



NEWSLETTER

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

No 81 January 2018

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OFFICERS

Chairman

Hilary Dodson

Treasurer

Peter Robinson

MEMBERS

Sharan Packer (Membership Secretary)

Peter Nichol (Minutes Secretary)

Jean Richards (Newsletter Editor)

Margaret Drury (Apple Events Co-ordinator)

Rachel Benson

Philip Rainford

Chris Simmonds

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Executive Committee is elected by the Annual General Meeting in November each year.

At the 2017 AGM, all existing members of the Committee agreed to stand for re-election and were duly re-elected.

One new Committee member came forward at the AGM, and will be introduced in the April Newsletter. Otherwise, the Committee remains as shown on page 2, still comfortably within the parameters set out in the Constitution of not less than five or more than thirteen members.

Membership is, however, on the low side, and the Committee does have power to co-opt, so if you would like to consider taking on this role, do talk to our Chairman.

LOCAL CONTACTS

Local contacts are an informal network of volunteer members who may offer a range of services from organising occasional events in their area, to swapping seedlings, or simply providing information to visitors and newcomers. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you think they can help you.

James Ellson: Hayfield (and area)

Bridget Evans: South Yorks

Melanie Fryer: Skipton/Guisburn

Ken Haigh: Darlington

Peter Nichol: Manchester area

Philip Rainford: Cumbria & North West

Chris Simmonds: Ryedale & North Yorks Moors

The Editor's apologies to Bridget Evans, who not only volunteered to be a local contact, but actually suggested the whole idea in the first place, and was then accidentally omitted from the list. Sorry Bridget, now rectified.

As you can see, the list isn't complete, so if your area isn't included, would you like to volunteer? Simply get your name and contact details in the Newsletter, and you take it from there, doing as much or as little as you wish.

DIARY

Dates for your diary for the next four months: please see the Programme and Events sections below for further information, and visit our Facebook page for updates and last minute changes to the programme.

JANUARY

Thursday 18: Otley Teaching garden

Wednesday 24: Dewhurst Road teaching garden

Thursday 25: Winter pruning course, open to all members

FEBRUARY

Thursday 1: Otley Teaching garden

Wednesday 7: Dewhurst Road teaching garden

Saturday 10: Meeting open to all members: scion exchange and talk

Thursday 15: Otley Teaching garden

Wednesday 24: Dewhurst Road teaching garden

MARCH

Thursday 1: Otley Teaching garden

Wednesday 7: Dewhurst Road teaching garden

Saturday 10: Grafting workshop, open to all members

Thursday 15: Otley Teaching garden

Tuesday 20: Grafting workshop, open to all members

Wednesday 21: Dewhurst Road teaching garden

Thursday 29: Otley Teaching garden

APRIL

24 -25: Setting up for the Harrogate Spring Flower Show

26-29: Harrogate Spring Flower Show

NEW WEBSITE

www.thenorthernfruitgroup.com

The old website was getting a bit tired, and truth to tell had been rather neglected of late, so the Committee decided to go for a whole new look with a brand new site.

The work was undertaken on a voluntary basis by Linda Bramley, and we think she's done a brilliant job. Although she grows fruit in the north, she wasn't a member of the Group, so we've given her a year's complimentary membership as a thank you.

The site is still 'work in progress' (as we go to press, among other things some items from your hard pressed Editor remain to be written) but do have a look and let us know what you think.

Note that the web address includes the definite article: *thenorthernfruitgroup*.

And while you are wandering around on your computer, notebook or phone, don't forget to check into our Facebook page from time to time for updates, reminders, and pictures of volunteers in the mud.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 81st Newsletter of the Northern Fruit Group. Yes, the last issue completed 20 years of publication, quarterly without a break, which we think deserves a bit of congratulation. More on that later.

We have another bumper edition of 32 pages for you, with (we hope) lots of interest, both serious and rather more light-hearted.

Let's start with some housekeeping items, and get the tedious one out of the way first. Your membership of the Group expired at the end of December, so if you haven't already renewed, you need to get on with it. The renewal form was enclosed with the December Newsletter, but if you've lost it, you can now renew on line - more about that in a moment - or just send a note to the Treasurer with your cheque (his address is on page 2). This will be the last reminder, and you will drop off the Newsletter distribution list if you haven't renewed by the time the April issue comes out.

The second, much more interesting item is that we have a beautiful new website: see below for details. With the new website, the old email

addresses for members of the Committee became obsolete, and have been replaced by new gmail addresses, so if you need to contact us, be sure to use the new address.

Turning to the Newsletter itself, as always apples and orchards feature strongly, but we also try to cheer the winter gloom with a look at mangoes and apricots, fruits synonymous with sunshine, and ponder the precise nature of a seed, including the enormous coco de mer. And we look back to the 1990s when the Newsletter began: each issue for the current year will bring you an article from the corresponding issue in 1998, starting with pine nuts: it seems my illustrious predecessor also had a penchant for things we don't grow.

And finally the Editor, and all the Executive Committee wish all members a happy and - perhaps more importantly - a fruitful New Year.

CONFESSIONS OF A FRUIT NOVICE



I was intrigued by the news item a few weeks ago about a man who suffered cyanide poisoning after eating “cherry seeds”.

My interest had nothing to do with the man or the cyanide or the reason why anyone would want to do such a bizarre thing, but rather with the nature of a seed.

What's the difference between a seed and a pip, I asked the Constant Gardener (aka the Husband) , and what do you normally call the bit inside the stone in a cherry? Busy, he replied, look it up. I knew better than to press the point, so took his advice.

A seed, I learned, is “the unit of reproduction of a flowering plant, capable of developing into another such plant”, whereas a pip is “a small hard seed in a fruit”. Synonyms for seed include pip, and synonyms for pip include seed.

As with so many synonyms or near synonyms, the cause is two (or sometimes more!) words deriving from two (or more) languages in the mixed bag that makes up modern English (cat/feline, graveyard/cemetery, sad/miserable... you get the picture).

Pip is “apparently representing a shortened form of *pippin*, from Middle English *pipin*, from Old French *pepin* (“a seed”)”. Whereas seed comes from Middle English *seed*, *sede*, *side*, from Old English *sēd*, *sāed* (“seed, that which is sown”), from Proto-Germanic ... need I go on? The dictionary was impressive but ultimately unhelpful; perhaps this is one of those areas where it is best to stick with common usage. Apples have pips or seeds, pomegranates have seeds, grapes have pips (unless they are seedless).

