

The Cleobury Clarion



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April 2017

A4117 ROAD CLOSURE

The work on the A4117 from Cleobury through to the county boundary on Lem Hill was all done by March 17th. Mouchel, who some may remember did the Town Centre Enhancement Scheme did the job on time.

By working from 8.00pm until 6.00am they kept disruption to a minimum. And some strangers found new byeways as they followed the diversion through Clows Top and Neen Sollars to get into Cleobury late at night!

A CLARION SCOOP

It's with great pride that the Clarion announces it has scooped the motoring press with news of a groundbreaking all electric bus soon to be tested on the hills and hollows of our local 2L route. Yes, it seems that Diamond have been chosen to put what could be a truly revolutionary vehicle to a serious test before it is launched on the open market. We naturally wait to see it.

It's the work of our 'On The Buses' man, Steve Todd, who reveals details in this issue, that comes to you on April 1st.

CHARLIE TAKES ON THE CHANNEL



Charlotte Manley in serious training for the Big Swim.

"I was informed that more people have climbed Mount Everest than have successfully swum the English Channel. This encourages me on days I need motivation to train." The words of a young woman with more than her fair share of grit and determination.

Charlotte Manley is heading for her 30th birthday and wanted to do something special to celebrate the day. A recent convert to open water swimming, she heard about the Sea Eagles planning a group swim across the Channel to raise money for the Aspire charity that helps people with

spinal cord injuries. Each member of the team takes their turn and swims for one hour. No excuses if you can't; if any member can't do their turn the whole effort is declared invalid.

So Charlotte's in training, when the water temperature is about two degrees. At the time of the Big Swim on June 30th the normal temperature in the Channel is about 15 degrees, so she shouldn't find that a problem.

She has to prove that she can swim for two hours in open water before getting the final OK, but if determination counts for anything she'll be there.

You can help Charlotte with her fund raising by sponsoring her at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Charlotte-Manley1. Just remember that every eight hours someone in the UK sustains a spinal cord injury and is told they may never walk again. Those are the people Aspire helps, with stuff like accessible housing, grants, IT facilities and advice. It's a cause that deserves support. And Charlotte has a Facebook page: Charley Vs the Channel.

A brave lady.



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The Cleobury Clarion, April 2017
Volume Fifteen - Edition One



*A real family business, growing fast because they care.
See Page 5.*



*What is that peeping around the corner? The future of motoring.
See Page 17.*



*Tranquillity in name and style.
In Business Page 55.*

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ANOTHER LOCAL SUCCESS

I have written before about the standard of care that TLC Care at Home provide. On that very sad occasion their care for my wife in her final days was quite amazing, one of the girls bringing her old hairdresser's kit one evening and staying late to give the lift that any woman feels with her hair freshly permed.

So it was intriguing to hear that they've moved offices from home in Neen Savage to a suite at number 14 in Bewdley's Load Street. Jacqui Jackson is still the responsible manager, not available on the first day we called because a staff illness meant she was out looking after a client. Peter Jackson filled me in.

"We'd reached the point where the business was taking up three rooms in the house, and we had to look around for proper offices," he explained. They certainly need the space, with 47 carers on the books and training needed to keep all skills up to date. The growth since the start four years ago is very impressive, from a handful of carers to 47 and their area of operation spreading ever wider.

It's a real family firm, that got started because daughter Tracy was working as a carer and came home upset because someone she was looking after was told that she would have to pay if a carer came to help her go to the toilet at night. If she couldn't pay, she'd have to use

her pad, wouldn't she? That's not the way TLC work, because it's all about care. That was the start, with Jacqui, Peter and Tracy all directors, determined to do the job well.



It's a real family firm and here are the three directors to prove it: Peter, Jacqui and daughter Tracy.

The caring industry has not had a good press in recent months and when we called TLC were waiting to hear the results of a recent Care Quality Commission inspection. This is the body responsible for all carers being up to standard and their inspection looks at five categories. One of these asks "Is the service caring?" and TLC got a very rare 'Outstanding' there, one of only three carers in the whole of Shropshire and Worcestershire to get that grade. In all the other categories they scored a 'Good' rating. "We're all over the moon to be recognised in this way," beamed Peter.

We've talked to Jacqui since, who's rightly very proud of this achievement. She told about a

carer staying late so that a client could watch the First Night of the Proms and then be put to bed. And the time they cooked a proper Christmas dinner and delivered one to each client and partner if they had one. No charge, just good care. And they have a very precious certificate to prove it.

THE CHILDE ENDOWMENT FUND

Students residing in the parishes of Cleobury Mortimer, Neen Sollars, Milson, Coreley, Hopton Wafers, Farlow, Wheathill, Aston Botteril, Stottesdon, Kinlet and Neen Savage are invited by the Trustees to make applications to the above fund for financial assistance to help further their studies.

Details and application forms can be obtained from Lloyds Bank, Cleobury Mortimer, Lacon Childe School or The Reverend Justin Parker, Clerk to the Trustees of the Fund at Adam House, Birmingham Road, Kidderminster DY10 2SA. The closing date is June 24th.

WRITING GROUP

It started as the Creative Writing Group when Vicki Alexander was our librarian; today it has a less ambitious title. Second Monday of the month, at 6.30 in the library, a small but friendly group meet.

Our aim this month is a maximum of 1,000 words including passionate, sideboard, equilibrium and artistry. On the 10th at 6.30 we'll see how many manage the task.

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THANK YOU

I would like to thank my family and friends for Get Well cards and their best wishes for my stay in Hereford Hospital. It is the best hospital I have been in; I had a week there. I am on the mend now.

God bless you all.
Sheila Whitefoot

CLOWS TOP GARDENING CLUB

April is the most exciting month of the year because we are well and truly into spring. National Gardening week is 10 - 16th April and along with the Easter Holidays it's a good time to crack on with some seasonal jobs. No garden? No problem. Pots or containers can give lots of variation with shape and colour, even Fruit and Veg can be grown if you choose the right variety. Visit garden centres and nurseries every few weeks or once a month, to get a range of plants with staggered flowering and scent to give year-round interest. The country lanes are now bursting with wild flowers. Instead of driving by, stop, go for a walk and enjoy the sight and scent of these beauties.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday April 26th, when the speaker for the evening will be

Bob Oliver on 'The A-Z of Vegetable Growing'. Admission Fee: members £2, non-members £4. Free Refreshments. Magazine swap. Flower of the Month Competition.

Further Details: Marion Wilson 01299 270475. Email: clowstopdistrictgardeningclub@hotmail.co.uk
Pauline Bowen

A QUIET TIME

Last year the Parish Church launched their Wholeness Service for Lent. It was a simple concept, welcoming people into the church to sit, quietly contemplate and draw strength from a communal feeling of peace. It worked well and this year will be on Thursday, April 6th, from 7.00pm.

It's described as "A quiet service of Healing and Wholeness for Lent, with particular reflection on Forgiveness." Everyone is welcome, whatever your belief; it is simply a time to reflect, to pray if you wish and possibly share a moment of peace with others. A quiet time in fact.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Is this irresponsible dog owner you, or someone you know? Dog mess has been rather less of

a nuisance in recent months, but we hear reports of a problem on the Catherton Road to Love Lane footpath, where a lot of children walk, and then this very pointed message came in:

To whom it may concern: Please do not allow your dog to foul the drive, garden and path in the front and side of Cinema Court, Childe Road.

It seems that someone's on the lookout, so you've been warned.

CORRECTION

Roger Gittins writes:

Could you please insert in the Clarion a correction of last month's "News from Coco" on page 39? It's not the Bells Sunday Darts and Dominoes League that raises money for the charities. It is the Sunday Charity League to be thanked which is only supported by the landlords and customers of the Social Club, Stable Tavern, Bell Inn and Old Lion.

Thank you.

Roger Gittins

SILLY OLD BITS

Did you ever notice that the Roman numerals for 40 are XL?

Some people try to turn back their life's odometers. Not me, I want people to know why I look this way; I've travelled a long, long way and some of the roads weren't surfaced.

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THE SOROPTIMISTS

As in previous March supper meetings we marked International Water Day by changing wine into water, paying for wine but had water instead. Everybody was asked to bring a bottle which would be disguised for a Secret Bottle Raffle.

A reminder to all bridge players: our annual Charity Bridge Drive in aid of the Alzheimer's Society will be on Wednesday April 26th, at the Parish Rooms, Belbroughton Road, Blakedown DY10 3JG. 10.0 am for a prompt start at 10.30 until 4.00. £12 per player, including lunch. Book your place with Sue Merrill on 01562-700078, 07831487648 or suemerrill@btinternet.com

We start our next business year on 1st April with our annual Reflection Day and Thursday 6th will see the first Business meeting when President Denise Carson will hand over the chain of office to Hilary Thompson.

