



THE APPLE OF YOUR EYE

SLOG QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 49 – AUTUMN 2021

*** FRUIT GROWING ***

CONSERVING LOCAL ORCHARDS

PROMOTING HERITAGE VARIETIES

www.slorchards.com

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Editorial

2021 so far has been an annoying year for at least two reasons. Firstly of course the wretched virus which prevented us holding any events in the first half of the year. But secondly the weather, and specifically the April frosts which have caused huge damage to fruit set resulting in reduced crops for the second year in succession. Just like last year the culinary varieties have tended to fare slightly better than the dessert varieties but the overall picture is patchy. Some varieties which failed to crop last year have a heavy set this year which requires thinning – this is an opportunity to remove scabbed and insect damaged fruitlets. Beware that since the rain returned after the hot dry July, there may be some fruits splitting which can provide an entry point for brown rot.

For those of you who do get a crop you may want to start making plans for pressing it into juice or cider. If you wish to hire the Spiedel Mill + Hydropress kit, email Mike Gibson at: mgibson231@btinternet.com or phone 015395 68639 with your requested date(s). Collection and return must be made between the hours of

9.00-9.30am and 4.30-5.00pm at Tarnside Farm, Crosthwaite LA8 8BU. Please respect these hours since this is a working farm. The farm is situated 200yds up a narrow lane off the A5074 just south of the A5074 junction with Totter Bank. As you turn into the farmyard, fork right to the barn, don't go left to the house where turning is difficult. Hire charge is unchanged at £20 per day of use. Please return the equipment clean and ready for the next person to use in order to recover your £25 deposit.

To book the large press & trailer, phone Dick Palmer on 01229 716095 or 07799 615750 or email dickrhonapalmer@gmail.com The large press hire charge is £25 per day plus £25 deposit returnable when the entire equipment and trailer is returned clean and ready for the next person to use. But bear in mind that Dick has just had a hip replacement so his mobility is somewhat restricted for a while.

We still have the hand scatter and barrel press kit which is available on a free of charge collect and return basis to local schools to encourage children to take a greater interest in local fruit and make their own juice. If you know any schools who may be interested, please tell them to email: andygilchrist@hotmail.co.uk

SLOG container grown trees are again available for sale at £15 each, mostly 1yr old maiden whips of local, heritage and popular varieties grafted this spring. Collection from High Newton by arrangement with Kirsten & Paul: email both kirstatjoneskins@gmail.com and ackyboy@hotmail.com

Finally, please note that it's time to order your rootstocks for next season – see page 6 for details.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

For the most up-to-date information look in:
<https://www.slorchards.com/events>

Sunday August 29th 2.00 - 4.30pm – Autumn Orchard Visit to Crookfoot Orchard, Lyth Valley We will see the original old pear trees, some of whose fruit we named after DNA analyses showed them to be unique. **Directions:** From Plumgarth roundabout at the northern end of Kendal, take B5284 through Crook, then take the first turn left after Crook Memorial Hall and just in front of the Church. Follow this narrow road (Back Lane) for a 1½ miles until reaching the left turn for Crosthwaite. Continue down the Crosthwaite road for ½mile and Crookfoot is the first turn on the right.

Sunday September 19th 10am - 3pm - Members' Apple pressing day at Abi & Toms Garden Centre, Halecat, Witherslack (date provisional, subject to confirmation with Abi & Tom) Following the success of last year, we plan again to operate a booking system. Bring up to 40kg of apples for a single batch pressing. All welcome. Free to members, and visitors can join on the day. To book a time slot, phone Dick Palmer on 01229 716095 or 07799 615750 or email dickrhonapalmer@gmail.com **Directions:** Follow A590 west and take the Witherslack turning. Pass the Derby Arms and take the left turn in the village centre. Follow the brown signs for Halecat Garden Centre.

