

# The Fruit Leaf

Santa Clara Valley Chapter



July/August  
2007

California Rare Fruit Growers, Inc.



Cathy Berwaldt  
Former CRFG Secretary

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### Newsletter

Submit articles, pictures, cartoons  
by email:

Sue Cancilla-Conde  
weedeater@earthlink.net

Or snail mail:  
4698 Englewood Drive,  
San Jose CA 95129

Our Organization's URL  
<http://www.crfg.org/>

## Nancy's Blogett

Nancy Garrison

No meeting this August in lieu of  
Festival of Fruit in San Diego  
August 10 and 11

AFFORDABLE! I know of no other conference with tours anywhere that offers so much for so little cost. I want to strongly encourage our members to sign up and go for the time of your life. These fruit festivals are always scrumptious with something for everyone. Please seriously look into going and then we'll see you down there!

There are exhibits of rare fruits and rare fruit vendors with prices below regular nursery prices and of course no shipping because you take them home in your vehicle. Check out the rare fruit photo contest area. You will have opportunities to hear speakers on many different fruit topics. The tours to nurseries and private rare fruit growers are a huge hit to attend. The energy and excitement is unmatched from all other events in this state. Check it out and treat yourself to a few days of fruit bliss. The Festival of Fruit web site is <http://www.festivaloffruit.org/>.

*Taken verbatim from their web site....*

When you attend the 2007 Festival Of Fruit you will be able to select from over 20 different presentations related to propagation, growing, maintaining and enjoying the most delicious and unusual fruits that can be grown in California. You will hear special guests discuss their experience in growing temperate, subtropical, and tropical fruits. You will also have the rare opportunity to taste fruit grown in California, as well as take advantage of the offerings from fruit tree nurseries and other vendors.

You will have the chance to meet and exchange information with experts within this exclusive group of people. Come and join us for intensive days of presentations. Enjoy our exciting guided and self-guided tours through some of the fabulous gardens of our members, groves, and the fruit garden at Quail Botanical Garden. There will also be an exclusive full day trip to the markets of Tijuana to enjoy the herbs, spices and fruits of Mexico. Please visit us often as the program is developed. This web site will have up to the minute information.

# 'Old Home and Farmingdale'

The Romeo and Juliet of Pear Rootstocks;  
An Historical Perspective  
Kim E. Hummer



The search for a high quality pear rootstock was begun by Professor F. C. Reimer in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He obtained two fire blight-resistant clones of *Pyrus communis* L., 'Old Home' and 'Farmingdale' from Illinois. These two clones became a "Romeo and Juliet" of pear rootstocks producing the 'Old Home x Farmingdale' series. In the United States the names and numbers of this series have been trademarked and several clones were patented. Three generations later, 'Old Home' continues to be used as a parental source of pear fire blight and decline-resistant genes in rootstock and cultivar breeding programs in the United States, Canada, France, England, and Germany.

## Introduction

Fire blight, the plague of pear production in the United States, caused Professor F. C. Reimer of Oregon State University to "search the world over" to find resistant trees. He made plant collecting expeditions to China, Korea, Manchuria, and Japan. One of the most worthwhile trips, however, was within the United States to visit Mr. Benjamin Buckman of Farmingdale, Illinois in 1915. During this trip Professor Reimer found two blight free trees.

## 'Old Home'

Mr. Buckman obtained some scionwood of a seedling European pear (*Pyrus communis* L.) from Mr. B. O. Curtis of Paris, Illinois. Mr. Curtis found the tree in a hedgerow of a property that his family referred to as the "Old Home." Buckman planted a grafted tree at the Buckman family homestead and named the clone 'Old Home.' Professor Reimer visited Illinois and collected the scionwood from Buckman's tree. Subsequent testing showed that not only was 'Old Home' blight-resistant, but the frame developed strong wide-angled branches. This clone was an excellent compatibility bridge for quince, and was also resistant to pear decline. Unfortunately the yield efficiency of 'Old Home' was very low. Also this pear, like most *Pyrus* clones, was

self-unfruitful. The disease-resistant characteristics lead Reimer to consider 'Old Home' as a parent in rootstock breeding trials.