Soroptimist International is open to all women from the age of 18. For more details contact 01299 266101 or email: kidderminstersorop@gmail.com

A VERY UNUSUAL CHOIR CONCERT

I live in Cleobury but belong to a choir based in Leicestershire called the Harborough Singers. Crazy I know, but I love it because it gives me a chance to sing in places I never would have dreamed possible. Like St. Paul's Cathedral, the Albert Hall and ... a Polish Saltmine! I also get to appear alongside brilliant professionals, both musical and otherwise. I sang with the Queen of Baking herself, Mary Berry, at Christmas. Unbelievable.

Despite our Musical Director, David Beavan, being a Shrewsbury man, we don't very often give concerts in Shropshire. The fact that we're singing at St. Mary's in Bridgnorth in April is of enormous excitement to me. I can roll out of bed and be on stage in half an hour!

Our Bridgnorth gig is entitled 'I was Glad' and will include lots of choral favourites, like Parry's 'I was Glad', famously used at all Royal Weddings, and Handel's 'Zadok the Priest,' a Coronation Anthem which many might be more familiar with as football's

U E F A C h a m p i o n s League Anthem. Do come along.

Kick off is 7.00pm on Saturday 22nd April at St. Mary's Church Bridgnorth. Tickets are £10, to include interval refreshments, and will be in aid of St Mary's Music Fund. They are available from the Severn Hospice Shop in Cleobury, who will make £1 for every ticket sold, or from www.harboroughsingers.com or phone or email me: 01299 271934, gill.guest@fsmail.net

Gill Guest

CLEOBURY COUNTRY A.G.M.

Cleobury Country Limited, which does a great job keeping local business in front of local people, as well as running the Centre and the Library, will be holding its Annual General Meeting in the Centre on April 11th, starting at 5.00.

The AGM is a good place to hear what a company or club is doing, particularly if you are thinking of joining them. You can also hear how their finances stand and what plans they have to expand what they are offering. And if the meeting starts at a sensible time - 5.00 is half sensible, at least - it means you can get it done and get home reasonably early.



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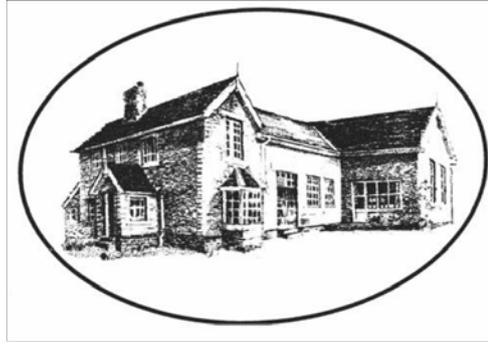
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CLEOBURY SWIFT WATCH

All are welcome to the first meeting of Cleobury Swift Watch on Thursday April 6th in the Methodist Hall, starting at 7.30.

Peta Sams of Shropshire and Ludlow Swift Groups will give us an illustrated talk about Swifts and what we can do in Cleobury to encourage this wonderful bird.

It is intended that Cleobury Swift Watch will link with some of the young people of the St. Mary's Youth Project to make new Swift nest boxes to supplement existing nesting sites in the town. Using SMYP's superior technology skills, we hope they can help us to link small cameras and microphones in nests of St. Mary's Church to screens inside the church so that we can all get a live humans' eye view of nesting, hatching and fledging from May to July. Swift nest boxes, cameras, literature and discussion will all be available as we plan what we can do when the Swifts arrive in May

Do come along and let's see if we can help to prevent a decline in our Swift numbers.

Kit Smith

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

At Lacon Childe School in March, George Castledine recalled 'Working in War-torn Countries', something he has been doing for some years, on behalf of the British Army and the World Health Organisation, amongst others.

His earliest exposure to a war zone was a trip to Belfast to deliver an IRA patient to hospital during a period of rioting and street fighting. Walking Belfast's streets at that time raised the frightening possibility of being mistaken for a British Army officer by an IRA sniper.

Amongst places to which the WHO sent George was Palestine, at a time when travel required negotiating with the Israeli Intelligence Agency and the PLO. The latter was well informed about George's mission, and wanted him to meet Yasser Arafat, who appeared unwell. On his return to UK, George was interviewed by the Foreign Office, interested in the health of an important Middle Eastern figure. Arafat died soon afterwards, and numerous theories sprang up about the cause of death. The mystery still remains; poisoning

by radioactive material remains a possibility.

More recently, George has visited Uganda for the WHO, with the aim of trying to restore social and medical normality after the depredations of The Lord's Resistance Army, a particularly brutal organisation, involved in mass killings. The LRA has now withdrawn from Uganda, but its leader, Joseph Kony remains at large. He has been indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court in the Hague, but has evaded capture. As the LRA destroyed many villages, two million people left their homes. Into this disorder George (recently accompanied by Jenny Vanderhook and Pat Sheppard) has been bringing much-needed medical services.

The Breakfast Club next meets at Lacon Childe School on April 11th to hear Gill Edmonds speak on 'Five Live to Witley Court Tea Room'. Members wishing to attend should contact Jonathan Fair (CM 271913) to book places.

Mark Baldwin

WIT AND WISDOM

There's always a lot to be thankful for if you look for it. For example. I'm sitting here thinking how nice it is that wrinkles don't hurt.
Anon.



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FROM THE BANDROOM

On March 12th the band left Cleobury early and travelled to Bedworth for the Midlands Area Competition to defend our title. We had been rehearsing the enjoyable test piece 'St Andrews Variations' since the beginning of January.

It was a very tight competition and I am pleased to report that we came third and by doing so, have qualified to compete at the National Brass Band finals at Cheltenham in September. This will be our third time in five years, something that we are rightly proud of.

We will hold our Spring Concert on May 13th at the Parish Hall, playing a popular music programme, with fish and chips served in the interval. Numbers are limited and tickets will be available from Carrot Tops priced at £10 or phone to reserve tickets with me on 01299 270262.

Running the band is expensive (it will cost us around £500 to go to the finals) and I would like to make a plea to anyone or local business who would like to

sponsor the band, to please get in touch with me. Could be a different way of advertising your business!

I thought it might be worth advertising that we would like to sell our complete set of traditional uniform, maroon jackets with gold braiding. If anybody is interested please get in touch to discuss.

Our training band is more popular than ever and we have recently had an influx of new players. If you are Grade One or higher and are interested in joining our friendly group, we have a range of ages and abilities. Just turn up to the social club at 6.45 on Tuesday evenings.

Our website lists our forthcoming engagements and also has contact numbers for both senior and training bands. www.cmcb.org.uk

Katie Griffiths

CRICKET AT KINLET

Kinlet United is a village cricket club that's ideal for anyone who likes to play without the intensity of league cricket. Our teams include players from their early teens to their sixties (and occasionally beyond) and the

ethos is one of mutual support. Teams are a mix of ability and experience, and we never expect more of anyone than they feel happy with.

We play on the Moffats ground, which featured in the Daily Telegraph's "Ten most beautiful grounds" a few years ago. For us the social side matters as much as the game, developing friendships within the team and players' families. After every home game we treat our guests to refreshments in the Eagle & Serpent. We also play at some fabulous away venues, and our tour to Wiltshire every September is a highlight. All games are "friendlies", on midweek evenings and Sunday afternoons.

We're always looking for new players. If you'd like to join us (with indoor nets in Cleobury before we play outdoors), we'll give you a warm welcome. Please get in touch with me on 07710 288526 or fengleheart@hotmail.com

I can't finish without mentioning Cleobury's team, if you prefer the challenge of league cricket; or maybe you could manage both (I often do!). If league cricket is an option for you, I'm sure they'd like to hear from you. *Francis Engleheart*



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Shropshire
Fire and Rescue Service

**On-Call Firefighters Cleobury Mortimer
(Retained Duty System)**

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is currently looking to recruit on-call firefighters at Cleobury Mortimer Fire Station. On-call firefighters agree to be available for a certain number of hours per week; they carry a pager and must be able to get to the fire station within five minutes. For this they are paid between £1,587 - £2,116 per annum (dependent on contract) as a Retaining Fee plus payments for attending incidents and drill evenings at Cleobury Mortimer fire station.

TO APPLY YOU MUST LIVE OR WORK WITHIN 5 MINUTES OF CLEOBURY MORTIMER FIRE STATION

To be a Firefighter requires special skills and qualities, not only do you need to be able to work under pressure as part of a team at operational incidents you need effective communication skills to deal with the public at fire safety events and in their homes. You will work within your local community to support our aim of preventing fire related incidents and road traffic collisions. The Service is looking for people aged 18 or more on their start date who can demonstrate a high level of physical fitness

For an information pack please contact us on 01743 260220, or email HRAssistants@shropshirefire.gov.uk, stating your name, address and quoting Cleobury Mortimer

Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to equality and diversity at work. We positively welcome applications from disabled people and minority groups who are under-represented in our Service.