Saturday October 2nd – Apple Day at Ford Park, Ulverston 11.00am to 4.00pm Bring your (clean) spare or windfall apples for juicing and containers for the juice. For directions etc see: <http://www.ford-park.org.uk/home.asp>

Sunday 10th October 10.00am – 4.00pm Beetham Nursery Apple Day Apple identification and advice. To identify your apples, bring at least three apples from each tree. **Directions:** [Beetham Nurseries](#)

Saturday October 23rd 10.00am - 2.00pm - Sedbergh Apple Day at The Peoples Hall, Howgill Lane, Sedbergh LA10 5DQ Organised by COGS (Community Orchard Group Sedbergh), there will be apple pressing using the Spiedel Mill & Hydropress, apple identification & advice, other related stands & music **Directions:** <https://www.sedbergh.org.uk/locations/peoples-hall/>

Sunday October 31st 10.00am - 3.00pm - Members' Apple pressing day at Sprint Mill, Burneside The final opportunity to bring your apples for pressing into juice. Don't forget to bring containers for the juice and bags to carry away the spent pulp. **Directions:** From Burneside take road past paper mill towards A6, Immediately before bridge over River Sprint take track on left for 100yds then park on left.

Tuesday 30th November – Winter Meeting 7.30pm Crook Memorial Hall Recent DNA analyses have demonstrated that we have discovered several unique varieties of apples and pears in local orchards. Until now, these varieties have been known only by code numbers but they now need proper names like any other recognised variety. At this meeting we will describe each variety and its location and then attempt to conjure up an appropriate name for it. Come along and join in the fun of naming our new babies! There will of course be refreshments, apple juice and socialising. Cakes etc welcome! **Directions:** From Plumgarth roundabout at the north end of Kendal, take B5284 direction Bowness. Go through Crook village, past the Sun Inn, then up the hill and the Hall is on your left at the top of the hill. Satnav LA8 8LG

Please note that if the Covid-19 epidemic flares up again the events above may be subject to last minute changes. Members will be advised of any changes by email, and updates will be posted on the SLOG website. For the most up-to-date information look in: <https://www.slorchards.com/events>

RECENT EVENTS

SLOG Annual General Meeting Tuesday 27th July

The AGM, at Crook Memorial Hall was attended by fourteen members. A dozen members sent apologies.

Reports were presented from the Chairman (Andy Gilchrist), Membership Secretary (Joanna Steven), Treasurer (Adam Walker) and Web Editor (Andy Brown). All the officers and Committee members (the four above plus Adele Jones, Hilary Wilson, Phil Rainford, Dick Palmer, Anthony Fitzherbert & Adam Rubinstein) were re-elected. Membership subscription rates remain unchanged.

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The meeting was followed by refreshments and the berry & currant show. Winning gooseberry was grown by Andy Gilchrist and winning currant was grown by Mark Fawcett. Hugh Connor provided a particularly tasty gooseberry & blackcurrant cake.

Minutes and officers reports will be posted on the SLOG website.

Summer Pruning Workshop Saturday 7th August

Despite a summer storm rolling in which deposited 2½” of rain in the previous 24hrs, we still went ahead and 16 hardy members gathered in the yurts at Growing Well. As the rain lashed down on the roof, Phil struggled to make himself heard as he demonstrated t-budding. Then members had a go for themselves and encouraged also by Hilary and Andy, succeeded in chip budding and t-budding a dozen apple rootstocks between them. Fortunately the rain relented after a couple of hours allowing us to venture out and practice summer pruning on the cordons. Summer pruning is a useful means to slow the growth of over-vigorous trees. It is normal practice on restricted tree forms such as cordons, espaliers, fans & stepovers. The cordons at Growing Well are a good example as they are now about twenty years old on MM106 rootstocks and fairly vigorous. We cut the tops back to the top wire and pruned the annual extension growth back to three buds. Sadly the trees were carrying very little crop due to the damage done by the April frosts for the second year in a row.