And neither of them relate, linguistically, to the thing in a cherry, which I have always called a stone. But the culprit was not the stone itself, but the inside bit - kernel perhaps? “A softer, usually edible part of a nut, seed, or fruit stone contained within its shell”: well at least that makes sense.

The outcome of all this was a headache, so I gave up and went in search of a novel. The CG, who is also a sci-fi fan, suggested John Wyndham’s “The Seeds of Time”. Is there a companion volume, I wondered, called “The Pips of Time”?

MEET YOUR COMMITTEE

Continuing our series of brief biographies from members of your Executive Committee, in the spotlight this time is Philip Rainford.

You have now met all the ‘old’ members (for want of a better word): our new member will be introduced in the April issue of the Newsletter.

My fascination with top fruit can be traced back to the late 1970’s when I read an article highlighting the disappearance of many old apple varieties. Intrigued, I decided to find out more. In the 1980’s, using information provided in “The Apple Register” and Hogg’s “The Fruit Manual” I managed to track down a lost c18 Lancashire apple “Hargreave’s Greensweet” and ever since I have been totally immersed in researching and in seeking out rare and missing apples – and more recently pears too. I am not alone in this manic pursuit! Between 2002 and 2004 many old orchards to the south of Preston were surveyed thanks to the leadership of the late Joyce Morris. She lived in the village of Eccleston near Chorley, situated in an area of countryside known as “the Evesham of the north”. During 2005 to 2007 I visited remnant orchards in the Arnside/

Silverdale AONB. Booklets “Eccleston Apple Blossoms” and “Orchards of the Arnside/Silverdale AONB” were written at the time.

At our South Ribble Orchard Project location to the south-west of Preston, we are monitoring a large number of unidentified apples and pears, propagated from ancient trees in the north of England. Many more trees are planted a few miles away at a Penwortham allotment site. “Saved” varieties are distributed to locations where there is a good chance of long-term conservation and scionwood made available to interested parties. Last year some of our grafted pear trees bore fruit for the first time- invariably the flavours were delicious. Yet the majority remain unidentified after recent DNA testing- in essence, forgotten fruits in danger of becoming extinct.

I joined The Northern Fruit Group in the late 1990’s at one of the very first Apple Days held in the Bath House, Harlow Carr. I remember at the time that Trevor Rogers, our first chairman, had placed himself strategically by an exit door in order to recruit new members! A complicated apple story lay behind my visit to the venue, a tale too long (and tedious?!) to relate in full, but it involved a variety erroneously known as Lady’s Finger of Lancaster, subsequently named Lady’s Finger of Bledington and now confirmed as Black Gilliflower, taken to America by early settlers.

Since becoming a member, it has been wonderful to meet up with so many enthusiastic and like-minded members of the NFG. Life- long friendships have been made within the society and beyond as a result of the many activities and workshops organised by the group over the years. I have early memories of a trip to Addingham with apples for Ernest Oddie to identify. An intended brief visit turned into a marathon session, Ernest’s sister making sandwiches as dusk approached! I am also reminded of an incident which took place in a rather gloomy room within the Bath House a few years ago. Unidentified apples from several northern Apple Day venues were assembled for final scrutiny to try and establish positive identification, a three day event irreverently known as the “apple post mortem.” At the end of an exhausting final day, a frazzled friend and colleague, yearning for closure and with thoughts of a relaxing evening drink, incorrectly and absent - mindedly identified apple variety Lady Henniker as “Lady Heineken”.

PROGRAMME

Fruit Group Events

Executive Committee members please note that meetings for 2018 are scheduled for February 10, June 2 and November 10.

Meetings

Four times a year, on a Saturday, the Executive Committee meets in the morning, and there follows in the early afternoon an event open to all members.

The next meeting is on **Saturday February 10, at Hampsthwaite Memorial Hall**. The post code for sat nav users is HG3 2EJ, but keep a map handy as we have reports that the post code takes you to the proverbial middle of nowhere. There is plenty of parking.

At about 1.00 pm there will be the annual exchange of scions (fondly known as the stick swap). Please bring along any scions you think might be of interest to other members, and/or go away with any that take your fancy. You don't have to give to receive, some members have more surplus than others, and are happy to see scions go to a good home. More details below.

This will be followed by an interesting presentation by one of our long term NFG members, Chrissie Clayton, following the making of a small "Heritage Apple Orchard" on part of the old Bishops Palace site in her village of Nettleham, Lincoln.

Grafting and Collection of Scion Material

Our grafting sessions tend to concentrate on apples. There are two varieties of rootstock that we like to use. The most widely applicable is MM106 which can be used to produce not only medium size bush trees but also the trained forms of cordons and espaliers. The other rootstock is M27 which is useful if you have to grow in a small space or are desperate to have fruit early in the life of the tree. If you book on to one of our grafting courses, rootstock will be supplied at cost, you do not need to bring your own.

Scion material is the bit from the tree that you wish to propagate. Ensure that its name or other means of identification goes with it. It is collected in winter, normally January before winter pruning, and stored in a dry plastic bag in the refrigerator. The scion consists of a twig that grew

last summer and needs to have at least six well developed buds. This usually means that the final piece will be about 15cm (6 inches) long with the lower part and tip having been discarded. The twig should be about pencil thickness as this is easier to handle. A range of scions will be available at grafting courses.

FOR THE SCION EXCHANGE (“TWIG SWAP”) PLEASE BRING PREPARED SCIONS AS ABOVE, NOT BRANCHES OF TREES. ALSO ENSURE THAT THE BUNDLE IS TIED TOGETHER WITH THE NAME OF THE VARIETY ATTACHED.

Hilary Dodson

Teaching garden sites - our Chairman reports:

After a break for Christmas, work starts again in mid January: please see the Diary for dates up to the end of March. Work in the gardens is weather dependent, but there is shelter at both sites. Detailed reports for the two gardens follow.

Dewhurst Road teaching garden

This site is now very well established and providing a good range of top fruit. In the reference orchard of apples, most trees produced some fruit. Many of the unknowns also had fruit which enabled them to be checked to see if they were known varieties. In the event many appear to be unique. The large crop meant that we had plenty of apples to produce apple juice.