***Newbridge Cat Rescue and Rehoming Centre, which is a Registered charity, are in need of a data base designed to keep records of its operations. Last year we took in 354 cats and rehomed 286; this alone is over 600 records each year. We are looking for someone to write a Microsoft Access data base to enable us to record and search this data and maybe produce reports. We are able to offer the loan of a laptop with Access 2007 loaded for this purpose. We have a budget of £200 for this project.
Telephone 01299 270701.***

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MORE JOB AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ON PAGE 39

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A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

Whatever personal prejudices suggest, logic tells us that electric cars are the future. You may have a view on the way electricity to feed them is generated, but they are here and getting better with each new model launch.

Current darling of the scene is the American built Tesla and I have been driven in a Model S that friend Michael Spencer had on loan. Mike is a convinced electric driver, with a Nissan Leaf in the garage and a broad enough view to judge the Tesla objectively. "You start here," he explained, showing me the car shaped remote control that had the door handles springing out from flush mountings as he approached.



Once in, I was waiting for the engine to start, but we moved away in complete silence. An eerie experience until you become used to smooth and near silent travel, the only sound coming from the tyres.

No conventional transmission, just an accelerator pedal to press and a brake pedal. The rate of acceleration is amazing, but use of full power does drain the battery; driven sensibly the car has a range of 190 miles and we called at the Hopwood Bank services on M42 to plug in and top up - free. In the time it took to order and drink a coffee, the battery was fully charged

The car comes with a high level of automatic operation if the driver chooses to use it, although Mike has found that if you need to switch on the headlights in a daylight fog bank, you have to fiddle with the "iPad" to do it. A minus point. But using cruise control (on city roads or motorway) keeping a fixed distance from the car in front is a delight. Subject to good mobile phone reception the car will even park *itself*. *Poor reception can be a problem.*

It's very comfortable, the bank of batteries that cover the floor

area give a low centre of gravity that makes cornering very easy and stable, while at Motorway cruising speeds the combination of stability and low noise makes it a very relaxed way of travelling. Only at illegal speeds was there any wind noise.

The instrument panel is dominated by a 13 inch iPad that can provide a huge range of information. But do you want to keep looking at the screen instead of the road ahead? Basic information is shown very clearly in front of the driver.



Neat and tidy interior.

I must say I was impressed by this experience of how good an all electric car can be. Would I choose future driving if I could afford such a car? Bring it on.

Jim Reynolds

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The Mobile Vet Service

Who we are and the services we offer:

We endeavour to arrange your visit when it suits you best, so we ask if you would prefer us to see your pet in the morning (9-12) or afternoon (12-3) at the time of booking. We then contact you on the day of the visit to provide you with a more specific time if possible. Please have a collar and lead available for your dog, and please restrict your cat to a safe small room.

The mobile vet service is offered by Severn Edge Veterinary Group to its registered and new clients. It is staffed by a qualified vet and a nursing assistant who are available 9am till 3pm Monday to Friday.

We carry the necessary equipment and medication to enable us to provide a veterinary consultation in the comfort of your own home. The service we offer ranges from routine vaccinations and nail clips to blood sampling and euthanasia. The cost of a home visit under the Mobile Vet Service Zone Scheme is only £10 and any medication or service fees are exactly the same as when your pet is treated at any of our branches.

Is my area covered by mobile vet service?

As we cover such a large geographical area we group our planned visits accordingly. Hence on each day of the week we cover specific postcode areas:

Monday - SY6 7, SY6 9, SY8 9, SY8 3, WV16

Tuesday - DY14, DY12, DY11, DY10 1, DY10 2

Wednesday - WV16, TF13, SY5 6

Thursday - TF12, TF7, TF8, TF11, TF 1, TF2, TF3, TF4, TF5, TF5 6, WV15

Friday - WV15, DY7, DY6, DY3 4, WV6, WV7

Is a mobile vet visit right for you and your pet?

If you would prefer us to treat your pet at home and you live in one of the postcode areas we cover, then simply get in touch and we can discuss your requirements. On occasions we may recommend a pet is best seen at a local branch or a more urgent home

visit is necessary. For example: if we suspect your pet's condition requires more prompt attention or may need access to hospital equipment. We are more than happy to provide help and guidance if you are unsure. Some of the more common reasons our clients choose to use Mobile Vet Service are listed below:

- Multiple pets and litters of puppies
- Pets with long term mobility problems
- Pets with fear or dislike of travelling
- You are unable to travel to one of our branches

How to book a mobile vet visit?

Just phone 01746 713 914 and leave us a message with yours and your pet's details. We will aim to get back to you within 24hrs. Alternatively, contact your local branch. Please allow 48hrs notice for your Mobile Vet appointment.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Anastasia Roberts MRCVS and Julieann Harris

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www.sevg.co.uk

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QUALITY UP ON THE HILL



Doddington Lodge has been established as a residential home since 1984. It's grown quite a bit since then, now boasting two wings: Malvern looking out to those distant hills and Mortimer looking down on Cleobury. You can't miss it, proudly standing in its beautifully kept grounds. The owner is Vanessa Cronk, whose family history in care homes goes back more than 50 years.

The manager when we called was Michelle Lloyd, who plans to stand back and work as deputy manager to give more time to building her qualifications and look after her 16 year old daughters and their GCSE studies.

Michelle is passionate about the Lodge, which was awarded a Care Quality Commission 'Good' rating last December. "My aim is to make the Lodge the best residential home in the area," she explains. "All the staff

have an NVQ3 qualification and if they haven't when they join us, we'll have them working up to it very soon."

Looking to add to the services available, Michelle actively promotes all carer staff to deal with dementia: "It's simply a matter of giving a sufferer dignity and respect." She's very particular about dignity, and refers to every resident's room as their flat, all built around the community that is Doddington Lodge. Owner Vanessa shares that view, and residents can choose the decor and furnishings for their rooms.

That standard of individual choice extends to the catering, where again each resident can say what they wish to have and the catering team will build it into the menus. "She's a miracle worker," admits Vanessa. "We're firm believers in home cooked meals and all the food is sourced as locally as possible."

Michelle sums up the approach they have to the job: "I want people to know how passionate we are," she says. Walk into the entrance lobby and look at the range of quality certificates on display; they tell you how proud these people are of their name.

To find out more, call them on 01584 890864 or visit:

www.doddingtonlodge.co.uk.

Or follow them on social media to see all that's happening up on the hill.

CLEOBURY W.I.

Mark Baldwin's March talk on World War Two Code-breakers and the Enigma machine was well attended and held everyone's attention. It was interesting to hear facts rather than any film version, as well as see and try an Enigma machine.

We will be back at the Market Hall on April 11th to learn how to design jewellery with Laura Grey. Remember to bring £4 per person for a memory wire bangle using non precious beads, Semi precious stones on memory wire from £7-£10 per person for materials. Visitors are welcome; 7.30start; £4 to include refreshments.

More information on Cleobury Mortimer WI's Facebook page, contact me on CM 270983 or email judysant10@gmail.com.

Judy Sant

SILLY BIT

Q: What is the fastest way to a man's heart?

A: Through his chest with a sharp knife.

Anon. (Of course!)

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THE SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB

February and March has been a busy time for the Social Club with refurbishment work on the toilet facilities continuing, the disabled and bar side men's toilets nearing completion. Work has also started on the toilet facilities in the function room.

March 5th saw 14 teams compete in the Big Quiz, very ably compered by Justin Parker. The questions were once again challenging (it's not always about the winning!) with £425 raised for Cleobury CoCo and Prostate Cancer UK. Thanks to all those involved in the organisation, those who donated prizes, Justin for making it good fun, and to all the folks who made up teams to support these worthy causes. Great to see so many young people taking part too.

40 Senior Citizens attended an Afternoon Tea Party on Friday 17th March. Our guests were entertained by Trevor Wood, a retired banker who moved to Cleobury four years ago, and now donates a part of his retirement time providing musical entertainment. Following a very enjoyable

music quiz and sing-a-long, everyone tucked into tea and cakes. Thanks go to Trevor, those who baked and donated cakes and helpers on the day.

Children are invited to join us for an Easter Egg Hunt on Friday April 14th. Registration is at 10.30 am for an 11.00 o'clock start, cost £2.50 per child.

This month's Open Mic Night will be on Thursday April 27th, starting at 7.30pm. All performers welcome.

Periodically through the Summer, we will be introducing a guest beer for all you real ale lovers. It's the start of the cricket season, and cricket, as well as other sports matches and Formula One will be shown on Sky Sports/BT Channels.

For further information please contact our Bar Manager, Andy Goold on 01299 271448.

