

## Blossom Day 2012

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On Sunday, Lynsted Village's community cherry orchard was once more the venue for a wonderful afternoon of family entertainment. Despite the earlier wind and rain, the committee's hard work in setting up the necessary marquees, paid off, as the sun peered through gaps in the cloud, just in time for the visitors. Surprisingly, some families were still able to relax and picnic on the ground as the wind calmed and the sky cleared.

Gavin Maclennen shared his knowledge of fruit husbandry whilst leading a tour of the orchards. 'One day old' lambs seemed content to settle in view of the gathering, soothed by the music of 'Derek and his Jazz friends' and performances by local poets who included; Barry Fentiman, Mark Holihan and Bob Carling with his guitar.

The inviting WI stall was laden with temptation in the form of fairy cakes, mini lemon drizzle loaves, banana cake and chocolate gateau amongst other delicacies, but if you fancied something a little stronger, the bar was well stocked with good quality wines, cider, beer and lager.

Children, of all ages, had great fun creating paintings of blossom and making badges inspired by Sioux Peto and Colin Barnard, of 'Polka Dot' art gallery in Teynham, who provided the art activities. All the pictures were beautifully colourful but the winners of the art competition, who received prizes, were as follows; 1st place Tiffany Haffenden aged 13, 2nd place Ruby Stoddard aged 7 and 3rd place Alice Milliner- Brooks aged 4.

Other children occupied themselves by completing a nature quiz or a 'wordsearch' or playing skittles and 'roll a twopenny'.

Congratulations and a prize went to Oscar Cornall who got the highest score in Skittles for the under 12 category.

The 'Carter' family of Lynsted village created their own amusement by playing a relatively non-contact game of rugby and although highly competitive – No injuries were reported!

This event in the Park Farm Community Cherry Orchard, owned by local famer Pip Neaves, turned out to be a truly entertaining but relaxing afternoon that was finally blessed and warmed by the sun.

'Cherry Day' on Saturday 6th July will be held at the same venue when visitors will be able to pick their own cherries from these traditional trees – some of which are over 60 years old.

## **Cherry Day Report**

Cherry Day on Saturday 20th July at Lynsted's Park Farm Orchard went full steam ahead despite cooler weather and a spell of drizzly rain mid- morning.

The cherries were perfectly ripe for many families to take huge advantage of the 'Pick your own' stall run by James English aged 10 and his grandmother Barbara who were selling very large pummets for just £2. Kelly Wreford set up an enticing stall laden with jars of her own prize winning Lynsted honey and pure beeswax candles whilst other craft stalls sold handmade leather belts, jewellery, customised clothing, cards and original paintings.

Entertainment was provided by local band 'Frayed Knot' and 'Doddington Ukelele Movement'- 'DUM' for short - who were enjoying their first open air gig. Later both bands came together for a wonderful ensemble of 'Candy' which further enhanced the 'feel good' atmosphere of the event.

Delicious cream teas were provided by the WI while the BBQ stand was constantly busy selling sausages from the local Doughty's butchers.

The event created a harmonious scene of large family groups enjoying the fresh air and their own private space picnicing under the branches of the cherry trees whilst taking full advantage of the communal space.

There will be a guided 'Fungus Foray' On Saturday 12th October for those who would like a ramble through the orchard and learn more about the mushrooms and toadstools that appear at that time of year.

On Saturday 26th October the Park Farm Cherry Orchard Group will host their annual 'Halloween' evening which is always well attended and loved by the children in particular.

## Foray reveals fungal riches in the Orchard.

Venturing out to collect wild mushrooms/fungi, and then bringing them home to cook is an experience you really must try at least once. However, for most of us the challenge is to understand which wild mushrooms can be safely eaten and which can make you extremely ill.

With these thoughts in mind Martin Newcombe, a local naturalist and fungi expert, spent a couple of hours in Lynsted Community Orchard, on October 13th, showing a group of local enthusiasts what to look for when searching for a tasty and free meal. The group soon uncovered a staggering range of edible and non-edible fungi while Martin regaled us all with stories of the legends surrounding fungi and mouth-watering ways of turning them in to a tasty meal. The weather on the day meant that conditions in the orchards were ideal for finding and identifying the fungi and we could hardly put one foot in front of the other before another specimen was found.

En route home we stopped off at Lynsted Church where Marlene, Myra and Rosie had laid on very welcome hot soup and crusty bread. A number of the group went home with a selection of wild fungi to cook.

Martin Newcombe has promised to update us with a list of the fungi we discovered.

There were so many species to examine that we ran out of time to survey Toll Wood as well - perhaps another time! Visit our website [www.lynsted-orchard.org.uk](http://www.lynsted-orchard.org.uk) for more information about your Community Orchard - including fungi!

Pip Neaves and Lisa Candy are thanked for allowing access to their land.

Bon appetite!

[Click here for details of species](#)