It has been a remarkable year for both pears and plums. Many of the pear trees produced their first crop of fruit and it was a steep learning curve to know when to pick them. The next challenge was to know when to eat them. Several varieties were left on the tree for too long and so had gone brown inside before we tasted them. Hopefully we will have crops of pears again in the future and we will know when to pick and when to eat them. Similarly there was a good set of plums. River's Early Prolific was, as its name suggests, prolific and we had many fruits to enjoy. The two Transparent Gages also produced a good crop of fruit and it was interesting to see the very different tree forms resulting from the different rootstocks. The sad thing about the plums is that five of the trees died in spite of having set a fine crop of fruit. The leaves just dried up and the fruit remained as it was, still attached to the branches. The affected trees are in a line across the hillside but I am not sure if this is significant. To try to find out what had happened I dug up one of the trees and found that

the soil was bone dry. Normally this hillside is distinctly wet so it may be that the trees could not adapt to the rapid change from wet to dry. It is now obvious that the roots have not died because there is rootstock growing up from the soil where the dead trees have been left in place.

The gooseberry bushes have been pruned and the jostaberry cut back to try to keep it in check. The newly planted gooseberry cordons all seem to be growing so we should have a fine range of varieties in future.

The four plots where we are looking at the effect of mycorrhiza, double strength wool compost or a liquid feed on soft fruit are continuing. Two of the plots are distinctly overgrown, so the blackcurrant Baldwin was removed from each of the plots and taken to Otley to form part of the edible hedge.

Otley teaching garden

We now know where the rich land is on this plot, and have started to clear some of this from the weeds. Some of the cleared part has been planted with garlic, elephant garlic and winter onions. Another section has been planted with grazing rye to protect the soil over winter. The line of the edible hedge has been established and the Baldwin blackcurrants from Dewhurst Road have been planted in it. There are also some gooseberry bushes and a red currant. This area has the orange netting used around road works to protect it. Blackthorn is being provided by one of our members and some hedging plants have been ordered. The ones chosen are field maple, hazel, hawthorn, dog wood and guelder rose. Some crab apples have also been ordered, with the intention that they should be allowed to grow tall and stand above the rest of the hedge. If you have anything you would like to add, please let us know.

Because I seem to have plenty of cardboard, we are trying the "no dig" method of clearing the land. Some cardboard has been laid and either apple pulp or weeds have been put on top. This area will probably be used to plant soft fruit eventually.

A compost pile has been established and we have access to some stable clearings, so in the long run feed will not be a problem.

Protecting newly planted trees from rabbit attack with the spiral tree guards has worked up to now. Garlic has had wire netting laid on the soil surface and the onions have the orange plastic netting over them. Up to now the rabbits have avoided these areas.

We are still in need of your ideas for the things that you would like to grow on this site.

Hilary Dodson

Grafting Workshops

We are offering two grafting workshops to members this year; the single event last year was oversubscribed. We are restricting the numbers to 10 per session to provide a better experience.

The sessions are at Hampswaite Memorial Hall, see information about the February scion swap and meeting for location detail. The events start at 10.30am and we will finish before 3.00pm. There is a charge to cover the cost of rootstocks and other materials.

The dates are Saturday 10th March and Tuesday 20th March.

When your place is confirmed, you will receive additional information about facilities and equipment.

If you are unable to attend those dates, please let us know your location and availability; we may be running an event for another organisation in your area.

Winter Pruning Courses

A winter pruning course has been arranged for Thursday 25 January 2018 at a small established orchard near Calverley, Leeds. We will start about 10.30am and definitely be finished by 3.00pm. Please let Hilary Dodson know if you are interested in attending.

Other winter pruning courses will be arranged for some time in March at orchards with large mature trees. They will probably be on either a Wednesday or Thursday. Keep an eye on the website or facebook for details.

MEETINGS and SHOWS

November meeting

Rob Gooderidge, Garden Supervisor at The Walled Garden in Ripon spoke on "Its past, present and future". Here's a report.

We were delighted to welcome Rob Gooderidge as our guest speaker after the AGM. The Northern Fruit Group has worked with The Walled Garden in Ripon for a number of years to help renovate and restore their orchard, which Rob described as the 'core' of their organisation, along with

their members. Allegedly some of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland are based on the orchard and it holds a number of rare and unusual varieties of apples, pears and plums, some dating back to when it was planted in 1840.

The Walled Garden provides day care for adults with learning difficulties engaging in a variety of horticultural activities. They are celebrating their 25th anniversary this year and Rob gave an illuminating talk about the history of the site and what their vision for the future is.

In 1835 the first Bishop of Ripon was appointed and the Church of England built a palace to house him, along with a walled garden, orchard, pig sties, dove cote and glasshouses to feed him and his entourage. It was small scale with few employees and gardeners which the Bishop paid for. A later Bishop moved in to Ripon in 1940 and Barnados Girls School was evacuated to the Palace in the war. Barnados bought the estate in 1946 and set up a school in the palace. The garden fed the school until the mid 1960's when the head gardener, John Morrison retired.

From 1965 until the late 1980's the garden became derelict and overgrown. At the same time, Barnados was changing and they were accommodating disabled people as well as orphans. The palace became unsuitable for their needs and was sold as housing, but they kept the garden as horticulture was becoming a 'fashionable' therapy. The project started with members from the school and in 1992 it opened up to adults with learning difficulties. The garden and orchard was relatively unknown to the outside world but Ernie from the NFG discovered the orchard and set about identifying some of the apple trees in there.

In 2005, The Walled Garden became part of Ripon Community Link and Rob started working there during the school holidays and liked it so much he left teaching altogether after a few years! The emphasis of the organisation also changed due to funding regimes and they had to become more financially viable and create revenue streams. Plant sales, garden contracts, a shop, café and visitor centre all contributed to this. But it was felt the orchard and gardens were still being neglected - much of the time was spent maintaining other peoples gardens which left no time to look after their core assets. Over the past couple of years, garden contracts have given way to utilising the site for the members (56 at present with ages ranging from 14 to 72) and other organisations such as mainstream and special schools.

As well as 2017 being the 25th anniversary, The Walled Garden became owners of the site on the 9th of October. They have ambitious plans to create an even more beautiful place for visitors to come with more activities for an increased number of members. But it will retain its wow factor of being a calm and peaceful place to be.

Rachel Benson

The Walled Garden is open to visitors 10.00am to 4.00pm, and the café from 10.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Saturday (7 days a week for Christmas tree sales from end of November). The shop stocks apple juice and preserves made with produce from the garden. It is located on Palace Road, the road between Ripon and Masham, on the left hand side past the golf course.