Glenys Turpin

THE CLEOBURY MORTIMER LECTURES History talks under the twisted spire

A great success last year and Robert Hodge brings early notice of this year's offering: After the success of last year's programme, a second series of lectures will take place on May

25th, June 19th and July 6th in Saint Mary's Church, Cleobury at 7.30pm

Come and listen to a talk by a very special guest, find out about forced removal and help shed light on an unsolved murder.

All in aid of Saint Mary's Youth Project

www.cleoburymortimerlectures.uk

Robert Hodge

THE READING GROUP

Few of our group finished "My Name is Red" by Orhan Pamuk. A difficult read, all thought it would have benefited from being shorter. Set in late 16th century Istanbul, it is a glimpse into Islamic society, many voices telling the tale from different perspectives. The story involved miniaturist artists, their art and East and West artistic traditions, plus love story, mystery and clash of cultures. Little has changed, with religious and cultural clashes still causing problems worldwide. We appreciated the time line at the back which helped our understanding. We would recommend as an insight to Turkish culture. Back to the West Midlands as we read "The Girl on the Wall" by Jean Baggott. We meet in Cleobury Library on April 17th

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THE ASPIRE CENTRE

This is a rather special place, where students looking to move into a career in engineering get a focused course. It's part of North Shropshire College, the most southern branch if you like, at Burford. Just across the A456 from Tenbury Wells and Worcestershire.

Gina Harris heads a small but devoted team: Nicola Pearson teaches English, Simon Thomas looks after lathe work and maths while Dan Morris oversees welding and vehicle servicing. The place has been open since 2001 and has built a good name, with local engineering companies using it as a recruiting centre.

MIG welding is in demand and students are taught well. We looked at one sample of work, with a variety of tasks that included joining two metal pieces at right angles while the work is held vertical. No easy task, keeping the metal flowing when it wants to go with gravity. And no surprise that two recent students are working on North Sea oil rigs, where the welding has to be very good.

The lathe work requires a variety of jobs on a sample, which student Jordan Ledbury



The Aspire team. From left, Nicola Pearson, Dan Morris, Gina Harris, Simon Thomas and student Jordan Ledbury.

showed us when he'd finished a job on one of the cars there for practical work. Tutor Dan Morris has worked at some big name places before taking up an urge to teach, and now produces mechanics ready to handle basic tasks and learn more according to whatever job they take up.

It's a big workshop that holds a number of cars plus separate welding and machining shops. The pass rate is impressive - 100 percent reach Level 2 if they complete their chosen course. In a world where there is a growing demand for engineers this place is a vital source.

01584 811789 is the number for more information.

FOOTPATH NEWS

We had eight people out on footpaths at our March work party, enough for two teams.

One team repaired the steps at the bottom of Workhouse Bank. Long term residents and walkers will remember that this bank used to be impossible during the winter months. The steps we put in some years ago transformed it into a useable path all year round. They have taken a hard battering since but have stood up quite well. Just three steps needed replacing. The team also did some improvements to two other stiles and put in a fingerpost.

The second team put in a small plank bridge at Sproseley and made repairs to a stile on common lane.

The April work party is also planned to tackle more than one job so a good turn out is needed. From May we will also be carrying out clearance of summer growth along paths and at stiles. This can be done individually or as small groups.

More hands are always welcome so if you would like to join us on what is an enjoyable and rewarding activity, please get in touch. *Graham Simpson*

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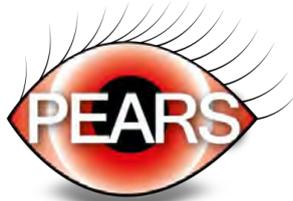
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Many families in Shropshire have some positive news this month, as the national living wage increases to £7.50 – a £500 pay rise for a full-time worker on the minimum wage – and the tax free personal allowance for all taxpayers rises for the seventh year in a row to £11,500. These two measures will particularly help the lowest paid, which is welcome.

Also this month Shropshire will start to benefit from the £12m of additional funding for social care from last month's Budget. Shropshire's acute hospital trust will be able to bid for some capital funding to help put in place improved triage streaming at A&Es to prepare for next winter. These measures will help alleviate acknowledged pressures in the system.

This month we will also start to make progress with Brexit, following the passage of the Brexit Bill through Parliament. The PM has been consistently clear – Brexit will happen and she is determined to make a success of it. There will be no attempt to stay in, re-join the EU, or rerun the national vote. It was the UK's decision to Leave, and we will take this path together.

Away from national policy, the way in which the majority of services for people in the Ludlow Constituency are provided is through Shropshire Council. Everything from roads to adult social care, bin collections, and planning are determined from Shirehall. Just as Whitehall has spent the last few years pushing responsibilities down to Shirehall, Shirehall is now looking to local communities to take on more responsibility for non-statutory services in their area.

So who we choose to represent us at local elections is very important. On 4th May, across

South Shropshire, voters will be asked to choose who they believe will effectively represent their area at Shropshire Council. I will be encouraging people to express their democratic right to vote, or to consider standing at either county level, or town and parish council level.

If you feel you could represent your community when important decisions which affect the local area where you live are being taken, I would encourage you to consider applying to be a candidate. Nomination packs can be requested from the Electoral Services team via e-mail at elections@shropshire.gov.uk or by phone on [0345 678 9015](tel:03456789015). Nominations must be submitted by 4pm on Tuesday 4th April 2017.

But clearly, not all will have the time or energy to stand for elected roles. So using your vote to back your preferred candidate can make a difference. If you are intending to vote in these upcoming elections, it is important to ensure you are registered to vote ahead of the deadline of 13th April 2017. This can be done online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. These are the first countywide local elections under the new system of Individual Voter Registration, which was introduced in 2014, so it is worth checking you are still registered, to avoid disappointment on polling day.

When more people feel able to stand for election, or use their vote, our democracy becomes more inclusive and representative. So whatever our political beliefs, we should encourage as much political participation in voting, whether by post or in the ballot box, as we can.



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THANK YOU

Valerie Cope and daughters, Jill Pottinger and Sue Lambert, would like to thank the hundreds of people who attended John Cope's funeral on 24th February, and wish sincere thanks to all those who expressed sympathy and made donations to a total of £1275.

We would also like to thank Adrian Satterly, of Cleobury Funeral Directors, for the care and understanding taken in all aspects of the funeral, and the doctors, nurses and carers who often went above and beyond their roles.

CLEOBURY COMMUNITY CELEBRATION

Saturday June 10th

Q. What is it?

A. A fun family day out to celebrate what Cleobury has to offer including local groups, organisations and talented individuals

Q. What's on?... Who do I contact to get involved?

A. Playing Field: Lots being planned, including fun run, food and a dog show

Contact: Matt Sheehan:
matthew.sheehan@cleobury.org.uk

Sports and Social Club: Will be open with activities including

face painting, junior disco & evening entertainment

Contact: Andy Goold: 01299 271448 / FB: Cleobury Mortimer Sports&Social club

Cleobury Creative: Using the Market Hall; Lacon Childe School and St Mary's Church Celebrating the artistic and creative talent of the people of Cleobury Mortimer

Contact: Clare Carter:
carterart@btinternet.com

Cleobury Town Trail: A fun trail for the kids and family with map and small prize for those who do it.

Health & Well Being: Showcasing groups and organisations locally to promote health and well-being awareness
Contact: Cllr Jon Bodenham
jon.bodenham@cleobury.org.uk

We would like to thank all those supporting this event including Cleobury Mortimer schools, and local businesses. Why not get involved?

Volunteer Coordinator: Pete Blackburn: petblack@me.com
Cleobury Mortimer Parish Council: 01299 271154

LEGION NEWS

On Sunday March 19th, 50 members and guests sat down to an excellent luncheon at the Sports and Social Club, catered for by Phil Gibbs. Following the meal, we were addressed by

Group Captain 'Jock' Brown who, as a serving RAF officer, told how he sees the future of Britain's armed forces.

Our next event is a coach outing to Stratford-on-Avon on April 19th. There is a lot to see in Stratford, so passengers will be able to choose their own programme for the day. Tickets cost £12 each, available from Ron Breakwell (270830) or Mark Baldwin at The Bookshop (270110).

On the fund-raising front, Cleobury can be proud of its recent achievements. Roger Gittins reports that a record £6,530 has been raised for the 2016 Poppy Appeal, and the Annual Quiz, organised by Lesley Ravenscroft, raised £123.50 for Fisher House, the hostel for the families of service men and women being treated at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Mark Baldwin

SPICY DEALING

Overheard in the Spice Empire late one evening, when the bill for a very good meal appeared. Customer: "As we're three old age pensioners, how about a special deal? Say 10 percent off?"

Reply: "Tell you what I'll do, sir. We normally charge 10 percent extra on a Sunday, but I'll knock that off for you." Laughs all round, bill paid. Good meal, too.