## 'Farmingdale'

While walking around Buckman's farm Reimer noticed a second blight-free pear tree. This tree grew near an old *P. communis* cv. Anjou and had a similar fruit-shape. Because of this, Buckman and Reimer considered the seedling to be an open pollinated cross of 'Anjou.' Buckman had named the clone 'Farmingdale' and tried to introduce this blight-resistant large-fruited pear into the nursery trade. He didn't immediately let Reimer have scionwood. Unfortunately, 'Farmingdale' proved to be extremely difficult to propagate and it failed in the nursery trade. Buckman sent scions to Reimer in 1921.

Mr. Buckman died in 1925. His family orchard, the original 'Old Home' and 'Farmingdale' trees were destroyed. By that time Reimer had established trees of both 'Old Home' and 'Farmingdale' in research collections in southern Oregon. Although 'Old Home' was disease resistant, it did not have high yield efficiency as a rootstock and 'Farmingdale' was difficult to propagate. These became corner stones in Reimer's rootstock breeding program.

## Beyond Romeo x Juliet

Many researchers became interested in the blight resistant 'Old Home' x 'Farmingdale' rootstocks. The Agriculture Canada Research Station, Summerland, B. C. managed an orchard where 'Old Home' was grown interspersed with 'Farmingdale' as a pollinizer. They collected and sent seed from the 'Old Home' trees to a private nurseryman, Lyle A. Brooks of Daybreak Nursery, Forest Grove, Oregon. Beginning in 1961, Mr. Brooks evaluated more than 2500 seedlings for ease of propagation by cuttings. He gave selection numbers to the most desirable clones. These clones were replicated and underwent additional evaluation by Drs. Melvin Westood,

Porter Lombard, and Ronald Cameron, from Oregon State University. Most of the clones were disease resistant, while some had high yield efficiency, and could be clonally propagated by cuttings. These clones cannot be propagated by stooling with sawdust, as is done with clonal apple rootstocks. Instead propagation by dormant cuttings taken in late winter is successful. In the late 1980's Mr. Brooks trademarked the name 'OH x F' Series. In the United States, plant patents for five of the rootstock clones were assigned in 1985 and 1988, and one additional rootstock is propagated under an exclusive contractual agreement. Six of the original 'OH x F' clones are being marketed in Europe under other names.

Growers and researchers continue to discuss the sizing effects and yield efficiency of 'Old Home' crosses. Over a 12-year period, Westwood examined the performance of 'Bartlett' pear on standard and OH x F clonal rootstocks in Medford and Corvallis, Ore. 'OH x F 217' had the highest yield efficiency, 'OH x F 40' ranked fourth; 'OH x F 87' ranked sixth; 'OH x F 333' ranked twelfth. Initially, the semi-dwarfing 'OH x F 333' was recommended because of ease of clonal propagation. Unfortunately its low yield efficiency, tendency to induce small fruit, and inconsistent fruit size has since reduced its popularity. The trend of the 1990's is to plant high density orchards on dwarfing rootstocks and the lack of adequate size control is another strike against 'OH x F 333'. From 1992 through 1996, the dwarfing *Pyrus communis* rootstock 'OH x F 87,' has produced a consistently higher yield of *P. communis* cvs. Bose, Red Anjou, and Red Clapp in Hood River, Oregon, than did the 'OH x F 333'.

In 1993 open pollinated seedlings of 'OH x F 51,' 'OH x F 333,' 'OH x F 40,' were selected by Dave Homer, an Oregon nurseryman. These clonal rootstocks, known as the Homer Series, are under testing and evaluation at the Mid-Columbia Research Station, Oregon State University, in Hood River, Oregon.

'Old Home' has also been a valuable parent for scion cultivar breeding. In 1983, Harvey Quamme and G.A. Spearman released the *P. communis* cvs. Harrow Delight, a high-quality, early fresh market,

and fire blight resistant pear.

'Old Home' is considered a valuable genetic resource for rootstock improvement in several foreign countries. At the Institute National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) Station in Anger, France, several open-pollinated 'Old Home' selections, OH 11, OH 20 and OH 30, have been selected and named as the "Retuziere Series." In England at Horticulture Research International, East Malling, 'Old Home' has been crossed with the South African rootstock 'BP 1' to produce the QR 708 series which are currently undergoing trial evaluation. In Germany, in 1980, Professor Helmut Jacob of Geisenheim, Germany crossed 'Old Home' with 'Bonne Louise d' Avranche.' In 1994 he obtained a German patent for selection Bu 5-18, or Rhenus 1 calling it 'Pydrodwarf.' This rootstock is noted for good winter hardiness, average fire blight tolerance, excellent productivity, and size control but has thus far only been tested in Germany. Further evaluation is needed on this rootstock to determine its response under broader environmental conditions.