If you would like to support their work, you can find details of how to make a donation on their website:

www.riponwalledgarden.org

or call 01765 609229 for a copy of their appeal booklet.

SHOWS PAST

Apple Event

The annual Apple Event was held at Harlow Carr garden, from October 11 to 14, 2017.

First of all, thank you to all who helped with setting up, identifying, filling out requests for identifying, fielding questions, selling produce, and making tea/coffee, not forgetting dismantling displays and taking all the apples away for juicing. Thank you one and all.

People still seem to need apples identifying, there are still old orchards but many more Aldi /Lidl specials, modern varieties wrongly labelled.

In total 114 people brought 205 apples to be identified, plus some NFG members seeking verification of their opinion on apples from other Apple Days. I informed 23 people about the apples they had left for further study.

A total of £509.75 was raised, mostly from the sale of apples, fruit juice and jams (£382.75), the remainder being donations (£85) and three membership renewals.

Margaret Drury

SHOWS TO COME

The time to put in applications for places at shows seems to get earlier and earlier: for the Harrogate Spring Show and RHS Show Tatton Park, they had to be in before the end of November. The application for the Great Yorkshire Show has also been sent. So what are we intending?

Harrogate Spring Show 2018

The Show runs from 26th to 29th April and setting up will be on Tuesday 24th and the morning of Wednesday 25th April. Please put these dates in you diary and come along to help. Details in the next Newsletter.

The idea that I have for this display is under the title of "My Backyard". It will be mainly fruit trees, hopefully in bloom, but will also include some pots of brightly coloured flowers to give impact to the display. If possible, the flowers will be in interesting containers, so please let us know if you have anything along these lines. Any ideas for interesting containers for the trees will be welcome.

Great Yorkshire Show 2018

This show runs from Tuesday 10th until Thursday 12th July, with setting up on Sunday 8th and Monday 9th July.

We rely on the harvest of soft fruit to stage this display and once again ideas are needed and welcome. This is a very interesting show to attend as there are all the other attractions such as the horses, cattle, sheep and pigs as well as the forestry skills. Make a note in you diary.

RHS Show Tatton Park 2018

This show runs from Wednesday 18th to Sunday 22nd July so setting up is on Monday 16th and Tuesday 17th July.

As you will see from the dates above there is a quick turn round from the Great Yorkshire so even more help is needed.

Hilary Dodson

TWENTY YEARS OF NEWSLETTERS

The first Northern Fruit Group Newsletter was published twenty years ago, in January 1998. It had 12 pages, the same logo on the front cover that we use today but in black and white, was edited by Diana Davis, and contained a mix of items not dissimilar to the current issue you are now reading.

In an article on the Development of the Newsletter, the first Editor wrote:

“It is proposed to issue the Newsletter quarterly and to develop it to include articles, reports and notes on any topic relating to fruit.”

After listing no less than sixteen areas of likely interest, she continued: *“The Newsletter can only develop and become interesting if the membership takes an active part and sends in material. Your committee would be delighted if every member felt able to make a contribution, in due course, however small. Articles, notes, recipes and problems should be sent to the Editor.”*

The present Editor can only say ‘hear hear’ to that, and hope that Diana, who is still a member, approves of the efforts of her successors to continue her legacy. We have at least continued to issue the Newsletter quarterly without a break for all those 20 years.

Incidentally, the annual subscription in 1998 was £3.00.

FRUIT GARDEN FREE TO A GOOD HOME

Would you like to take over the care of a small established fruit garden in the Calverley area of Leeds, from an OAP?

There are apples, plums and cherries. There is also a rootstock stool bed and some soft fruit. It is in need of TLC.

Roy.

If you think you could give Roy a hand, please contact the Editor, and we will put you in touch.

A Smallholder Writes . . .

No 7

NFG member James Ellson writes a blog about his smallholding
<http://jamesellson.blogspot.co.uk/>



What's the point of pears?

They all look the same, they all taste the same and they don't store well.

This year, however, I was converted. I also found out that they do have a point – a historical one.

My epiphany took place at the end of a cold rainy Dewhurst session – at the close of the Summer. (Dewhurst, for years now, has reliably provided good weather every Wednesday, irrespective of the forecast, the rest of the week, and what it's doing on my, Hayfield, side of the Pennines.) This year it was different and we suffered on Wednesdays.

So there I was, sitting in my car, engine on, heater on, mug of marmite in my hands, ready to drive away. My car boot was full of wet and claggy waterproofs and tools.

Hilary approached, bearing gifts.

I wound down the window. She handed me three pears. 'Try those. Don't keep them too long. Weekend at the latest.' As she walked away, I was already plotting, currying favour with my wife, Sarah. (While I'd been swanning around at Dewhurst she'd been hard grafting in Manchester with impossible deadlines, interminable meetings, and difficult staff.) I drove home, bearing black kale and perfect blushing raspberries.

On Friday, I looked at Hilary's pears. After a while of concentrated thought, I dredged up their name. *Louise Bonne de Jersey*. I sliced one open for my lunch, like the fool at Henry VIII's table. If it wasn't any good, then I'd eat all three myself.

The flesh was white and creamy. Blemish free. I took a bite as I read a magazine. I stopped reading. The flesh melted in my mouth. It was exquisite. I took another bite. Golden, honeyed flesh. I pushed away the

magazine. Finished the pear. Every morsel, only the stalk and the pips remained on the plate. I now had a new dilemma: did I love Sarah enough?

Before I answer that, I will make my historical case for pears.

In the 1860s, a new style of dining came to prominence in British high society: dining *à la Russe*, dining in the Russian style. Rather than all food being put on the table at the start of the meal, food was served in different courses (like it is today). The increasing variety and quality of pears helped to define these courses. Fruit regularly formed the centrepiece of the table. In addition (in England) the dessert course was often of fruit alone. (In France sweets were still popular.) Dividing fruit into ‘dessert’ and ‘culinary’ varieties originated from this period.

There was huge competition amongst landowners to present the most opulent, the most attractive, the most delicious dessert, and huge expense was made to try and achieve this. A large country estate was needed, along with several glasshouses and a small army of gardeners. Strawberries and grapes were grown, along with peaches, passion fruit and pineapples.

The pear was a star performer.