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FACTS AND TIPS FROM RED HARE

This month from stylist
Chelsea Hester:

FACT: Hair grows slightly faster in warm weather because heat stimulates the circulation and encourages hair growth. So if you're struggling to grow your hair, get out there and enjoy some sunshine.

TIP: To untangle your hair always use a wide toothed saw cut comb or specialized detangler. Never use a bristle brush as these are for styling purposes only. Application of a silicone free leave-in conditioner will also help.

CLEOBURY PATIENTS' VOICE

There are plans to create a single Emergency Department in Shropshire, and to downgrade the remaining hospital to a Planned Treatment Centre. But it seems both will still have A&Es. The newsletter explains what these so-called A&Es will cover: "Non-emergency injuries and ailments", "Some fractures" and "Minor head, eye or ear problems". Not an emergency service, but perhaps in the bizarre fantasy world these publicists inhabit, "A&E" now stands for "Ankles and Ears".

The same people appear to have created the video doing the

rounds of parish council meetings and shown to those who attended last month's Local Joint Committee meeting, held at the Medical Centre, on the subject of health and social care. The video is a slice of propaganda in support of the Future Fit programme, but neglects to mention that the latter needs over £300 million in additional, unsourced capital spending to realise its ambitions. In his budget the Chancellor announced monies of £375million for such NHS projects; this was for the whole of England. Need I say more?

In Shropshire social service now goes by the name of People2People. It's still run by Shropshire Council and our latest Council Tax bills include the maximum 2% uplift permitted by the government to assist with the social care funding shortfall exacerbated by Shropshire's seven-year tax freeze. At the LJC meeting, People2People announced that it would be setting up a "hub" in Cleobury in the near future: a regular, monthly drop-in session where people can bring their social care issues and concerns. Watch for further details.

Mark Radford

NEW FITNESS CLASS

SA Fitness is a new venture, starting out with a Fitness Focus

Group in the Parish Hall with a Monday morning one hour session, 40 minutes devoted to actual exercise. The first class will be on the 24th, all abilities catered for at just £5.00 a time.

Steve Adams is the man behind it all, on 07969 523 228 or safitness1@outlook.com. With summer around the corner and the beach calling, could be just the thing you need.

ROCK PATHFINDERS

This month's Thursday morning walks are on the 6th, when they gather at Ye Olde New Inn, Pound Green, Arley DY12 3LF or SO Reference 757792.

Then on the 20th the meeting point is the Island Pool on the Wolverhampton Road at Cookley. DY10 3RX or SO Ref: 853804. More information from Alan on 01299 400304.

HORTICULTURAL NEWS

The speaker from Wyre Forest parks department was unable to come in March. The place was taken by Richard and Leslie Betts who entertained with some audio visual presentations.

Our next meeting is on April 10th and we will be learning how to sharpen our blunt tools, so please bring them along.

Our May meeting is on the 6th at 8.00 o'clock in the Methodist hall.

Liz Smurthwaite.



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The April Clarion Social Calendar

Part One

Date	Time	Details	Contact	Telephone
Sat 1 st		Its April Fool's Day. Not that we'd be trying any false stories in the Clarion.....		
	8.00am	Sale of Household Goods, Knowle Sports Ground, Clee Hill		
Sun 2 nd	6.00	Open Mic Night at the Kings Arms, Church Street		
Wed 5 th	10.00	Walking for Health step out from the Sports Centre	Alan Kimber	CM271 754
	8.00	Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall	Sonia Pearsall	01584 890874
Thurs 6 th		BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY		
	10.30am	Rock Pathfinders meet at Pound Green, Arley. PAGE 31	Alan	91288 400304
	7.00	Healing for Wholeness for Lent, at St Mary's Church. PAGE 7		
	7.30	Cleobury Swifts Group, Methodist Hall, Church Street. PAGE 11		
Mon 10 th	6.30	Writing Group, Library, Love Lane. PAGE 5	Jim Reynolds	CM270 642
	8.00	Horticultural Society meet at Methodist Hall	Flo Hadley	CM271 762
Tues 11 th	7.25am	Breakfast Club meets at Lacon Childe School. PAGE 11		
	5.00	Cleobury Country AGM, in the Centre. PAGE 9	Clare Todd	CM272 300
	7.00	Cleobury W.I. meet at the Market Hall. PAGE 21	Judy Sant	CM270 983
Wed 12 th	10.00	CoCo Coffee Morning, Market Hall, £1.50 for coffee & homemade cake		
	7.30	Neen Savage W.I., Village Hall, talk: "Life on a Smallholding"		
	8.00	Royal British Legion Meet at The Bell, Lower Street	David Taylor	CM270 793

BROMYARD SPEED FESTIVAL, APRIL 1st and 2nd

Details of this event arrived rather late, but we did hear that it was a good weekend last year. For 2017 the organisers have added a re-creation of the 1946 Bringsty Common Grand Prix on Saturday, featuring motorcycles of the era when that event happened. It will be a time trial on private land, with no access for spectators.

On Sunday the Festival will feature two early Land Speed Record contenders, Parry Thomas's famous 'Babs' and the 28 litre Fiat from Pre World War One days. They will be in action around the town, along with lots of vintage and classic cars and motorcycles. Prominent amongst the two-wheelers will be a collection of Italian Laverdas, both road and race machines, a famous make that was imported into the country by the Slater Brothers of Colington, just down the road from Bromyard. In this neck of the woods Laverda is better known for its combine harvesters, of course.

The action starts at 10.30 and is expected to last until early afternoon. Expect crowds and quite a lot of noise, not to mention some unusual odours from the alcohol based fuels the very early racing machinery will be burning and the distinctive whiff of castor oil that they also use. There is no racing, just demonstration runs that will evoke the sights and sounds of a past era. Great fun for petrol heads.



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Thurs 13th		GREEN WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY		
		Deadline to register to vote in May's local election. PAGE 27		
Fri 14th	10.30am	Children's Easter Egg Hunt from Sports & Social Club. PAGE 23		
Sat 15th	9.30am	Farmers Market, in and around St Marys Church	Clare Todd	CM272 300
Mon 17th	7.30	Reading Group meet at The Library, Love Lane. PAGE 23		
Wed 19th		Royal British Legion outing to Stratford-on-Avon. PAGE 29	Mark Baldwin	CM270 110
	10.00	Walking for Health leave the Sport Centre for a social stroll	Alan	CM271 754
	7.30	Stottesdon W.I. meet at Chorley Village Hall. PAGE 39		
	8.00	Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall	Sonia Pearsall	01584 890874
Thurs 20th		BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY		
	10.30am	Rock Pathfinders meet at Island Pool, Cookley. PAGE 31		
Fri 21st	8.00	Bingo Night at Doddington Village Hall	Sonia Pearsall	01584 890874
Sat 22nd		Clows top to Bristol. Picking up in Cleobury. PAGE 39	Mrs Gregory	01584 891464
	7.00	Harborough Singers at St Mary's Church, Bridgnorth. PAGE 9		
	7.30	Flicks in the Sticks, Parish Hall. Tom Hanks in "Bridge of Spies"		
Mon 24th	9.00	SA Fitness classes start at the Parish Hall. PAGE 31		
Wed 26th	10.00am	CoCo Coffee Morning, Market Hall		
	10.30am	Charity Bridge for Alzheimers, Parish Rooms, Blakedown. PAGE 9		
	7.30	Clows Top Gardening Club, Victory Hall, Clows Top. PAGE 7		
Thurs 27th		GREEN WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY		
	7.30	Open Mic Night at the Sports & Social Club. PAGE 23		
Fri 28th	8.00	Bingo Night at Doddington Village Hall	Sonia Pearsall	01584 890874
		AND LOOKING FORWARD TO MAY.....		
Wed 3rd	10.00am	Walking for health start out from the Sports Centre, Love Lane.	Alan Kimber	CM271 754
	8.00	Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall	Sonia Pearsall	01584 890874
Thurs 4th		LOCAL ELECTIONS. PLEASE USE YOUR VOTE		
		BLACK WHEELIE BINS & RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY		

ADVERTISING YOUR EVENT IN THE CLARION

Entering brief details of any local event on these pages is free of charge. You just need to send brief details to the Editor (contact details on Page 63) and we will happily give you a mention in both the editorial pages and the Social Calendar.

If you prefer to make more of a splash and take a paid advertisement we are naturally happy to help. We do try to cover as many local events as possible, but the editorial 'team' for such work is one elderly man, so there are limits to how much we can do. But if you want to send a report about your own efforts we welcome such contributions, with the proviso that they are subject to editing where necessary. Space is always at a premium on these pages, so keep it brief.