SLOG ORCHARD UPDATE

The frost in April hit our orchard very hard and it is sad to see a second year of poor cropping. The fruit count is slightly better than last year – of the apples: 77 varieties have fruit versus 66 that do not, of the pears: 10 varieties have fruit while 12 do not. Then the wet May (6” rainfall – curiously the same as last year) facilitated a heavy scab attack. A scab assessment at the end of June indicated that the 60 following apple varieties were resistant to scab:

(Cumbrian): *Greenup's Pippin, Keswick Codlin, Forty Shilling, Duke of Devonshire, Lancashire Pippin (1&2), Autumn Harvest, Tiffen, Nelson's Favourite, Wheaten Loaves, Fallbarrow*

Favourite, Taylor's Favourite, Bradley's Beauty, Rankthorn, Mower's Quench, Black Prince, Daphne's Delight, Betty Robinson, King's Meaburn, Ritson's Red, Tarnside Red, Alan's Apple, Cockermouth Codlin, Nancy Crow. (Lancashire): *Sowman's Seedling, Proctor's Seedling, Royal George, Jenny Lind, Trumpeter.* (Yorkshire): *Ribston Pippin, Yorkshire Beauty, Cockpit, Cockpit Improved, Hunthouse, Flower of the Town, New Bess Pool, Sykehouse Russet & Rymer.*

(Others): *Peter Lock, Domino, Lucombe's Pine, Pearl, Mank's Codlin, Mrs Lakeman's Seedling, Bardsey, Polly Prosser, Margil, Decio, Antonovka, Lady of the Wemyss, Finkenwerder Prinz, Hawthornden, Scotch Bridget, Transparente de Croncels, Rajka, Delbar Jubilee, Redlove Era, Bright Future, Park Farm Pippin & Rosette.*

A further 60 apple varieties had only slight scab infection:

(Cumbrian): *Carlisle Codlin, Longstart, Low Farm Pippin, Dan's Pippin, Brantwood Golden Codlin, Burgh Beauty, Plough Inn, Eddie Potts, Red Nuisance, Oakbank Pippin, Burr Knot.*

(Lancashire): *Gold Medal, Lady's Finger of Lancaster, Hargreaves Greensweet, Philip Barron, Lord Suffield, Lady's Delight, Gressingham Lady, Harvest Festival, Prendiville Pippin.*

(Yorkshire): *Nancy Jackson, Fillingham Pippin, Nelson's Codlin, Joanetting, Green Balsam, Yorkshire Greening, Nothern Greening, Craggy's Seedling, Acklam Russet, Hornsea Herring.*

(Others): *Gladstone, Jester, Isaac Newton's Tree, Black Gilliflower, Lady Sudeley, Blenheim Orange, Upton Pyne, Catshead, Dr. Harvey, Violette, Norland, Perzikrode Sommerappel, Court Pendu Plat, Alice, Captain Kidd, Evagil, Cambusnethan Pippin, Galloway Pippin, Liddell's Seedling, Alderman, Cybele, Otava.*

There were 23 apple varieties that had significant scab infection on leaves and/or fruitlets:

John Hugget, Red Balsam, Potts Seedling, Malus niedzwetskyana, Elstar, Lemon Square, Golden Spire, Bloody Ploughman, Delcorf/Delbar Estival, Dog's Snout, Ananas Reinette, Mauld's Meaburn, Dave's Delight, Saturn, Prima, Santana, Christmas Pippin,

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Grandpa Buxton, Spartan, William Peters, Tidicombe Seedling & Merton Russet.

The pears were mostly free of scab except for *Nouveau Poiteau & Williams Bon Chretien.*

One result of the poor crop was that the trees put on some vigorous vegetative growth so our 14th August working party summer pruned the trees back into shape. Many thanks to Pat, Bernard, Adam, Paul, Jacqueline & Pauline. The next Working Party will be in November to remove some trees shown by DNA to be non-authentic and replace them with their definitive versions, put a few new canes in, fix a couple of loose posts and general tidying up.

PLAGUES & PESTILENCE: EARWIGS

Earwigs are neither a plague nor a pestilence, in fact they are beneficial insects which predate upon species which are considered a pestilence such as aphids, mussel scale, codling moth, and pear sucker. There are seven species of earwigs in Britain but that found most frequently in apple and pear orchards is the European Earwig



Forficula auricularia. Earwig populations are generally low in orchards in their early years due to recently disturbed soil, lack of tree canopy and low plant diversity. In the early life of a new orchard, earwig populations can be encouraged by providing cover to hide in during the day and a source of food/prey for the earwigs to feed on at night. Firstly, a complex mix of grass and wild flower species can be sown or allowed to grow on the orchard floor to provide a variety of food including pollen and alternative insect prey.