In ‘The Book of Pears’ Joan Morgan highlights *Doyenne d’Ete*, ‘a tiny honeyed mouthful’, the ‘golden’ *Williams Bon Chretien*, the ‘syrupy sweet’ *Fondant d’Automme*, *Beurre Suerfin* ‘which overflowed with lemony juice’, and the ‘finely textured, vanilla-scented’ *Doyenne Du Comice*.

Buoyed up by these revelations I decided to re-visit the shape of pears. I looked up some notes I took at a pear ID course a couple of years ago. Pears do have different shapes, and although to many this maybe debatable, they do have wonderful names for the shapes. Bergamot, conical, pyriform, calebasse. Wonderful to write, and to say, and to know.

So, pears have plenty of point: pleasing names for their different shapes, exquisite taste and historical significance. I, at least, will be grafting more pears in March.

And if you’re hanging on, wondering, of course I shared the two remaining *Louise Bonne*.

FRUIT WE DON’T GROW: MANGO

This column was intended to look at fruits that we commonly eat but don’t grow in Britain (except possibly in the great glass houses of stately

homes). Not much point in discussing the finer points of, say, jackfruit, bullock's heart, or calamondin, when you never see them.

On this basis, I had ruled out the mango. Yes, you do see it in supermarkets, but if you've ever eaten a real mango, in a country where it's grown, you will know what a travesty our supermarket offerings are. "Ripe and ready to eat" says the label. Rubbish, "picked too soon, for ease of transportation, and never likely to ripen" is nearer the truth. Mangoes need sunshine. Britain doesn't have sunshine; not that kind of sunshine anyway. The refugee mangoes languish in the dull cold, remain hard and tasteless, and are much better avoided.

So there the matter rested, until member George Baker sent me some recipes (which follow) using tinned mango pulp. Although not a great fan of tinned fruit (is there no end to my grumbles?), I do nonetheless enjoy mango pulp: it doesn't give quite the same pleasure as sucking on a mango stone while the juice runs down to your elbow, but the taste is good, and pretty authentic. So mango of sorts is available, and makes it into the column on that basis.

Not only do mangoes need warmth, they need space. The trees grow up to 35 to 40 metres tall, with a crown radius of 10 meters. Soil depth permitting, the [taproot](#) descends up to 6 metres, with profuse, wide-spreading feeder roots. And mangoes are long-lived; some specimens still fruit after 300 years. Not your average English garden fruit then.

The mango belongs to the family *Anacardiaceae*, of which only a few members grow in temperate climates, including sumac and poison ivy. Yes, the mango has some nasty relatives, and does itself produce a resinous sap which can cause an itchy rash in sensitive people. It can also produce a characteristic smell which at its worst resembles turpentine.

Mangoes are native to South Asia, from where the 'common mango' or 'Indian mango', *Mangifera indica*, has been distributed worldwide to become one of the most widely cultivated fruits in the tropics: this is the variety most often found in British supermarkets. Other *Mangifera* species are grown on a more localised basis: Philippine mangoes, yellow and kidney shaped, (and in my opinion the world's best fruit) may sometime be available from Chinese supermarkets.

Should you be tempted by a whole mango and not have tackled one before, here's how. The skin is inedible, and the stone is large and fibrous and will not be easily dislodged: methods used for, say, peaches, simply do not work. Lay the fruit on its side, and take off a long fat slice on each side, as close to the stone as you can get. Skin the remaining centre piece and scrape off as much flesh as you can with a knife. Or simply suck the

stone, getting bits of fibre stuck in your teeth - not recommended in polite company!

In fact, the whole exercise is so messy that there is a lot to be said for the tinned pulp, so after all that -

Here are George's recipes:

Mango pulp can be bought in the supermarket. During Ramadan is best because it is often cheaper than the rest of the year. The usual package size is an 850gm tin of sweetened mango pulp. I hope to pay a pound when it is on offer. The tin usually contains about 90 - 92% pulp. The main varieties listed on labels are Kesar, Chaunsa and Alphonso which is usually the most expensive. But how do you know what is in the tin? It does not matter to me, I buy the cheapest-- but am picky about apples and pears, but tinned they are hard to tell apart.

Mango Ice Cream

8oz pulp
4 oz double cream
1 desert-spoon gin

Whisk to get it as fluffy as you can, Put it in a freezer. Get it out 30 minutes before you want to eat it. The alcohol restricts the size of the ice crystals so it is creamy. Makes 3 helpings.

Mango sorbet (well slurry really)

7oz pulp
2 desert-spoon gin

Whisk to get it as fluffy as you can, Put it in a freezer for 1 hour, Whisk again put back in the freezer. Makes 2 helpings.

ANOTHER 'FRUIT' WE DON'T GROW

An article from 20 years ago

I worry occasionally that I stray too far from my editorial brief in writing about fruit that we don't grow, so I was delighted to find this

article in the very first issue of the Newsletter. It seems that I follow an honourable tradition!

In celebration of our 20 years of publication each issue of the Newsletter in 2018 will bring you an item from the corresponding issue in 1998. Ed.

Monkey Puzzle Fruits (*Araucaria araucana*)

A note from member Robert Pemberton

Joyce Payne, in a recent article (Bulletin of the Yorkshire Naturalists Union, no 28, 1997) noted a fruiting Monkey Puzzle tree in Cawood. A brief survey of the lower Ouse and Wharfe areas yielded 23 trees of which three bore fruit.

The male and female stroboli (catkin-like structures) are normally borne on separate plants, but occasionally on different branches of the same tree. Pollination is by wind and the globose cones, 11 - 18 cm in length, take 3 years to mature, finally breaking up on the tree. Since the trees usually occur singly, the opportunity for fruiting is uncommon in Britain.

In its native Chile, the roasted nuts are regarded as a delicacy. Joyce Payne sampled the long brown nuts she collected, both raw and roasted, but found them inedible. There are no references to the edibility of British Monkey Puzzle nuts in Bean (Trees and Shrubs Hardy in the British Isles) and it would be interesting to learn of any members' experience with fruiting trees.

In response, the then Editor (better informed than the current one) wrote:

The pine kernels use in European cuisine are from the Stone Pine (*Pinus pinea*) of the Mediterranean region, traditionally used in Italy in soups and ragouts; they are also used in confectionary and vegetarian foods. Seeds of other pines are eaten in various parts of the world: *Pinus cembra* in Switzerland, *Pinus sibirica* in Russia, *Pinus cembroides* in Mexico and SW America, *Pinus gerardiana* in the Himalayan region.