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This month has seen a large increase in the number of incidents relating to animals. There have been multiple reports of dogs acting aggressively towards passers-by and unfortunately some reports of them attacking both other dogs and people. These reports are being dealt with individually and where possible we will look at taking action. These incidents are likely to affect Cleobury's crime figures for the last month with dog aggression being classed as anti social behaviour and where a dog has bitten, it is classed as an assault.

I would ask all animal owners to ensure you are capable of appropriately controlling your animal if you take it out in public. If you can not control the animal please ensure that it is always on a lead and if necessary a muzzle is used. Failure to comply with this could result in a dog control order or potential criminal convictions. If you feel that a dog is being aggressive or is a danger please report it via 101. This also applies to failing to remove dog faeces.

It has also been reported that a number of cats have been poisoned around Cleobury recently. I would like to advise people that this is potentially linked to the use of antifreeze in

water features. Although if anyone suspects foul play, please contact the police.

The Safer Neighbourhood team are currently working along side a PCSO from Shrewsbury police station in delivering a series of lessons in Lacon Childe School regarding healthy relationships and "banter". So far these lessons have been very successful. I would ask that if your child is taking part in these lessons you support it.

Another subject never far from local policing is parking around schools; whilst it is rarely reported it is frequently commented on. We have been trying to get around schools and so far have been pleasantly surprised by the results. Please when collecting your child from school consider those who live in the vicinity of the school. They may require emergency access to their drive and when parking on the road please ensure there is enough room for a fire engine to pass should it need to. Walking a little bit further to drop your child is a small price to pay.

If you wish to get in touch please contact ch.snt@westmercia.pnn.police.uk if you wish to report a crime please use the 101 service or in emergencies 999

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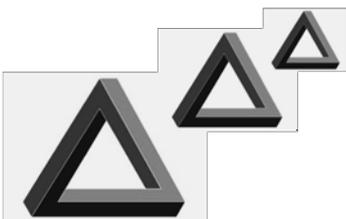
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No news yet from Shropshire Council about the responses (or result) of their Bus Strategy but I see from the latest Conservative local newsletter that our County Councillor Gwil Butler sits on the board of the RSN (Rural Services Network) for Shropshire that aims 'to send a clear and loud voice to government in support of our rural communities' which includes public transport funding issues. Unfortunately, this vision does not appear to be shared by the new Transport Minister, Andrew Jones, who recently told a bus conference 'An industry which requires public subsidy is not an industry which has a healthy, robust, and sustainable future'. This may not be a problem in London (although even there, evening and Sunday services would struggle without support) but most rural bus routes could not run without a subsidy and this would be a recipe for disaster for those without access to a car. Oddly, the same argument does not seem to apply to the railways, which the government happily subsidises, or the aviation industry which is under taxed and not required to pay for the pollution it causes. Perhaps rural bus passengers are not considered important enough to be given a similar bung. However, they do have votes...

Back on the 2L, The usual run of breakdowns continues with several no shows and delays. One early service to Kiddy struggled as far as Bewdley before grinding to a halt wreathed in smoke, apparently from the clutch and with the passengers opening all the windows to let it out. At least one youngster was looking a rather odd colour by this time... Luckily a 2 service was following behind and picked them up without too much delay. The driver then asked the transferring passengers if everything was OK which produced a response which could not possibly be repeated in a family publication. Bewdley seems to be jinxed as other problems

have also occurred there. The latest row concerns a property company which wants to build houses on The Lakes Road and has proposed that the 2/2L be rerouted to give them better access. However, this would involve the service going down even narrower back streets than it does now so the suggestion is that yellow lines be introduced preventing those residents from parking outside their houses. Not surprisingly, this proposal has not been well received.

Another Worcester bound user who misses the fact that the 2L and 303 services no longer co-ordinate, has developed a strategy which involves driving to Hartlebury and parking then jumping on the 303 into Worcester. Unfortunately, this only works if the 303 turns up – which it didn't. At least not for 45 minutes when the driver explained that it was a relief service due to the original bus breaking down. The return service was little better with the vehicle making some very odd and worrying noises. It did make it as far as Hartlebury but whether it got all the way to Kiddy is not known.

However, there is always someone worse off than you are: The inhabitants of a remote Spanish village, La Torre d'Orista, near Barcelona, have just one bus a year which arrives on the first Monday in March. They were awaiting its appearance with some excitement when they spotted a notice saying it had been cancelled... Apparently the reason given was the fact that few locals use the service due to the high ticket price of about £5.20.

No more news yet on any replacement for Diamond on the 2L. I will make further enquiries and let you know what I discover. However, as promised last month, some details of a radical new Diamond initiative have now been revealed and should appear somewhere in this issue.

Steve Todd

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Gordon Lines has crammed a lot into his life, learning a great deal as he progressed. 14 years in the RAF, where he worked on counter intelligence, close protection of VIPs and anti terrorism. Plus ten years in a variety of jobs in South Africa.

You could call him a hard man, but he applies the lessons life has taught helping others. He and partner Diane, herself a nursing trainer, run the 4Ever Wellness Centre from their new home on Tenbury Road, offering a wide range of aid and tuition

to help troubled people move on.

Like the 40 year old man with a very troubled history from childhood. Three years later he has the self confidence to hold a post as security officer at a busy hospital. What Gordon did was bring out the abilities that a life of neglect had buried.

Gordon's ability to talk about complex treatments reflects a hunger for learning, and he can quote a string of qualifications. But look at the alpacas and chickens in the garden and you realise there's a gentle side to this man; "Children love alpacas and chickens. And lonely people will often have an animal as a companion."

He offers life coaching to help with any form of pressure, therapy and counselling to help with illness, depression and other mental issues. And Intervention Therapy, aimed at businesses, to save time and money dealing with Mental Health at Work issues. Call him for details.

01299 211097 or email
gordon@4everwellnesscentre.co
m

STOTTESDON W.I.

The year started on a positive note, with a number of new members enrolling. We had a seamless transition to new leadership as Helena Hale took up her role of President. Laura Grey has taken us into the 21Century, minuting meetings on-line for our instant perusal.

We have had two lively meetings, with remedies from Neal's Yard last month, and our Open Evening attended by around 40. All fascinated by John Swift's account of the early days of his family bakery. John and his family are constantly innovating with new flours and techniques (I recommend their Spelt and Shropshire Brown loaves) It was an education to learn about changes to rural life as seen through the eyes of the local baker. John has found himself exploring the history of the baking industry through his recent appearance on BBC's Victorian Baker series.

Do join us for a meeting soon:
April 19th: CPR and
Defibrillation: Duncan Turner &
Bill Brown at Chorley Village
Hall , 7.30 p.m. *Marian Wootton*

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April in the Wyre Forest

Linda Iles

The cacophony of birdsong on the forest edges announces that spring is here. Tomorrow morning I'll be joining in the annual deer census so I'm hoping that the dawn will be fine and melodious to compensate me for that last hour in a nice, warm bed.

April sees the arrival of summer migrants such as swallows, redstarts, chiffchaffs and blackcaps, and we eagerly await the evocative call of the cuckoo. This seasonal explosion of song is a way of establishing the territories in which breeding pairs will nest and find the food needed to rear their young. The nature of the territory depends on the habitat which that bird needs: some preferring heather and young birch, for instance, while others find food and nesting holes in mature oak trees. The size of the territory depends on the abundance of resources and the pressure of competition from the neighbours. To attract a good number and variety of birds there needs to be a patchwork of different habitats with the range of tree species and ages of growth present in a well-managed woodland. As Wyre has broadleaved and coniferous trees with areas of wetland, heathland, pasture, orchards and gardens all intermingled it offers a relatively attractive home for resident birds and summer visitors.

As I have mentioned in these articles before, the national picture for woodland birds is far from encouraging, with an overall reduction in numbers of over 75% since 1970. The wood warblers are becoming very scarce in Wyre: they, like the chiffchaff, nest in low shrubs near the

ground and are very susceptible to disturbance. Though the major factor in their decline may be the loss of their winter habitat in Africa it still behoves us to do what we can here to conserve this delightful summer visitor.



A rare sight today, the pied flycatcher.

I remember in the early days of the Discovery Centre that a pied flycatcher nested in a bird box at the back of our original forest classroom: it was a good choice as there used to be a small pond there for pond dipping and many insects would have been attracted to the water. I haven't seen a pied flycatcher since, and again, changes in winter habitats in Africa plus climate change seem to be implicated. More bird boxes, in a variety of different situations, can only be a good thing.

And by the way, dear reader, I've started to finish my garden pond with pebbly, rocky and vegetated edges and hope the amphibian residents will be happy with the result as well as the human ones!

Linda Iles



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MICHAEL TURNER



The Eureka Jazz Band led the hearse from Saint Mary's Place to the Parish Church for friends to say their final farewell to Michael.

