

The Parish Pump

The Journal of the Marden Society

July 2010

The Brogdale Fruit Collections

So what is Brogdale? Ted Hobday, a guide there, told us about the National Fruit Collection which is held there, just south of Faversham. It is a 150-acre farm with the largest collection in the world of different varieties of fruit and, just like Noah's Ark; it holds 2 of each variety.



- Apples – 2200 (650 are British) * Pears – 550 * Grapes – 100
- Soft fruit – 400 * Plums – 351 * Cherries – 321 * Cobnuts – 40
- Quince – 19 * Medlars – 5

They reckon that they have the best land for fruit growing (better even than Marden!), as they have good soil on top of chalk and get the North winds in winter, which sends the trees/bushes to sleep when they need it. So is that the remedy for a good night's sleep?

Ted took us through the names of our “Cherry Orchard” estate.

- Roundel - a mid season, red cherry from Kent
- Napoleon - a white (red on yellow), late cherry from Kent
- Merchant - an early dark red cherry from Cambridgeshire
- Stella - a late, dark red cherry from Canada
- Sunburst - another late, dark red cherry from Canada

Fruit can be deliberately propagated or many varieties come from sports. A pip may be spat out and mutate. Golden Delicious came from an orchard in California. We have some locally named fruit with a Diamond plum from Brenchley and a Farleigh damson. (see picture)

The very early nurseries have several fruit named after them – Early Rivers and Laxtons are two of them.

There is no need for special trees to cross pollinate each other here in Marden as there are enough orchards around for this purpose. Also, Britain is the only place to differentiate between cooking and dessert apples.

The Bloody Ploughman has an interesting story attached to its name. A ploughman from Perthshire was scrumping, not only for himself but, to sell to others. Caught by the gamekeeper he was shot and killed. The widow was even



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given the apples, which she threw out in disgust. However a new apple grew and was given the memorable name. We only got Cox's Orange Pippins because Richard Cox made his money brewing ale and retired to his hobby of growing apples. Many apples have been crossbred from Coxes. The Braeburn apple was just found growing in New Zealand and the Bramley apple grew from a sport found in Southwell. Here we celebrated its 100th birthday by planting one in the churchyard. Only 5% of trials are successful.



Brogdale is funded by DEFRA. Trees have to be repropagated every 25 years, with the ground then left fallow for 6/7 years. If you wish to buy a tree from there, you will be consulted about where you live and what sort of root stock you wish to have, according to the size of your garden. Tours are available and are most popular at blossom time and tasting time.

The Marden Vineyard Tour

The June Vineyard and Winery tour by Nick Hall saw around 40/50 people joining in – many not Marden Society members, but it was good to see such interest.

Nick took us round one of his vineyards and explained the process of culture and harvesting, followed by a look round the winery. A very high tech business, very strictly controlled, which the group followed with interest.

The evening rounded off by either 14 going to The Unicorn for a meal, or some others going to The Tandoori.

Many thanks to Nick for his time – everyone enjoyed the evening, and we were lucky enough to have beautiful weather.

Now with September and the shorter days, the Society kicks off the autumn talks with Angela Mutana on Benjamin Harrison, Ightham Grocer and Archaeologist. Ben was a self-educated man, who left school at 14, but became fascinated by the Neolithic remains he found around Ightham, including Lower and Middle Palaeolithic Stone Age Man.

Angela hopes to bring some of his finds and sketches from the Maidstone Museum. We hope to see many of you at this talk, showing human occupation in Kent as far back as 40,000 years.

MAUREEN CLAYTON

I am trying to compile an e-mail list of Members, as it might prove useful. So if you don't mind my having this, can you e-mail it to me on tillergirl2913@aol.com
Thanks MC

Nick Hall's newsletter contains his report on the visit to Peter Hall's Sainsbury's Concept orchard, by Anna Ford, a Sainsbury's Director. "During her visit Anna was shown the Vineyard and was thrilled by the farming methods we employ and our ambition to create a truly great English sparkling wine. Afterwards we served a classic English tea."

The Formal opening of the John Banks Hall

The evening of 8 July 2010 saw the culmination of the work of The Marden Community Plan when the John Banks Hall was officially opened. Pamela Banks, the wife of the late John Banks performed the ceremony of unveiling the commemorative plaque now permanently placed on the wall. It was, in a way, a bittersweet occasion because John was not there.

The wording on the plaque reads: -

JOHN BANKS HALL

This project has been undertaken due to generous grants from:

Kent County Council
Maidstone Borough Council
Marden Parish Council
Mrs Pamela Banks
Raymond and Blanche Lawson Charitable Trust

The works have comprised of a new hall,
extended porch area
And conversion of the cottage
into office and residential accommodation

Officially opened on the 8th July 2010

By
Mrs Pamela Banks

John Elphick
Treasurer

Graham Tippen
Chairman

Alison Hooker
Secretary



Robert White

Goodbye to a beloved Head teacher.

The Marden Board Schools logbook for July 1908 showed Robert reporting .

1 July Medical Certificate received from Dr H P Ainsworth for W^m. Reader who is suffering from Ringworm. To be excluded for 30 or more days. And on 3 July Robert reports, “Owing to the excessive heat in the playground, the usual Drill Lessons in the 1st & 2nd Classes suspended this afternoon & Geography & Drawing substituted respectively.” On the 7th Albert Barnes (in Standard 2) was also excluded by Medical Certificate for the same reason, Ringworm.

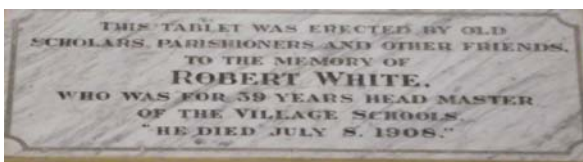
8 July 1908 is Robert’s last entry in the Log Book – “The usual whole holiday given on occasion of the Annual School Treat to the children attending the “Providence” Chapel Sunday School ” He died suddenly, that evening.

A local newspaper carried the report of the inquest, which learned that Mr White was aged 63 years and had been Head for 39 years and had always enjoyed excellent health. On Wednesday he went with his son Charles for a bicycle ride to Boughton, apparently enjoying the spin. On returning he then went to the Vicarage and smoked a cigar with the Rev. R E Johnston, with whom he chatted on parochial affairs generally. He appeared in no way fatigued and, to use the Vicar’s words at the inquest, “commented upon his excellent health and what a pity it was that being so strong and vigorous, in two years time he should have to retire”. On arriving home at about half past ten, he said he thought he had indigestion and sat down to remove his boots. His wife heard a thud and going to him found him lying on the floor. She at once sent for Dr Smart but he was past medical aid. At the inquest on Thursday evening, held by Mr C D Murton, Dr Ainsworth, who had made a post-mortem examination, gave it as his opinion that death was due to heart failure and the jury returned the verdict accordingly.

Robert had been looking forward to the Sunday School trip, which he had helped to organize. His death cast a shadow over the event and indeed, the whole village. The Church was packed for his funeral and his coffin was carried by six former pupils. A Memorial Tablet in the School and his gravestone in the Churchyard were both paid for by public subscription.

His epitaph is shown on the School Memorial shown below; a fitting tribute.

EDITH DAVIS



The Parish Pump is distributed free to Members of The Marden Society every two months



For details of Membership please contact the Membership Secretary Aileen Hill on 01622 831904