



A SHORT HISTORY OF THE MAPLE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

By Hugh Angus, April 21, 2023

Well, it is not till you start writing an article like this that one realises just how limited one's own knowledge on the matter is. On that basis my thanks to all who have, so far, contributed to this article. I would particularly like to mention Susan Wiegrefe and Linda Miles who sent me various images and commented on some of my initial thoughts and questions. You will also see that I am rather vague about various matters concerning dates etc. If you can help fill in any of the gaps it would be great to hear from you, all contributions welcome. In that way we shall have a comprehensive history of the newsletter that can be published on our website.

My understanding and investigations show that the first edition of the newsletter was published in Spring 1991 and this was followed by a second in the Summer of 1991. These were then followed by four editions in 1992 and the trend of four editions per year has continued to this day.

The Spring 1993 newsletter was numbered as follows, Spring 1993 Vol. 3 No. 1. It is interesting to note that the year 1993 was changed by hand from 1992. The first newsletter to have a numbering system on the front cover was the Summer 1992 edition and was numbered as follows Vol.2 No. 2.

The very first edition was black and white, A4 in size, running to 10 pages. It was named *The Maple Society Newsletter* and this has never changed. It was Peter Gregory and Doug Goodyear, the then secretary who initiated the newsletter and at that time they did all jobs associated with its production, including some hand drawn artwork.

Colour was used on the front cover of the Spring 1994 Vol. 4 No. 1 issue for the first time. The use of colour was then used on and off for a great many years. All the original A4 newsletters were photo-copied, compiled and then distributed by Peter. The switch to an A5 size newsletter also saw the introduction of more colour. Then as costs allowed, the switch to full colour took place a few years later and that continues to the present day. The first A5 edition was produced as the Winter 2005 Vol. 15. Edition. The volume number equates to the number of years that the newsletter has been produced.

Over the years we have not really had many editors. Peter Gregory was initially the editor and this continued for most of the early years of the society. The role was next filled by the

family editorial team of Laura and Graham Jones. They also did the typesetting for the newsletter, oversaw the production process and introduced the transition to full colour.

After their term of office Peter took back the editorship until around 2016 when I became involved in the role. During this time we also introduced a specific typesetting role. I was happy to do the editor bit, but typesetting was beyond me!

Keith Montgomery was the first full time typesetter and did a great job for a number of years before relinquishing this role to Piotr Banaszczak. At first having Piotr in Poland doing the typesetting and myself doing the editorship in the UK felt rather strange but it worked out to be a very good partnership. This also helped to reflect the truly international role of the society. They were interesting times and it was interesting to see how different people approached the same role.

Today the Editorship is done by Yalma Vargas-Rodriguez based in Mexico, Robin Gardner based in North America, and the typesetting by Frederique Belotti based in France. It is going to be interesting to see how their own personal styles develop the newsletter over time. Certainly, what we have seen so far reflects the quality of older newsletters.

Contents of the newsletter have remained fairly constant, with the main focus always being on maples. Originally the newsletter was just a few pages long whilst the current edition is around 30 plus pages. What is interesting is that Peter Gregory's maple profiles have had a prominent role in the newsletter from the very start. These started as fairly short pieces, but as Peter's knowledge grew substantially, so did the length of the profiles. All of his final profiles, arguably, gave a greater detail to a particular species that has not been equaled as yet.

What does the future hold? Well, my crystal ball is currently under repair so it will be interesting to see. One thing I am certain of is the importance of the newsletter to society members as both an educational and communication tool.

Hopefully one day we shall have all the newsletters on our website, as it is fascinating to look at some of the old ones, but more importantly it would give members access to all the great articles that have been written over the years. Looking through the old newsletters also gives one a better appreciation of the history of The Maple Society as a whole.