It was a wet, overcast day on March 22nd when Michael Turner was laid to rest, and his friends gathered in the Parish Church to say their sad farewells.

A quiet, gentle man who was a regular sight walking slowly around the town, he spoke only when spoken to, his shyness and near blindness no aid to social awareness.

POETRY PLEASES

The Poetry Club that gathers in the Library every month, is gently growing, with the promise of two new faces at the late March meeting. The fact that the art form is actively

recognised on BBC Radio Four does encourage people to ask just what the local association does. The answer is very simple - you can read your own or a favourite author's verse, or just sit and listen. Last Monday of the month, starting at 7.30 and ending when the members choose. The sharing of a bottle of wine does add to the friendly atmosphere.

Which is a good point to introduce you to the work of Neen Savage's Parish Poet. This unidentified person pens rhymes about the Parish Council there and finds the work frequently torn down. We thought this sample from July last year was too good to throw away:

"The Annual Parish Meeting was a bit of a shame

The Parish turned out, but no councillors came!

They chose the date and invited us all

To join them, for the evening, at Neen Savage Hall.

The parishioners arrived, to listen and share

Their thoughts and worries with people who care.

But instead of a welcome and hospitable greeting,

Our elected councillors disregarded the meeting.

So the residents sat and discussed what to do

To bring back harmony between old and new.

But the message is clear and we can guess what it meant,

They have no time for us - who they represent.

DEFIBRILLATOR ON THE HILL

An emergency facility recently installed at the Hopton Bank Service Station in Doddington is a provision that could be a life saver. The big advantage with this one is that it's on the forecourt of the garage and is available 24 hours a day.

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This is a move on from the original idea of units being kept on business premises. But those places are not always open, while the Doddington unit is there and available when the garage is closed. We just hope that it's never needed.

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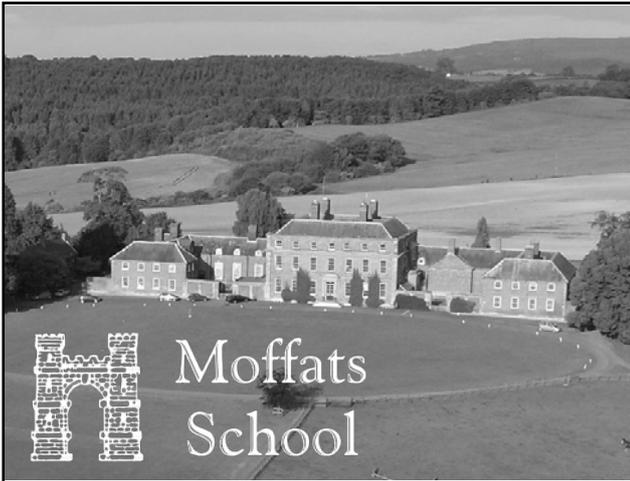
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Paul French adds to his stories about local men and their involvement in the 1914 -18 Great War. This month he looks at the Rippard family.

Large families were common at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Often all of the sons in a family would have signed on to serve in the Great War. Shall we consider this for a moment.

One son enlists and whilst parents may have been proud, there would have been concerns, fears and reservations. The more sons there were the greater these burdens would have been. So in 2017 we can only surmise how Robert and Mary Rippard felt when they thought about their seven sons who went off to serve.

This piece deals with two of the brothers who died directly either as a result of wounds or of long term problems caused by their service. The other five came home.

Albert George Rippard was born in 1887 at 88 High St Cleobury Mortimer. In 1891 the census records him living with his brothers in Upper Town in Cleobury. The family consisted of Robert J aged seven, John six, twins Joseph and Samuel aged five, Frederick two and Richard aged two months. Robert was recorded as having been born in Nova Scotia!

In the 1901 census Joseph and Samuel are not recorded, but Mary Elizabeth born in 1893 is. Albert is present and recorded as a "tool carrier". He enlisted at Bowmere Heath Shropshire in the King's Shropshire Light Infantry in 1906 and at some stage between 1906 and 1911 found himself in India because he is recorded as "absent" in that year's census. He shipped to France and is recorded there in December 1914 and subsequently to Salonica. From an earlier piece we know that Salonica was plagued by mosquitoes and so it was that he was shipped home with malaria as a result.

Albert was transferred to Labour Corps and worked for a farmer in Ellesmere. This was due to his being classed not suitable to serve at the front. However farm work at that time was very physical but essential to the war effort, so Albert certainly continued to "serve". He died in Prees Military Hospital of pneumonia on 11th November 1918.

In 1903 Robert then aged 19 and living in Shrewsbury enlisted in the KSLI and was

probably in the Army Reserve at the outbreak of war. Mobilized on 5th August 1914 he landed in France on the 10th September 1914. Hooge is a small village close to Ypres in Belgium. It saw intense fighting from 1914 to 28th September 1918 when it was finally retaken by the British after changing hands many times. It was during one of these "changing of hands" that Robert died on 9th August 1914. Even in "quiet" times Allied casualty rates averaged 300 per day throughout the war at Hooge.

It is well known that both sides used mining techniques to get under opposing trenches and then detonate explosives to destroy positions. Hooge was no exception and on 19th July 1915 one of the largest explosions of the war was detonated by the Royal Engineers 175 Tunnelling Company. This allowed the Allies to retake the position. What was new was that in the battle for Hooge on the 30th July 1915 the Germans first used in earnest the flame thrower or "liquid fire" as it was known. The Germans regained the position on this day.

Robert was in the action attacking Hooge Crater on 9th August 1915 and it was here that he died. He is commemorated on the Menin Gate and on the Knowbury War Memorial. The flame thrower was a fearsome weapon and although during this action casualties were not high, the effect of the weapon was demoralising and a psychological success. The writer recalls a relative describing the horror of being confronted by a flame thrower during the retreat from Dunkirk in WW2...far more frightening than anything experienced before. We cannot imagine what it was like, apparently it was incredibly noisy apart from anything else.

Edmund Blunden in his poem 'Trench raid near Hooge' wrote 'Through the black reached strange long rosy fingers'. I would be happy to think that Robert with a great deal on his mind anyway did not experience those "long rosy fingers"

Thank you Robert and Albert.

Paul French

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Ruth Brunger started Tranquillity Travel 14 years ago for the best of reasons - she was unimpressed by the service she got from travel agents and was sure she could do better. At first she worked from home, keeping the overheads low and only needing room for herself, desk, phone and a growing range of catalogues and information.

In just two years she moved to a room at the Mercure Hotel on Bewdley's Habberley Road. A good sense choice, with free parking, lots of people passing the door on their way to the sports and gym facilities and the cafe just around the corner. The coffee's great, by the way.

So is the service, as we found out. Not long ago they helped a local school arrange a trip to New York. Great treat for the children, but when they arrived at the hotel there'd been a muddle over the booking and they weren't expected. Can you imagine being the teachers responsible for a large party of other people's children and no rooms at your distant hotel?

The 24 hours a day / seven days a week customer contact line at Tranquillity is rather a special one; it goes straight to Ruth's mobile. She got a call at 11.00pm and stayed on the line until 3.00 am when the matter was sorted and the children settled. In one teacher's words:

"We couldn't have done anything without you." It's no surprise that school is a regular customer.

There's a happy atmosphere at this all-women office, each of the ladies with specialist knowledge of different countries and aspects of travel. And travel doesn't just mean picking up a

brochure and booking your dates; their special knowledge means asking you just what you're looking for and coming up with a range of options to tempt you, often with little bits of advice based on their own experience.



Ruth Brunger (left) and Philippa Brewell, Social Media Fairy and Historic Tour specialist.

They have one of the friendliest websites I've ever used, rich with stunning photos and every staff member's favourite places and experiences. Senior Consultant Emma Hall tells you her most memorable experience was jumping out of an airplane at 12,000 feet above Lake Taupo in New Zealand - maximum respect!

On the less exotic side, they organise trips to shows and special venues. Once more there's evidence of good thinking in the way they do. You park your car in the Mercure at no charge and there's none of that time wasting stopping along the way to pick up other members of the party. You just

get together, have an easy trip to wherever you've chosen and all get back together to collect the car and drive home.

There's almost no limit to what they can book for you, including weddings and family holidays. We talked to Philippa Brewell as Ruth dealt with a customer and she emphasised the advantage of your outing, whatever it is, being handled by someone who knows the ropes and will make sure any travel abroad is covered by proper insurance via recognised bodies ABTA or ATOL, whose service covers out of the ordinary problems like the ash cloud from Iceland that upset air travel over a huge area. When one of Philippa's historic UK trips is under way, to venues like Buckingham Palace or Chatsworth, she travels on the coach and exploits her social media knowledge to avoid any delays.