Secondly, refuges can be placed in the tree canopy that will allow the earwigs to hide by day and forage on prey in the trees after nightfall. Refuges can be home made and

consist of old drinks bottles with the bottoms cut off and filled with corrugated cardboard. In older orchards, earwigs are sometimes found around the stalks of apples leading people to think they are a nuisance and perhaps even responsible for damage to the fruit. This is quite wrong and earwigs are a valuable generalist predator and well worth encouraging to manage a wide range of orchard pest species.

With acknowledgements to "The English Apple Man"

APPLE VARIETIES FOR HIGH ALTITUDES

Ros Nichol grows apples at Rookhope in Upper Weardale, County Durham, at an altitude of over a thousand feet. From an orchard comprising over a hundred varieties she has compiled a list of those varieties that "do well". Although Rookhope is on the "wrong" side of the Pennines, it is less than ten miles from Cumbria's eastern border, so her findings can be extrapolated as reasonably valid for exposed sites in our region.

Last year, despite 2020 being "probably the worst fruiting year since my trees became established" she recorded the following varieties as the best: *Lord Derby, Tower of Glamis, White Melrose, Yorkshire Beauty, Discovery, Beauty of Bath, George Cave, Laxton's Fortune, Worcester Pearmain, Blenheim Orange, Rosemary Russet, Katy, Cockpit & King of the Pippins.* In addition to these, other varieties which usually did well in previous years were: *Grenadier, Bradley's Beauty & Keswick Codlin.* The most disappointing varieties are *Bramley* (canker), *James Grieve & Annie Elisabeth* (scabby).

This is fairly similar to the list she provided in a previous article in Spring 2017 (SLOG Newsletter #31. Most of these are older, tried and tested varieties which would be expected to withstand adverse conditions so these results may be a helpful guide to anyone planning an orchard in challenging situations in our region.

With thanks to Ros Nichol & Hilary Wilson

NEW APPLE VARIETY: HIDDEN ROSE

Yet another pink fleshed apple variety – the breeders seem to be obsessed with them at the

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moment. The difference with this one is that unusually, and maybe uniquely, it has a green skin, thus the name Hidden Rose presumably because you wouldn't expect a green skinned



apple to have pink flesh. However, this one is not the result of a breeding program, it seems it was a random seedling found in the Pacific northwest of the USA. Here is its story: “*The original tree from which today's Hidden Rose apple trees are grown was located on land belonging to Lucky and Audrey Newell in Airlie, Oregon. The "parent tree" grew in the middle of the Newells' meadow just six feet from an abandoned, hand-dug well. In the mid 1960s, the Newells moved to a large property and sold the eighty acres where this one and only red-fleshed apple tree stood. Two decades later, Louis Kimzey, former field manager at Thomas Paine Farms, was walking through the Newells' old orchards and picked an apple from a large tree. Biting into it, he was amazed to find the pink flesh of what would become known as the Hidden Rose apple. The first Hidden Rose apple orchard was planted in the USA in 1992.* (courtesy dragonberryproduce.com)



A more prosaic English description of the fruit: “Medium size conical green apple with dark red flesh; crisp texture and sweet tart flavour. Little trace of red pigment in the wood or leaves. Sweet-tart flavour with thick mottled skin.

Possibly the richest-flavoured red-fleshed apple I have grown. Remarkable appearance - vivid red flesh under greenish skin. In UK this is not ripe until early November, when it has an excellent flavour and is sweet rather than tart. Dense flesh; will keep in good condition until Jan-Feb, by which time it has a flavour and texture similar to watermelon.” (courtesy Nigel Deacon, Sutton Elms) The variety name is *Airlie Redflesh* and it is available from our rootstock supplier, Frank P. Matthews.