In the Monkey Puzzle genus, seeds of *Araucaria angustifolia* are eaten in Brazil, and of *Araucaria bidwillii* in Queensland. (Information from Nicholson, Harrison, Masefield and Wallis, Illustrated Book of Food Plants).

And a final thought: Joyce Payne was luckier that the chap who attracted the Fruit Novice's attention by sampling cherry 'seeds'.

BIG SEED

Following on from the Fruit Novice's interest in the matter, and the article above, here's some further seedy information.

The world's biggest seed belongs to the coco de mer palm (*Lodoicea maldivica*): its fruit usually contains just one seed, which can weigh as much as 19 kilos.

It only grows on two islands in the Seychelles, and was identified in 1768. It was traded across the Indian Ocean as a curio, and for use in Indian medicine.

The name *Lodoicea* is a Latinised form of Louis, in honour of a reigning monarch of the time, Louis XV of France. *Maldivica* refers to the mistaken assumption that cocos were native to the Maldives. In fact they blew there across a thousand miles of ocean from the Seychelles.

For many years, the Linnaean name was *Lodoicea callipyge*, the second word being translated (reasonably politely) as having a lovely bottom, referring to the seed's resemblance to the said body part.

Originally "seedy" described something fruitful or abundant, but by the mid 18th century it had become a term of disparagement, meaning shabby, as in a plant that has 'gone to seed'.

BRITISH APPLE BOOM BRINGS BACK HUNDREDS OF FORGOTTEN VARIETIES

This may be 'preaching to the converted', but it was interesting to see a piece in a recent Guardian on rescuing heritage apples. Thanks to member Ken Haigh for bringing it to our attention. Ed

Britain is enjoying a remarkable apple boom, as hundreds of new community orchards revive lost varieties and contribute to a thriving heritage market.

According to Steve Oram, who is the apple diversity officer at the wildlife charity [People's Trust for Endangered Species](#): “We are adding new orchards to the register all the time. Some are in allotments, others in schools and even housing developments. After the postwar years of neglect and destruction, when 90% of the UK's orchards were lost and supermarkets sold only a few varieties and imported 70 to 80% of their apples, it is very exciting.”

[The Newquay community orchard](#) in Cornwall was started in 2015 with a £66,000 crowdfunding appeal. More than 2,000 trees, including 120 local heritage varieties, have been planted on land donated by the Duchy of Cornwall.

“It has been a huge success so far,” says operations manager Natalie Frost. “We have 300 volunteers and employ seven people – we haven't even had a harvest yet. There's a huge resurgence of people wanting to engage with nature. We find it is attracting schoolchildren, retirees, people from all parts of the community.”

Other community orchards are proving so popular they are being robbed of their harvest, possibly to supply the fast-growing “craft” cider market.

“Two weeks ago ... someone got on to one orchard site with a truck and cleared every tree of the pear apple variety,” says David Curry from Plymouth who works with more than 20 community orchards “They left the rest. The pear apple is a lovely juicy, sweet apple. They knew what they were doing.”

The big growers say community orchards have found a niche. “There is a great interest now in growing heritage varieties. We are seeing a lot of small community orchards being planted with 100-odd trees,” says James Simpson, chair of trade body [English Apples and Pears](#) and one of Britain's biggest apple growers. “These are starting to generate fruit and are supplying the growing heritage apple markets.”

Tom Adams, a young orchardist from Weston Rhyn, near Oswestry, Shropshire, who works with the [Marcher Apple network](#) of apple enthusiasts, is one of a growing number of apple detectives who are helping to track down and revive varieties of the fruit which were thought to have been lost for good.

He cites the case of bright yellow apples found on an old tree in a neglected orchard in south Shropshire. The single tree was an ecological and historical mystery: no one knew when it was planted and there was no mention of it in the national fruit collection of more than 2,200 apple varieties.

“It was probably 100 years old and the only one of its kind left. It was a lost variety. Its DNA was tested and it was shown to be unique,” said Adams. The tree is one of more than 60 “lost” varieties which have been found growing near the Welsh border. After several years of research it was last year identified as a Bringewood pippin, first bred in the early 19th century by horticulturalist Thomas Andrew Knight. All 60 varieties have now been saved.

The Marcher group is part of a burgeoning movement of growers and enthusiasts using old books and modern DNA testing to identify, propagate, and popularise Britain’s wealth of rare apples. Many, like Adams, who grows more than [50 varieties](#), are also selling heritage trees.

“They are finding, protecting and naming hundreds of apple varieties,” says Oram. “There are possibly thousands more varieties waiting to be discovered. Many were never recorded by the authorities or commercial growers but were grown by farmers, smallholders and households. We know of 924 varieties being grown which are not registered at [Brogdale](#) but there are probably hundreds more. About 300 are cider varieties.”

Some of those found have no names; others are being named after the person or place they were found or what they look like. New names added recently include Halfpenny Green B, Link Wonder, Nancy Crow and Burr Knot.

Sue Clifford, founder of the [Common Ground](#) environment group, which launched a movement to save traditional orchards nearly 30 years ago, and came up with the idea of an annual apple day, says apple awareness is now high and a corner may have been turned.

“Until quite recently, every farm, country house and suburban garden had its own collection of fruit trees. We lost nearly all these old orchards in the 1970s and 80s. We are in a far better place than we were then, but we were starting at a very low point.

“It is astonishing how people have picked up the idea of planting small orchards. There is much more planting now, a growing urban and rural movement and a resurgence of interest in ciders. Community orchards are becoming very important to places, and people are rightly proud of them. Apple Day has become a new harvest festival.

“But supermarkets were always the problem and they still are. Only one in three apples we eat comes from the UK, and they are still selling apples from Australia. They are just not thinking. They could do much better.”

BRITISH BITES

- **Colwall Quoining**: Dessert apple named after a village near Malvern, Worcestershire. It has angular ridges – ‘quoining’ refers to its corners – and crisp, coarse flesh with a sweet, nutty flavour. Green with splashes of red. Available January to October.
- **Pig’s Nose Pippin** : Named after its flattish top, resembling a pig’s snout. It has a sweet and aromatic flavour. Available mid-October.
- **Byford Wonder** : Yellowish flesh and a sharp and aromatic flavour. Available in October.
- **Ten Commandments** : Red apple ready late September. Its name refers to the 10 red spots that feature around the core – visible when sliced in half.
- **Brithmawr Forester** : A South Wales apple that can be used for cooking, eating fresh or cider. Ready for picking from mid-September.