Ruth's clear aim on the day she started the business was to put customer satisfaction at the top of the priority list. The growth in the 14 years since that date, both in the number of customers and the range of travel available, suggests that she got it right and hasn't lost sight of the ambition since. It may sound a little old fashioned as a business plan, but happy customers come back for more and tell their friends about their good experience. Not old fashioned at all, just plain common sense.

Tranquillity Travel is on 01299 400130 and is open 9.30 to 5.30 Monday to Friday and 9.30 to 3.30 on Saturday. Doesn't suit you? No problem, just call and they'll fit in to suit you. It's a well established habit.

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DIAMOND BUSES IN WORLD FIRST

At last, Diamond buses are moving into the 21st Century!. It has just been announced that they are to trial a revolutionary new type of electric bus and have selected the 2L route for the initial runs due to the difficult nature of the terrain which will create a more testing environment. Basically, the design builds upon existing EcoBus principles including the low emission version that Diamond already use from time to time on the 2L route and on which most of us have travelled at some point.

The new design, which is a joint venture between the UK and the USA, is said to be light years ahead of existing vehicles and incorporates a number of design features such as built in solar panels and regenerative braking as used on Formula 1 cars and which charges the batteries when the brakes are used. There are a number of other features including a monocoque body/chassis based on aviation technology and the use of advanced materials including graphene and carbon fibre which have been combined to create a very light but strong structure. The design has been tested in a wind tunnel to ensure it is as aerodynamically efficient as possible and is fitted with low rolling resistance tyres. No photo was available as the 'Clarion' went to press but the effect is said to be stunning.

The main power source is a bank of the latest Lithium-air batteries which are situated under the floor and which are said to provide three times the power for a third of the weight of the Lithium-ion units currently used on most electric vehicles. These are backed up with a small diesel motor at the rear for emergency 'get you home' use only,

resulting in very low emissions and should make the vehicle exempt from any current or proposed congestion or emission charges. Each wheel is powered by a separate electric motor which is a heavier duty version of those used on Tesla cars and this system gives better traction in slippery conditions enabling power to be fed to each wheel as needed.

However, the most radical feature is in the cabin where all seats are fitted with an adjustable pedal system which can be operated by passengers either using hands or feet to generate electricity which is fed to the batteries to keep them topped up. The amount generated is individually measured and, as an initial incentive, passengers will receive a full or partial refund on the cost of their tickets depending on how much energy they have produced. Naturally, anyone using an older persons or similar subsidised pass will not be eligible for a refund but will have the benefit of free exercise, thus saving them the cost of gym membership and improving their overall health levels. Anyone requesting special treatment as a result of a medical condition must produce a Doctors note to back up their claim. This feature has the added advantage that, in the unlikely event of both flat batteries and diesel engine failure, occupants will be able to pedal their way out of trouble.

No firm date has yet been set for the commencement of this trial but as a World first, it will no doubt generate a great deal of publicity and really put Cleobury on the map. More information on this initiative will be published when it is received.

Steve 'Scoop' Todd



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**IS THERE AN OBOIST
IN THE HOUSE?**



Conductor Michael Lloyd and soprano Alison Roddy take a bow.

A packed St Mary's church on a Sunday evening in March was slightly bemused when the conductor of the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra, Michael Lloyd, called the concert to a halt only three minutes from the beginning. The first oboe, Emma Cowper, had clearly been struggling to produce more than a handful of notes, and so Lloyd stopped the proceedings. A distressed Emma attempted to repair a couple of broken key springs during the hiatus, but without success, prompting the conductor to turn to the audience and say "I think

this is where I'm supposed to tell some jokes." He graciously gave Emma a few more minutes while he regaled us with a similar story from his vast concert experience, whereupon an oboist did appear from the audience. Nicky Brass who was scheduled to play a third oboe part after the interval in the Mahler Symphony stepped up to the plate. Given the nod, she slipped unobtrusively into Emma's seat and after a short tuning up, Brahms' St Anthoni Variations began again, this time with the crucial 1st oboe line intact. Everyone, including the orchestra members, breathed a mental sigh of relief. Following on from the Brahms (making, incidentally, a welcome programming change from the obligatory concert overture) was Mozart's charming Exultate Jubilate, performed with flawless virtuosity by soprano Alison Roddy. She was accompanied with sensitivity by the orchestra, one of the finest groups of amateur musicians in the Midlands.

It's not often Mahler comes to Cleobury, and this was an inspired choice. BPO gave a beautifully balanced account of

his fourth Symphony, the smallest and sunniest of Mahler's symphonic output. They responded tastefully to Lloyd's flexible tempi, and were joined by Alison Roddy for the final movement, in which the soprano voices a child's poetically naive view of heaven. The compositional style veers from simplistic to the sophisticated in the unique sound world of Mahler's scoring, where numerous players are given exquisite little solos, and in which the tutti passages are illuminated by a wide range of playing techniques. For instance the spectacular 'Schallbecher auf' in which members of the woodwinds lift their instruments up, bells pointing out into the audience (incidentally making it somewhat difficult to read the copy, I was informed over a libation in the KA afterwards). It was a great evening and one which supported the Friends of St Mary's, not only financially, but also showed off their considerable organisational skills to the benefit of the Cleobury community.

Linda Fowler

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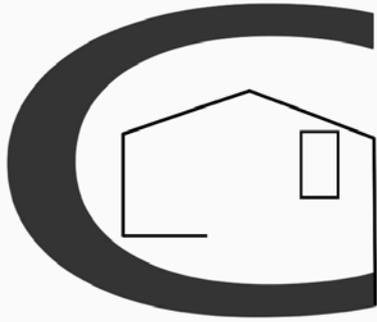
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COACH TRIP

Mrs Gregory up on Clee Hill is running a coach trip to Bristol on the 22nd of this month. All proceeds from these trips go to charity.

Details from Mrs Gregory on 01584 891464.

NEEN SAVAGE W.I.

Our March speaker was John Sant, who lives in Cleobury Mortimer and runs his own company recycling white goods. He gave a very interesting talk and made us look at recycling white goods in a whole new way.

Our next meeting will be on April 12th at 7.30 in Neen Savage village hall with a visit from Mrs A MacKirdy who will be talking about life on a smallholding - should be really interesting for anyone for wants to opt for the good life.

Julie Hobin

EARLY MORNING BIRD SONG

There's a chance for early risers to see and listen to birds singing in the Novers Limeworks Wood, Clee Hill, on May 13th. It's a joint venture by the Clee Hill Community Wildlife Group and Titterstone Clee Heritage Trust, and they will be gathering at The Novers car park for a 7.30 start. That's located off the B4214 south of Clee Hill Village or at

Ordnance Survey map reference SO597738 if you prefer.

There is a lot of activity up on the hill, reflecting interest in the bird life there. They are involved in a Curlew, Lapwing and other birds survey to assess the birds' security in the area. See www.ShropsCWGs.org.uk for more information about this enthusiastic group's work.

BAYTON CHURCH UPDATE

Major works have been taking place at Bayton Church since last June. The church now has a new roof that looks very smart and will keep the weather out for years to come. There have also been major problems with the floor; the old flagstones had eroded over the years and this plus considerable water damage has necessitated a new floor. A major task that involved digging down to the bedrock and building a complete new floor to alleviate water and damp. Work is going well and the whole project will hopefully be completed by May.

Over the months the church has been closed, the regular services have been transferred to either Mamble or Clows Top churches and functions have been held around Bayton, Mamble and Clows Top.

Brian Link

FREE TO A GOOD HOME

That's the sort of headline that normally goes with a picture of an appealing cat or dog, but this offer is very different.....



It's a Concept Freedom Trail bike, 23 inch frame and looking in pretty good condition, fitted with a Currie Electro Drive unit to help up steep hills. In fact the drive unit's lead acid battery is dead and has become warped in its carrier, so it needs some work and money if you want the extra luxury that offers.

Currie has a website and can supply just about everything you're likely to need, so it's a proposition for a handy man or woman. Robert Westwood can tell you more - he's on rjw261@btopenworld.com.

SILLY BIT

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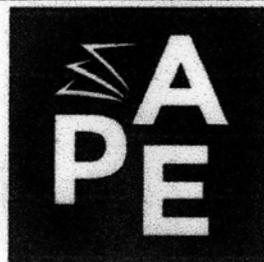
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THE DEADLINE FOR THE MAY ISSUE IS APRIL 25th

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Erica Hinwood
MARLA MNAEA
Office Manager

A new minimum level of energy efficiency will be about to come into force this time next year, so it's worth acting now to make sure your property will comply. Every property for rent in England and Wales must have a minimum EPC rating of E from April 2018, otherwise the landlord could be open to enforcement action. The rules apply to domestic and non-domestic properties, and the Government has just issued official guidance for non-domestic property landlords. You can find a link to read the guidance in full by visiting our website www.nockdeighton.co.uk and heading to the Blog section.



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