An ideal pear rootstock will have excellent productivity, decline and fire blight resistance, cold hardiness, and dwarfing qualities. With continued breeding and research efforts starting with a disease resistant parent such as 'Old Home,' this goal will no doubt be achieved.

To read the entire abstract visit:  
*Fruit Varieties Journal* 52(1):38-40  
1998

Reprinted Journal of the American  
Pomological Society

Thank you, Nick Lolonis, for submitting  
this article.



# Garden Tours Were a Great Success!

Susan Kay

The recent garden tours were a great success and I would like to offer a huge thank you to all who agreed to share their yards and to those that came to see the gardens. It seemed that fun was had by those who opened their gardens, and by their visitors. It was good to learn that no one has a perfect yard, and that we all have garden problems and can share ideas on what we might do better or differently. I had some feedback from the participants and want to share what they had to say.

## **These words were from Sheila Bailey:**

"I had signed up for the tour to finally inspire me to do a few things in the garden that I just kept putting off. Then I realized the tour was in just one week and I had a difficult work schedule. I wondered if I should fake a serious illness to get out of it. I got stage fright and wondered if people would think that my garden was just too silly and haphazard to show anybody. I pulled weeds like mad all day (the day before). By (the tour) morning there was so much I had wanted to do, but I was too tired to worry about it anymore."

So,

"I just had a wonderful day. It was just so much fun meeting everyone. I can't believe how lucky we are to have such a nice, and knowledgeable group of people in CFRG.

I think I had about 25 plus people over the 3 hours in a steady stream. I learned so much about my own garden! What a great experience. Thank you all so much. You are all welcome at my house any day!"

## **And this from Dexter Girton:**

"I estimate there were about 20 people, and many stayed quite a while and asked questions or told about their garden plants. This is the first time I had so many visitors who were enthusiastic and knowledgeable gardeners. Everything went well, and right now I can't think of any suggestions for future tours."

## **And from Aline Bier:**

"I had another definition for my 'overgrown' garden from a visitor yesterday: It is not 'overgrown'; it is 'established'! I think such visits should be a regular feature of CFRG. When we meet as a large group we don't get to know each other as we do when we visit each others' gardens."

# HAVE WE GOT EVENTS?

You bettcha



Fruit Tasting and  
"Ladies Night" returns  
with.....Ed Laivo

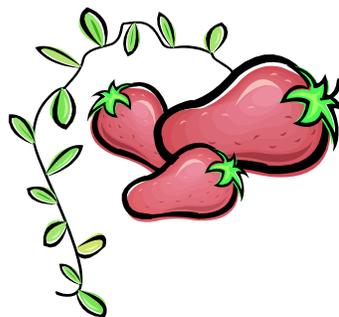
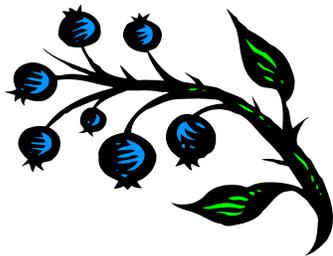
*Wednesday, August 8th --  
6pm to 9pm*

Summer Winds Garden  
Center  
4606 Almaden Expressway  
San Jose, CA 95118  
408.266.1670

**Ag Talks**  
Wednesday,  
August 29 at 7pm  
Washburn Film  
Night  
Showing of film  
from the 1930s to  
1950s. Enjoy  
scenes of Santa  
Cruz County as it  
was then.

The Ag Talks are  
held at the Codiga  
Center & Museum  
on the AHP Site at  
the entrance to the  
Santa Cruz County  
Fairgrounds,  
2601  
East Lake Avenue,  
Watsonville

For further  
information  
call  
831 724-5898  
Reservations  
requested



# More stuff to do...

## Storrs Winery Sustainable Farming Case Study and Open House

Monday, August 27th, 2007 11:00 am  
Location: Storrs Winery & Vineyards, Corralitos, CA

Visit a sustainably farmed vineyard and orchard. Wildlife corridors & habitat, solar power system, removal of non-native invasive plants, etc. Lunch is included. Directions will be sent after RSVP.

