

News from West Winds in Buckden at the heart of the Yorkshire Dales

5 October 2009

West Winds Apple Week offers chance to taste varieties you won't find in the shops



Following last year's success, we are running another apple festival, this year from Wednesday 28 October to Sunday 1 November, when tearoom customers will be able to taste 20 different varieties of dessert apple, many of which can't be found in the shops. Lynn will also be providing a range of tasty main course savoury dishes, puddings and cakes, all made with a not-so-secret ingredient – apples.

The tearooms will be open for West Winds Apple Week from 12.30pm to 6pm with apples for sale too. Why not come and visit for a free tasting followed by lunch, afternoon tea or high tea? We'd love to see you.

The apples are coming from Yorkshire Orchards, a small, family-run orchard containing around 180 varieties. It was established in 2002 close to Wilberfoss, near York, and continues to expand. Many of the apples grown by Alec and Angela Allison at Wilberfoss have evocative or historical names that reflect the magic and depth of the world of apples away from the shelves of the supermarkets. American Mother, Scrumptious, Laxton's Superb, Irish Peach, Lord Lambourne, Devonshire Quarrendon, Belle de Boskoop, Ingrid Marie and Greensleeves are names that come from a world where quality comes before quantity and convenience of production and storage. There are actually over 2000 varieties of apple in existence, many with flavours and colours that outclass the modern 'factory' varieties such as Golden Delicious and Granny Smith.

Apples originated in the Middle East more than 4000 years ago and have probably been grown in the UK since Roman times. Specially cultivated apple varieties arrived in England via France at around the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066. The Normans had a strong tradition of apple growing and introduced many apple varieties including Pearmain and Costard.

There was a decline in apple growing in the 13th century as a result of the Black Death as well as repeated droughts. This was reversed by Henry VIII who instructed his fruiterer, Richard Harris, to establish the first large scale orchards at Tynham in Kent. Harris began to import apple trees from France and planted a model orchard which was used to distribute trees to other growers.

Old English was the main dessert apple in England until at least the 18th century. Today, one of the most highly regarded apple varieties in the world is the English Cox. It dates back to 1825 when Richard Cox raised the first tree in his garden in Berkshire. The apple then started to receive public acclaim after Queen Victoria's head gardener Thomas Ingram championed the variety in the 1850s.

The Victorian explorers found new varieties of apple all over the world and bought them back to plant at Brogdale near Faversham in Kent, establishing a world famous orchard. Today Brogdale is home to the National Fruit Collection, the largest collection of fruit trees in the world with over 2300 different types of apple. It forms a safe repository of varieties and is supported by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Home Farm Trust Christmas cards go on sale in tearoom



Autumn means that Christmas cannot be far off... It's time to start stocking up on Christmas cards, so come and see this year's Home Farm Trust range of cards at West Winds Yorkshire Tearooms. We're running a coffee morning on Tuesday 13 October, from 10am to 12 noon, when you can browse through the different designs and maybe make a purchase in aid of the trust, which provides care for people with learning disabilities and support for their carers and families. If you can't make the coffee morning, please call in anytime the tearooms are open to see the cards.

October practice is last chance to polish dance shoes before Christmas Old Time Dance



Each Christmas in Buckden Old Time Dancing gives the floor of the village hall a pounding it can't possibly forget. The annual dance is normally packed out and is very much a part of Christmas in the village.

If you need to practise your dance steps, or even learn them from scratch, in preparation for this undoubted event of the year, then come along to the dance class on Wednesday 28 October in the village hall, starting at 7.30pm. Dance instruction is provided by Dancing Queen Rosemary Boothman, with music from her husband, Tim. More details are available from Lynn Thornborrow on 01756 760883.

Old Time Dancing was once the entertainment of choice for special occasions in village halls across England but has been in decline in modern times. The origins of many Old Time Dances are now obscure but they probably fuse many elements, including 19th century military customs, Scottish ceilidh reels and even Norse influences. The names of the dances themselves reveal a rich cultural history: Buttered Peas, Dashing White Sergeant, Dinky Two Step, Huntsman's Chorus, Imperial Waltz, Military Two Step, Eva Three Step, Circassian Circle, Swinging Six, Lomond Waltz and Pride of Erin Waltz.

The Dashing White Sergeant dates back to 1826 and was influenced by the Napoleonic Wars. The tune was composed by Sir Henry Rowley Bishop (the composer of Home Sweet Home) and words were supplied by General John Burgoyne.

The Military Two Step was invented by Manchester dance teacher James

Finnigan. He founded a dance academy, Finnigans, in Cheetham Hill in 1877, where he and subsequently his daughter and grand-daughter taught Mancunians to dance right up until it closed in 2005. In 1900 James devised the Military Two Step, although it didn't appear on a dance programme until 1917.

The final hours on the final day, for 2009 anyway...



Don't forget Sunday 1 November is our last opening day of the season. We're open from 12.30pm to 6pm as part of West Winds Apple Week but then closed for the rest of November for wet weather.

Spiky the hedgehog returns for autumn reconnoitre



We're pleased to announce that a hedgehog has been wandering round the tea-garden, perhaps looking for somewhere to hibernate for the winter. We're pleased because hedgehogs are supposed to eat slugs and we've certainly got plenty of them.

Hedgehogs have been in sharp decline for several years and are threatened by traffic, garden chemicals such as slug pellets and a lack of 'wild' gardens where they can find cover and hibernation sites.

At this time of year hedgehogs are trying to feed themselves up before hibernating. If you are lucky enough to see one in your garden over the next few weeks, you can feed it by putting out cat food. Milk doesn't agree with them though, so don't give them that. You can also provide places where they can lie up for the winter – try piling up brushwood and dead leaves in a corner of the garden.



West Winds Yorkshire Tearooms

Up the lane beside the Buck Inn...

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