Abridged from an article by John Vidal in The Guardian, Saturday 21 October 2017

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC?

Do you open your garden or orchard to the public under the National Garden Scheme, or similar charitable fund raising arrangement? Provided it includes enough fruit growing to make it of interest to our members, we would be happy to advertise your opening the April Newsletter.

Please send details of your location, opening date and times, and a few lines of description, to the Editor, contact details on page 2.

NEW APRICOT COMPACTA - A SELLOUT

Frank P Matthews' compact Apricot 'Compacta' sold out after Monty Don plugged it on BBC Gardeners' World in one of the last shows in the 2017 season. Other growers reported a similar rush in sales.

An “exciting new introduction for 2017” Apricot ‘Compacta’ is a naturally short self-fertile variety that produces lots of tasty orange fruit. It is slow growing, and very compact, particularly suitable for buckets for balconies and terraces. Ideal when grown in a sheltered sunny spot, apricot compact has low sensitivity to late frosts; however, winter protection is recommended for buckets. During blossoming, it is slightly susceptible to *Monilia*.

Frank P Matthews says this is part of a wider trend towards compact fruit trees. They said: "We have sold out. It's a very popular tree anyway and this has given it a boost. We've had a few calls this morning. It's not unknown for Gardeners' World to put something in and for it to sell very quickly. It happened with an Asian pear a year or two ago. People are looking for smaller trees for smaller gardens so they don't get out of control and don't take too much management."

They said one drawback of smaller trees was smaller fruit.

The HTA National Plant Show winner *Malus sieboldii* Aros, another compact fruit tree, has also sold out. Frank P Matthews said it was difficult to gauge how many to grow of new varieties so there were 500 of the *Malus* and 200 of the Apricot available. They said it was unusual for them to sell out so early in the season and they would not be available again until August 2018.

Buckingham Garden Centre's Chris Day said he had been asked by customers to source more of the tree but has to wait until next year.

OLD ORCHARDS: SOME DETECTIVE STORIES

**Anne Lee follows the trail of progress (or otherwise) in orchards
tended by Ernest Oddy**

Recent Discoveries at Newby Hall near Ripon

In Victorian times fruit, other than that for personal consumption, was grown for market, or to supply the needs of country house estates. These latter were nearly self-sufficient communities for which food was provided by the home farm, vegetable plots in walled gardens and fruit from their own orchards. Little now remains of our fruit heritage. The popular demand for a limited number of varieties, uniform and unblemished, meant that imports proved more profitable than home-grown.

C19th head gardeners were keenly interested in cultivating fruit for exhibition, where they competed to win awards. It is in their relict orchards that we can expect to find rarities. At country houses taken over by the National Trust decaying old fruit trees tended to be removed to make car parks, but without keeping any record of what varieties had been grown. Where orchards have been re-introduced at NT properties, it has been done by guesswork, for instance at Riddlesden Hall with reference to a list of Yorkshire apples.

At Newby Hall I estimate that about half of the original Victorian orchard and wall-trained trees survive, a collection of over 80 different cultivars. Many are at their 'last gasp', because, unlike woodland trees, fruit is soft wood and they are 'managed' trees, so do not have a life-expectancy of more than about 120-150 years. The identification task has thus proved to be something of a race against time.

The Newby detective story started in 1999, when Margaret Drury enquired of the staff whether they had any fruit trees on the estate and was informed 'a few'. The late Ernest Oddy ('Prof Apple'), Margaret, Terry and myself joined then head gardener, Chris Jakeman, to investigate these 'few'. We found nearly 300 old fruit trees - well more than the morning's work we had anticipated.

From the start the identification proved to be a challenge (an understatement!), because we found so many we never encounter in our northern orchards. At that time we had no reference collection, such as Hilary Wilson's at Helmsley Walled Garden, or websites such as the National Fruit Collection and Fruit ID. In the Indian Summer of 1999, Ernest and I progressed through the orchard day after day, leaving behind us a trail of apple cores (purely for tasting tests, you understand). We repeated the exercise in succeeding years. Newby proved a learning experience for me, but I didn't anticipate that it would still be ongoing 18 years later - the past six seasons without Ernest.

We sent samples to the identification services at the NFC and RHS Wisley, and paid fees, but without success. The breakthrough came with an NFG visit to John Hemsall's heritage collection near Newark, where I was able to verify a number, including *Christmas Pearmain*, *Sandringham*, *Beauty of Stoke* and *Hambleton Deux Ans*.

Evidence has recently been uncovered that tells a story of a 'new' orchard being introduced at Newby Hall in the late 1890s. Apples were planted outside the walled garden on the east, west and south as far down as the river Ure. More tender plums were put in the lower half of the walled garden and gages, pears and apricots trained on the walls. We were

told that the area below the present restaurant was given over to soft fruit bushes. Grapes were grown in the glasshouse with the blocked arches, through which the vines established in a well-manured outside bed, were trained. At the eastern end of the top south-facing wall were nectarines and peaches - all now gone, but their residual lead labels testify to what was there.

Robin Compton, the late owner of Newby Hall, told Ernest that the oldest surviving orchard, replacing an even earlier one near the Home Farm, had been planted in the 1890s (presumably by his grandfather). Last December, while looking through the old estate ledgers, the present head gardener, Mark Jackson, came across a reference to a payment made in 1897 to G. Bunyard & son, Royal Nurseries, Maidstone, Kent, for the sum of £216.6s.6d (about £20,000 at today's value?). Bunyard was then one of the nation's most prestigious fruit tree suppliers (and if it was good enough for Queen Victoria...). So was this a record of an order for fruit trees? Mark did an internet search for Bunyard and found their 1897/8 catalogue on Cornell University Library website. Comparison with Bunyard's list and Newby's old trees gives a good correlation.

Verification has emerged this year. The story retraces to 2012 when I managed to get graft scions from an unidentified dying tree, the only one of its kind in the orchard, literally minutes before contractors felled it with their chain saws. Philip Rainford grafted them and this year they fruited. We identified it as *Bow Hill Pippin* and Jim Arbury, keeper of the fruit plantations at RHS Wisley agrees. When I checked *Bow Hill Pippin* with Bunyard's catalogue I discovered it was new to them, which meant that it would have been obtainable exclusively from Bunyards. It was impossible for nurserymen to patent their stock, but they jealously guarded their introductions from poaching for as many years as possible.