Free, but please RSVP, as parking is limited to 25 cars.

Contact: RSVP to [gail@solartechologies.com](mailto:gail@solartechologies.com) or call 831-421-0440



## ANDY'S ORCHARD

**Saturday & Sunday, August 4 and 5, 10am to noon**  
**Fruit Tasting, Tour and Harvest Walk, more stone fruit**

**Sunday, August 12, 10am to noon**  
**Fruit Tasting, Tour and possible Harvest Walk,**  
**later varieties**

**Saturday, August 18, 10am to noon**  
**Fruit Tasting, Tour and possible Harvest Walk,**  
**late fruit varieties**

**Small fee for event**

**Further information: Call store: (408) 782-7600 and ask for Lorene**  
**[Andysorchard@andysorchard.com](mailto:Andysorchard@andysorchard.com)**

*Note: Please check ahead to confirm dates, which are subject to change. For groups of five or less no reservations are required. For groups of 6 or more, please call ahead and let us know the number in your group and what date planning to attend. **No pets, please.***

# Fruit Slices

**Ag Venture Tours & Consulting** specializes in wine tasting, sightseeing and agricultural education tours of the Monterey Bay region of California. Wine tasting tours visit either the Monterey Wine Country (Salinas Valley, Carmel Valley) or the Santa Cruz Mountains. Sightseeing tours include the Monterey Peninsula (Monterey, Pacific Grove, Pebble Beach, Carmel) or Big Sur. Agricultural education tours feature the Salinas Valley.

**Current rates and schedule:**

**Half day** (1:00 pm - 4:00 pm) tours (minimum of 2 guests, lunch not included)

**Full day** (10:00 am - 4:00 pm) tours (minimum of 4 guests, optional picnic or restaurant lunch)

Any size group can be accommodated, please call for more information.

**Contact Information:**

Ag Venture Tours & Consulting  
Evan Oakes  
PO Box 2634, Monterey, CA 93942  
Phone (831) 761-8463  
Fax (831) 761-5461  
[www.whps.com/agtours](http://www.whps.com/agtours)

**U-pick strawberry farms typically sell berries by the pound.**

**A quart equals 1 and 1/2 pounds of fresh berries**

<http://www.pickyourown.org/strawberries.htm>

Saeko has designed the below graphic so we may cut out and use as a badge. Just write your name nice and large with a Sharpie and pin to your lapel for any CRFG event.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007

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Membership Information Address Change Notification. For information on chapter membership, notification of address and phone number changes, please contact:

Sarah Sherfy, 9140 Paseo Tranquillo, Gilroy CA 95020. Phone: 408 846-5373

## 2007 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Programs	Nancy Garrison	408-298-5828
	<a href="mailto:nancyg2@aol.com">nancyg2@aol.com</a>	
	Jack and Susan Kay	408-735-7376
	<a href="mailto:Kay639@yahoo.com">Kay639@yahoo.com</a>	
Membership	Sarah Sherfy	408-846-5373
	<a href="mailto:sherfy@gmail.com">sherfy@gmail.com</a>	
Fruit Leaf Editor	Sue Cancilla-Conde	408-996-3112
	<a href="mailto:weedeater@earthlink.net">weedeater@earthlink.net</a>	
Scion Ex.	Karl Gross	408-733-5317
	<a href="mailto:kgross@usgs.gov">kgross@usgs.gov</a>	
Hospitality	Open	
Grape	Nick Lolonis	650-574-0998
Maintenance	<a href="mailto:flolonis@yahoo.com">flolonis@yahoo.com</a>	
Orchard	Ken Sherfy	408-846-5373
	<a href="mailto:sherfyk@gmail.com">sherfyk@gmail.com</a>	
Orchard	Nick Lolonis	650-574-0998
	<a href="mailto:flolonis@yahoo.com">flolonis@yahoo.com</a>	
Volunteers	Scott Papenfus	408-337-2240
	<a href="mailto:papenfus@pacball.net">papenfus@pacball.net</a>	
Librarian	Doron Kletter	650-571-1258
Propagation	<a href="mailto:kletter@impact.xerox.com">kletter@impact.xerox.com</a>	
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Sub-tropical	Open	
Fruits promoter		

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CRFG-Santa Clara Valley Chapter  
 9140 Paseo Tranquillo  
 Gilroy, CA 95020