

# Winter Newsletter 2012

## Stamford Community Orchard Group

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2012.



'Last year was an excellent one for SCOG. The highlight was when we won the Best Community Section in the Lincolnshire Environmental Awards in July, and this was followed by an excellent and well-attended Apple Day in October.

To reward our achievement in winning the Environmental Award, Stamford Town Council very generously gave us a new piece of land for orchard use. We are now planning to use the site as a mixed orchard to grow local heritage varieties of apples, plums, pears and cherries. Find out more about the new site on page 3.

We have also welcomed several new members to the SCOG management team. As we have grown in size, we are hoping to expand our programme to include new educational activities with local schools, moth trapping at our orchard and fundraising events such as plant sales. In mid-January, we are also holding our first-ever wassailing event, an old custom already practised in many cider-producing areas of England. See our

website or follow us on Facebook to get the latest on this event.

You might not expect us to be doing much at this time of the year, but as well as planning for the coming year, we do routine maintenance work during the dormant winter season. This includes pruning of established young trees at our orchard and preparing the ground for transplanting apple tree stock, which we have propagated in the last couple of years. That reminds me; if YOU are thinking of planting an apple tree, now is the time to do it. You can buy local heritage varieties from us, at only £12.50 a tree. For more details, just email or telephone us using our contact details on the back page.

I wish you all a happy and successful New Year!

Thank you for your continued support.

Max Winslow

Chairman of Stamford Community Orchard Group



## 2011 - ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL APPLE DAY !

The weather was glorious for our eighth Apple Day on 1<sup>st</sup> October, and despite the hot sunny day, which very likely enticed many to the seaside, we had over 1200 visitors in a steady stream throughout the day.

At least 60 visitors brought their own apples to be identified by experts from the East of England Apples and Orchards Project, and several apples were sent away for further analysis. As soon as we hear, we'll let you know if any of them were one of the many 'lost' Stamford apples – a discovery we keep hoping for.

SCOG'S stands included Tombola, apple tasting and sales, advice on growing apple trees, apple juicing, apple games for children, and a display of local school children's poster competition. There were also many always popular commercial stands, including apple juice by Stamford Juice Company, local honey, local cider by Jollydale Cyder, delicious apple products by Country Markets and New Stamford College, fruit tree sales by Russell's Nurseries, and beautiful embroidered fabric apples by local branch of Embroiderer's Guild. We also had display stands by Lincs Wildlife Trust and Stamford Transition Town.

All in all, we and all our volunteers had a fun day and with the number of visitors this year, we can count the day a HUGE SUCCESS. Thank you once again to all our volunteer helpers and the local firms who so generously supported the Apple Day. We could not have done it without you!



Our Apple Gurus were on hand to answer queries on growing fruit trees.



Apple tasting with 16 varieties to try out – great for choosing an apple to suit your taste if you wished to plant a new tree



Our younger visitors loved a chance to pulp and juice their own apples.



Our ever-popular Tombola stand. All prizes were generously donated by local firms.

## Appreciation

Margaret Nicholls, one of our founder members and a Trustee, has regrettably had to resign due to health problems. Margaret served as our Secretary until last year, a position in which she worked tirelessly and beyond the call of duty. Almost single-handedly, she ensured that our group, the orchard, and in particular all of our Apple Days have been a resounding success. Her enthusiasm, efficiency and ability to persuade all manner of people to give us their support will be very much missed. We extend our warmest wishes to Margaret and once again, express our thanks for all her hard work for SCOG.

### New SCOG orchard

On the back of our brilliant win of Best Community Section of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Environmental Awards 2011, Stamford Town Council have very generously given us a strip of allotment land, alongside the Stamford Community Garden, to plant as our second orchard.



SCOG team clearing the site

The site had been covered with brambles which were cleared by the Town Council when they put in a new access road/car park for allotment tenants, thus providing easy access to our new site. On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October, we had a 'clear up' working party to remove rocks, glass and metal in preparation for deep-ploughing the plot. This will allow the frost to get deep into the soil and kill off many of the weeds, leaving the ground ready for planting.

The site measures about 13m x 5m providing enough room for around 20 trees. As a new venture, we have

decided to plant a mixed orchard of apples, pears, plums and cherries. Being sited next to Stamford Community Garden will hopefully strengthen the partnership between the two groups who are both seeking to promote the growing and eating of more fresh, local fruit!

It's a true 'buy-one-get-one-free' offer: visit the Community Garden to learn about vegetable growing and you come across our new fruit orchard, and learn about great work SCOG is doing in seeking out and saving local fruit tree varieties. This should further raise our profile in the local community!

### UPPER CRUST' – one layer or two?



In early America, when cooking ingredients were scarce, cooks only used to put the lower layer of pastry in their apple pies. However, affluent families could afford to have both lower and upper layer, thereby becoming known as the 'Upper Crust'.

### LOCAL APPLE VARIETY

#### Isaac Newton's Tree



Believed to be a variety known as 'Flower of Kent', thought to originate in France. Descended from the original 350 year old tree, found in the garden at

Woolsthorpe Manor. First grafted in 1820 at Belton Nr Grantham, then later at Cambridge Botanic Gardens, East Malling Research Station, and currently at Brogdale Fruit Collection. Extremely rare in cultivation.

Large fruit heavily ribbed, pear-shaped cooking apple. Cooks to a sweet delicately-flavoured puree.

Self-sterile, compatible pollinators include Court Pendu Plat, Crawley Beauty, Edward VII, Royal Jubilee, Carswells Honeydew.

### Important Dates

- Jan 14th- Wassailing event at the Orchard in Christ Church Close at 4pm. This is a First for us!
- Pruning, Moth trapping and Grafting sessions - dates t.b.a.
- October 6th - FREE entry to our Annual Apple Day at the Arts Centre, Stamford.

Follow us on



and



### Farewell



One of our founding members, Jane Peckett, died recently, after a long struggle with cancer. We will miss Jane very much, particularly for her role in organizing and running the children's games and activities at Apple Days where her expertise as a teacher came to the fore. We offer our thanks for her support over the years and our sympathies to her family for their loss.

### Stamford Community Orchard Group

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