

Pressing Pears

Written by John Eager

Monday, 15 October 2007 11:15 - Last Updated Tuesday, 23 October 2007 09:55

The Big Apple weekend saw plenty of people out and about around the Much Marcle area, enjoying the countryside, learning about the apple and pear harvests and helping out in the pressing of the fruits for the production of fruit juices, cider and perry.

This video taken at Hellens at Much Marcle shows Carmel Stephens, Richard White, Richard Kirby and Giles and Alex Charlton, along with members of the public, who were there to watch, learn and help, pressing pears the old fashioned way. About 25 gallons of juice will be extracted from this cheese of pulped pears. Most of the pears were of the softer Blakeney's variety; others included the local, harder Aylton Reds.



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All English apples are derived from the wild crab apple. According to figures from the People's Trust for Endangered Species in the last 50 years orchards in England have declined by almost 60%. This has a damaging affect on the eco-systems that live in and around the orchards that include groups such as lichens, rare plants, birds, insects and small mammals. One particular species under immediate threat is the noble chafer beetle, which depends on old orchards with mature trees of 50 to 80 years in age. Usually seen in July and August this elusive, shiny metallic-green beetle has been spotted recently in orchards in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

To learn more about this beetle follow this link to [ARKive - Images of Life on Earth](#)

The People's Trust for Endangered Species are currently carrying out a two year traditional orchard survey to map England's orchards to raise awareness of bio-diversity in orchards and encourage traditional farming methods to halt the decline of species that live in these habitats.

For more information follow this link for the [People's Trust for Endangered Species](#)

Jennie Lane and Chris Poole

Displaying their artwork at Hellens were Jennie Lane, felt maker, displaying her handmade, embroidered felt wall hangings and Chris Poole, diplomat, writer and photographer displaying his black and white photographs.

Click here to see the [Chris Poole photography website.](#)

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Tools For Self Reliance



Also at Hellens was Graham Cole selling and collecting tools for the charity Tools For Self Reliance. The charity collects old tools, which it repairs and cleans and ultimately recycles. The tools are then either sent to countries that need them, such as Uganda, Tanzania and Ghana or sold here to raise money for the shipping costs.

Graham told me more than tools what the charity requires are volunteers to help repair and clean the tools they receive. These are sent by the container full to the countries that most needed them. The one problem Graham said was that to ensure the tools reached the most deserving and needy people, they had to ensure that there was a reliable organization at the other end to receive them. Unfortunately, this meant that some countries missed out.

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University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



Week 13: The English Tradition

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Their cider, perry and apple brandy is described as Herefordshire's best kept secret.

Performing at Lyne Down Farm on the Saturday and Sunday were Cyder City Jazz.