I then checked to see if any other of Newby's old varieties were described by Bunyard as 'new' to them. They included *Vicar of Beighton*, *Hambling's Seedling* and *Lady Sudeley*. The last, a delicious dessert, eventually became widely known. Newby's *Hambling's Seedling* was hollow, blew down in a gale and was swept away in a flood, but fortuitously Ernest had grafted it. It's now a thriving tree, produces an enormous crop of huge green baking apples, but never became popular because it is prone to bitterpit. I can find only one reference to *Vicar of Beighton* in any of the old books - by Taylor in *Apples of England*, 1946. Taylor says it is available from one nursery, but doesn't say which one. It suggests that other nurserymen had considered it not worth adding to their lists.

Where else in the north would we find a Bunyard orchard? Newby's rare heritage fruit collection may be of greater historical significance than we first realised.

With support from the NFG, Hilary Dodson and a team of volunteers, along with Lucinda Compton, Mark Jackson and Steve Williams, the orchardist on the staff, are engaged in a restoration project to conserve what remains; raise trees from grafts, and plant other varieties such as *Ribston Pippin*. All the 'baby' trees put in have been staked, fenced and labelled. Steve is keeping the records. Philip has offered to provide *Bow Hill Pippin* scions for Hilary to graft so it will 'come home' to Newby.

Anne Lee

Newby Hall is an 18th-century country house situated beside the River Ure at Skelton-on-Ure, near Boroughbridge in North Yorkshire. It is a Grade I listed building and contains a collection of furniture, painting and precious artefacts. The south side of the grounds, by the river, has extensive herbaceous borders and woodland walks. Also Grade I listed are the Georgian stable block, leased as offices, and the Church of Christ the Consoler.

Newby Hall is open to the public from 21 March until 1 October. Opening hours vary, check their website for details.

JUNEBERRIES

Writing in the Guardian earlier this year, James Wong, who describes himself as a botanist obsessed with food, enthused about the juneberry.

“Juneberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia* and *A lamarckii*) trees burst into life (in spring), with every tip of their thin, black branches topped with rosettes of delicate white flowers. But unlike most spring blossom, these easy-to-grow trees are a horticultural gift that keeps on giving. For after the flowers come little bunches of tasty, dark purple berries that look much like blackcurrants (hence the name juneberry). These crops are pretty substantial too, and start appearing even on 60cm-high saplings. Indeed, given their popularity as an edible crop in their native Canada, where they are known by the indigenous name “saskatoons”, I am surprised how little they are mentioned in the fruit section of British gardening books.

I first discovered them in the form of tinned pie filling in a Vancouver supermarket and have been making my own pies, jams and jellies from the fruit in my garden ever since. Add a handful to a bottle of gin, along with a generous dose of sugar and, you'll thank me come the autumn.

But the appeal of the juneberry doesn't end there. In autumn their leaves erupt into beautiful shades of orangey reds and salmon pinks to round up the season with a bang. All this on a tree small enough to fit into even the tiniest urban gardens – my tree is just 3m high after nearly 10 years, yet has the sculptural shape of a much larger species.

It is not surprising that this is the tree of choice for designers of chic, postage stamp-sized gardens. They are also widely available and accessibly priced. Bonus! Flowers, fruit, autumn interest and easy to grow? It's spring blossom with benefits.

Abridged version of an article by James Wong which appeared in the Guardian on March 26, 2017.

Intrigued, I looked for more information: most of the following comes from the websites of Pershore Juneberries, who market the fruit, and Yorkshire company Orange Pippin Ltd, one of the commercial suppliers of juneberry trees.

They are a popular Canadian berry and are packed with more antioxidants than blueberries. They have a wide range of culinary uses, from pies, jams, jellies, and ice-cream, to vinaigrettes and cocktail syrups. Most commercial production in the UK is sold to specialist restaurants.

James Wong says “their flavour is similar to a blueberry or blackberry, only much sweeter and with a less watery, more crisp texture similar to an apple or pear, to which they are related”, whereas Sophie Sidaway of Pershore Juneberries suggests they “taste like a cross between cherries and almonds”.

Juneberries belong to the genus *Amelanchier* which is found across Europe, Asia, and North America. In Europe, Amelanchiers are primarily grown for their attractive spring blossom and the autumnal tints of their leaves, and are commonly known as Snowy Mespilus. The fruiting species *Amelanchier alnifolia* originates from the western regions of North America, and was well-known to native Americans. Today they are grown commercially in central Canada, including around the city of Saskatoon in the province of Saskatchewan, hence the Canadian name for them: saskatoons.

Juneberries are often compared to blueberries, since the fruits look similar, but they are not berries, being more closely related to crab-apples. They are also much easier to grow than blueberries. The bush-like trees are very cold-hardy and will grow in most well-drained soils, but avoid clay or water-logged soils. They prefer neutral or slightly acidic conditions, but will tolerate slightly alkaline soils. The flowers, which appear during May, are susceptible to frost damage, so avoid planting in areas prone to late frosts. Perhaps the key requirement for successful juneberry production in the UK is that they should be planted in a sheltered situation in full sun. This is not surprising, given the origins of this species in the intense sunshine of the western states of North America.

In UK conditions juneberries are likely to grow to about 2m - 3m tall, with a similar spread, and will start bearing after 3-4 years. They are grown from seed on their own roots (i.e. not grafted). Fruit production on a mature bush is likely to be 2kg-4kg. The fruits follow quickly after the blossom - hence the name - although in most parts of the UK the fruits are more likely to ripen in July. Like cherries, they are attractive to birds, so it helps to net the fruit. All Juneberries are reliably self-fertile but will crop more heavily if several bushes of different varieties are planted together.

Does any member have experience of growing juneberries which they could share with us? Ed

AND FINALLY:

Christmas compost

Did a large tin of Quality Street feature in your family Christmas? The Which? Gardening magazine for December reports that the wrappers are compostable, so pop them in your compost bin and not your litter bin. Well done, Quality Street!

Nespresso coffee machines may also have appeared under many a Christmas tree. The same source says that many third party brands now make Nespresso compatible coffee capsules that are claimed to be compostable, though they have no information as yet on how successfully they break down.

My thanks to all contributors for their help in preparing this edition of the Newsletter. Ed

The next Newsletter will be circulated in April 2018. All contributions welcome, to the editor please by March 10.

If you would like to receive your Newsletter in electronic rather than paper form, please tell the Membership Secretary.



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