics recorded from a state trials station at Radebeul in southern Germany, close to its birthplace in 1965 at a research station in Pillnitz near Dresden.

It is a seedling from *Golden Delicious* crossed with *Clivia*, which has *Cox* in its parentage, so the *Golden*' bequeaths the cropping power and *Cox* at least some of the flavour.

It is recorded as fairly resistant to scab, completely resistant to Water Core and fungal infections in general, making it look like a good candidate for organic growing. It was released in 1986. The flesh is described as crisp, sweet-sour and pleasantly aromatic.

It takes time for foreign bred fruits to be trialled in the UK, they often arrive via Holland, it is good to see *Pinova* growing here now.

When I first saw it being tested at a Trials Station in northern Belgium some ten years' ago, the principal concern was whether it would ripen in their northern climate.

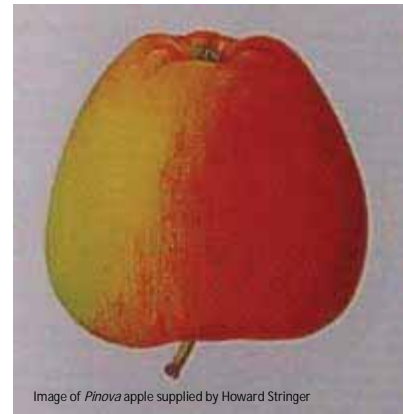
In its homeland, with much warmer summer and autumn temperatures the recommended picking time is mid-end October and the accompanying picture shows the depth of skin colour attained.

Certainly in mid-September the Belgian grown fruits carried only a pale flush and I do not know the results when picked.

Peter Hall's fruits certainly had maximum exposure to the sun and the form of growing ensures that every bit reaches the fruit, but this summer has been wretched and the fruits had a very poor flush. What will be the flavour be like?

Pinova has reached the amateur market in the UK now, with two suppliers, according to the RHS Plant Finder and I wonder whether any Fruit Group member has a fruiting tree and can report on their findings. I have a young tree obtained from Belgian graftwood but it has not yet fruited.

Let us hope that *Pinova* will join the new cluster of cultivars; *Jazz*, *Kanzi*, *Rubens*, *Cameo* etc., striving to slot into a market dominated by *Gala*, *Braeburn* and *Cox*.



Fruit Trees for Africa

I am delighted to report that FG Members are a generous lot. For the past two years there has been an opportunity to add a donation to the Seeds for Africa fruit tree campaign when you renew your membership. As a result we raised £330 in 2007 and £500 in 2008. We have received a letter of thanks from Amanda Gerrard, Corporate Fundraising Officer, Seeds for Africa, who writes that '...I can tell you that the donation has been effectively used to support projects in the slum areas of Nairobi in Kenya as part of a schools programme. The children are learning all about cultivating fruit trees successfully. It is a huge project involving some 25 schools and it will continue to need funding from people like yourselves but the results are so worthwhile. I have enclosed a couple of photographs for your members to see the work and conditions for these children. The recipients have made good progress but there will always be a need. The charity is so grateful to you for your support.' For more information about this project please visit the Seeds for Africa website www.seedsforafrica.org



Photograph, courtesy Seeds for Africa, shows a fruit tree about to be planted.

Where in the World?

In the FG Newsletter #38 we showed a photograph of apples growing in a dry, mountainous area 3,300 metres (10,000 ft) above sea level and asked Members to identify 'Where in the world...'. Additional clues were that the main fruit crop of the area is apricots, that barley, poplar trees and willow trees were also important crops, that the annual rainfall is between 3 and 6 inches in total, and that the entire area is snowbound for much of the year. We had a good response, several 'near misses', and some wag who suggested Norfolk. Two members correctly identified the Ladakh region of India, and it was Susan Kimber, who wins the prize of the revised 2008 edition of the 'The Horticultural Show Handbook' naming a valley that is in the same general area to where the photograph was actually taken: the Ule Ethnic Resort in the Indus Valley, the Sham region of Ladakh, 70km from the capital, Leh. Well done indeed.

Obituary, Roy Thompson (died 2008).

The West Midlands (now Midlands) Branch of the Fruit Group was formed in 1992 with a strong Pershore College flavour imparted by John Edgeley as Chairman. As is usual, much of the work was done by the Hon. Secretary who, from the beginning, was Roy Thompson.

Roy's training as an engineer meant he brought meticulous care to the job, and his personal commitment to the Branch was a major factor in its success.

By 1997 Roy had become Branch Chairman, and had joined the main committee of the Fruit Group. Although his 'reign' was marked by any number of well-organised, varied and enjoyable events for members, the flavour of the man is best remembered through his personal characteristics.

No one could forget his friendly and unassuming manner, the invariable kind words and thoughtful interest in all around him. Fruit growing was clearly a serious passion for him, but his knowledge and experience were lightly worn and readily available to all of us. Whilst it can become a cliché to speak of 'nature's gentlemen', in Roy Thompson we had the genuine article.

Liz, his wife, after supporting and encouraging Roy in his work for the Branch, nursed him through a long illness. She and her friends have made a generous donation to RHS in his memory.

John Poole

Obituary, Peter Smith

I am sorry to inform you that, Peter Smith, passed away on New Year's Eve in Epsom Hospital after suffering for a relatively short period from pneumonia.

Peter was one of the first people that I met when I joined the Fruit Group, he made me feel most welcome and was very patient, taking time out to give me all kinds of hints and tips which have certainly helped to improve my own fruit. In addition to fruit we both grew lilies and often shared ideas for dealing with our mutual problem - the scourge of the lily beetle.

He was a very keen grower and loved to exhibit his fruit, indeed it was Peter who encouraged me to enter some of my own fruit into a RHS Competition for the first time. As he promised, showing fruit has led to improved quality and a great deal of fun and enjoyment. It came as a great surprise to me to learn that Peter was 91 years old, it just goes to show that fruit growing can help us appear to be much younger.

Peter was a member of the Committee of the RHS Fruit Group for longer than any of us can remember. Over the years he worked hard on the Committee, keeping us focussed on what was important – the needs of our members – we shall miss his input at Committee meetings.

Alan Mansfield

Dates for 2009

Tuesday 24th March, Wisley. 1.00pm (RHS)
Peter Barwick – “Apples don’t just grow on trees”; Doug Palmer – “Growing in containers”

Thursday 16th July, Guided visit to National Fruit Collection, Brogdale, Faversham, Kent. (RHS) £14, including lunch.

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)

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

For Regional Branch events, please check with your local secretary or chair.

Other Events

19th – 23rd May, Chelsea Flower Show
7th July – 12th July Hampton Court Palace Flower Show

22nd – 26th July, Tatton Park Flower Show, Cheshire, incorporating the Summer Fruit and Vegetable Competition. **Please note this change of venue for the summer fruit competition.**

9th - 12th October, Europom 2009, Belgium

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

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

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

RHS Fruit Group (RHS)

For more information contact:
Stephen Colfer, 01483 212342

South West Branch (SW)

For more information contact:
Brian Fox, Chair, 01264 357229

Midlands Branch (M)

For more information contact:
John Beswick, Chair & Secretary, 01604 403115

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 Group), Brian Fox (South West), Alan Mansfield (Editor), Julia Mitchell, John Poole (Webmaster), John Sale, Howard Stringer, Eric Spanier

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: alanmansfield@ntlworld.com
Deadline for next issue: 31st May 2009
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