FRUIT FOCUS: BOLLWILLER PEAR

The Bollwiller Pear (*x Sorbopyrus irregularis*) is a hybrid of the European pear (*Pyrus communis*) and the common whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*). It is a small to medium-sized tree growing to 10–18 m tall (or 4 - 6m on dwarfing rootstock) with deciduous oval leaves



The fruit is a pome 2.5–3 cm long; it is edible with a sweet, yellowish flesh, which tastes similar to a Nashi pear. It is known as the Bollwiller pear, because it first arose in the gardens of the chateau of Baron Rodolphe de Bollwiller, in the eponymous village between Mulhouse and Colmar in Alsace, France, in 1599. It has been propagated by grafting ever since then. As an intergeneric triploid it is nearly sterile, only rarely producing any viable seeds. It is one of the rarest pears in the world: very few people grow it because it can take over twenty years to produce blossom and fruit. I am indebted to Dr. William Woys Weaver for bringing it to our attention, his tree in Pennsylvania took 22 years to blossom for the first time ([5](#)) [Facebook](#) and 28 years to produce fruit! Another cross between the same parents called Shipova (*x Sorbopyrus auricularia*) is similar but produces slightly larger fruits and there seems to be some confusion in the literature between the two.

With acknowledgements to Wikipedia & Skogstradsgardsbloggen

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ROOTSTOCK ORDERS

As per previous years, SLOG will consolidate orders from members for rootstocks for delivery in January 2022 in time for grafting. Rootstocks available include:

Apple: MM106/MM111/M25/M26/M9/M27

Pear: QuinceA/C/Pyrodwarf

Plum: St. Julien A/ Krymsk VVA1

We have a trade account with Matthews so if there is anything else you'd like to purchase from the Matthews website: <http://www.frankpmatthews.com/> just add it to your rootstock order and we should be able to get it at a useful discount from the retail price and without you incurring carriage costs. Apple rootstock prices vary between £1-£2.50 each depending on total numbers ordered. Email Andy Gilchrist at andygilchrist@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01539 727772 to place your order.

Deadline for orders is the end of September.

GRAFTING TO ORDER

The SLOG grafting to order service is again available this winter. If you want a particular variety on a particular rootstock, it can, subject to availability, be grafted for you. Adele Jones is the co-ordinator for this service. Price is unchanged at £15 per tree, buyer collects. Call Adele on 015395 52102 for enquiries & orders.

SLOG SHOP

1. SLOG has a range of container grown maiden apple trees for sale at £15.00 each, comprising traditional varieties suitable for our Northern climate mostly on MM106 rootstocks. Visit <https://www.slorchards.com/trees-for-sale> to see the list and for guidance on purchase and collection.



2. Wells & Winter labels are the most cost-effective permanent solution for recording tree variety identity. They are rigid black plastic labels

measuring 2 x 3½" (5x9cm), giving a permanent and very visible result. They are available at 15p each.

3. Apple Notelet cards £2 per pack of 5 different cards each featuring a different apple variety.

4. Recipe books: 28 full colour pages detailing 45 recipes for a wide range of fruits only £2.50.

5. The Apples & Orchards of Cumbria: Lavishly illustrated with over 100 full colour photos describing the twenty or so Cumbrian apple varieties and the fifteen orchards open to the public. Judged runner-up in the "Landscape & Tradition" category of the Lakeland Book of the Year Awards, 2014. £9

All the above items are available at SLOG events such as Shows, Apple Days and the Winter Talk.

SLOG Discount at Suppliers: Rogers & Beetham Nursery

SLOG has negotiated a 10% discount at Rogers of Pickering for SLOG members. When you place an order for any kind of fruit: trees, bushes, etc., quote your SLOG membership number and Rogers will apply 10% discount to your total bill. For mail orders go to:

<http://www.rvroger.co.uk/?linksource=frontpage>

We also have a 5% discount at Beetham Nursery applicable to all items. Just show your SLOG membership card at the checkout.

TAILPIECE

"The Apple of Your Eye" is a quarterly publication, the next one being the winter issue due mid-November. Contributing articles, preferably in word.doc, are welcome, along with photos where possible, by the end of October 2021 to: andygilchrist@hotmail.co.uk

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