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FEBRUARY 2022

FIONA'S TOP SHOP



Councillor Paul French hands the Clarion Cup over to a very happy looking Fiona.

Flowers by Fiona was judged the best presented Christmas window display when the judges walked the main street in December. It was quite a close run thing, but after much debate the editor, Councillor Paul French and Council Finance Officer Dorothy McBride agreed that Fiona deserved the Clarion Cup for a neat and colourful

display of what she sells so well through the year. The cup sits in her window.

Our thanks to all the local businesses who put on a good range of colourful displays to brighten the place through the festive season.

CLEOBURY HILLS DEMOLITION

The work of demolishing the Cleobury Hills nursing home in its rather inadequate form has begun, with two large grabs tearing the place down after the solar panels had been removed. Not much fun for those living close by and having the crash of a falling building disturbing the peace of their day.

One resident has drafted a letter of protest at the noise and circulated it to a list of local bodies. It gives a contact address as No 3 Cottage Gardens but no name or contact number. It suggests that local residents should approach the council and via them a meeting of various

parties should discuss what should be built on the site.

It does sound rather futile, because the site belongs to Capulet Care and apparently they intend to rebuild the home and get it open.

THE SCAM SCUM NEVER SLEEP

Please pardon that strong language, but the editor does get short of patience with the nasty people who are trying to rob us. The 'Which' Scam Alert Service advises that the latest trick is sending a message that looks like it's from the Post Office, or parcel delivery people like DPD. They say they couldn't deliver a parcel and want you to pay a modest Redelivery Charge to try again. And then invite you to give personal details, which they can pass on to other thieves. Obviously this was a popular scam at Christmas, but don't think they'll stop at that. I've had a message from the American Post Office! Beware JR



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The Cleobury Clarion, February 2022
Volume Seventeen - Edition Ten



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THE NEARLY DEAD POETS' SOCIETY

As the library was closed over the Christmas and New Year holiday, our last meeting in 2021 was in November. A little early for wine and mince pies, but we were persuaded.

Poems about Bonfires produced a range of styles, not all of them about poor old Guido Fawkes. As ever, we laughed a lot before the formal exchange of greetings cards and good wishes for the festive time.

By the time you read this we will have held our January meeting and offered various views and styles on the matter of 'Resolution'. With luck, some of us may have made our New Year ones and not broken them yet. Our February date is the 28th, 7.30 in the library.

THE CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

Only twelve days before Christmas, it was natural to serve a little wine courtesy of Lilian and mince pies from Marian. It was good to

welcome Gill Guest back from a Covid-driven absence, to be offered one of Marian's collected pieces to read. The true Christmas spirit.

'Time' was our theme and Marian recounted the discipline she'd known through school and on into work before retirement and easing of the demand. Lilian offered an actor in a hurry for a vital interview, then reverted back to the beginning and left us with a choice of endings, which was much appreciated. The editor summed up the world of expensive timepieces with a quote from an old chum about the price of a Ferrari watch: "You must remember it's a Ferrari, so it goes faster." It's a strange world out there.

We meet at 6.30 in the library on February 14th, having swapped tales in January about "New Start."

And finally, the editor offers apologies to Marian and Vivian for getting their November stories muddled. It's his age, y'know.

ERRATUM

Could it have been an early sipping of Christmas cheer that got the editor in such a muddle for the December/January issue? He certainly got it wrong in reporting Parish Hall matters.

Val Breakwell having stepped down as chair of the Hall committee, her place was taken by James Griffiths, not the Robinson that we suggested. And if you call Janet Short about booking the Hall, don't dial the 270107 number we gave. You'll get proper service on the correct number - 271070. It's the one given in the Hall's own advertisement.

Apologies to all concerned. Add these two bumbles to the mess he made of his report of the Creative Writing Group pieces written by Marian and Vivian last year and he'd better get his act back together for the New Year.

SILLY BIT

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Anon.**



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LOCAL TALENT MADE CLOWS TOP SPECIAL

I've written enthusiastically about Remi Harris's great guitar talent before, when he presented under the title of the Gipsy Jazz Guitarist. So just how well would he perform at a Rock n' Blues Night at Clows Top's Victory Hall back in November of last year? There's a simple answer to that question - the man just gets better.

Remi was joined by vocalist Dave Small, bass player Darren Beale and on drums Shane Dixon. These three all have work with other bands, so you might think they'd take a while to gel as a band, but no such worries. Every man is an accomplished musician and from the first note they sounded like regular performers together.



From left: Remi Harris, Shane Dixon on drums, vocalist Dave Small and bassist Darren Beale.

Dave Small is a good vocalist and would add a touch on bongo drums at intervals; a good, strong stage personality. Bass players don't normally get a chance to shine in rock or blues bands, but Darren Beale was the most energetic and active I can remember. Shane Dixon was a good match for these abilities and the overall effect had the audience settling down with their drinks to have a good evening.

There was more rock than blues through the evening, and at one stage Remi rounded off a great rock solo with a switch to a blues number in an impressively easy style. He leads the band, but each member gets a solo turn under his direction, the audience applauding the soloist as the band comes back in together.

I did take a notebook, intending to jot down what numbers were announced, but got so caught up in the music that I never touched the book. They were so good that I just wanted to listen and not play at being a reporter. It was a great evening, another success for the Victory Hall that was looking very smart after some hard work during lockdown and at £12 a head great value.

I sat with John Hands and Suzanne France and they follow Remi's local evenings in The Hatchery. They kindly persuaded Remi's partner Dani to squeeze me in for the late December evening there, but the arrival of the latest Coronavirus variant saw that postponed until safer times. I'm really looking forward to that treat, whenever it's possible.

If you see a Remi Harris gig advertised, get in fast as the tickets go quickly. JR

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HORATIO NELSON AT HOPTON WAFERS

Social events at Hopton's very fine Parish Hall are sadly few. But when they do happen they are pretty damned special. After all, you don't get the chance to sit and listen to Horatio Nelson talk about his social and military lives (navel and naval?) very often. With the reputation of such events gently growing, it was no surprise that the event was a sell-out.

Comedian Max Keen was Horatio for the evening, chatting to guests before Chris Woodward introduced the star of the show, who kept calling Chris "Your Highness" or "Your Excellency" as he began to unfold the story of England's great naval hero and the tactics he used to foil both French and Spanish enemies.

He was dressed in a pretty down-at-heel admiral's outfit at first, but between the many laughs there was a deep respect for the man whose story he was telling and an admiration for the sheer bravery that saw him sail straight at larger enemy craft and sweep to one side with cannons blazing as

they passed. Nelson was clever at taking out the masts of the enemy, which left craft with no forward drive or the ability to manoeuvre. If enemy fire hit the gun crews, they were lifted out of the way and other men took over. It was a merciless business.

An interval in the story telling brought in the promised five star buffet. Chicken (or halloumi for the veggies) on a bed of spicy aubergine, pepper, chickpea and tomato. A really fine dish and the offer of second servings was quickly taken up. To finish, an 'After Eight' cheesecake that went down very well. All the inspiration of Robert Hodge in his kitchen, but he surely must have had help to cater for more than 100 people? Whatever, the food lived up to the promise.

For the second half of the entertainment, Lord Nelson removed his admiral's finery to stand in the typical wear of a sailor in naval battle, knowing he would spend long hours in the confines of the battery, loading and reloading the cannon in the heat and clamour of battle while he was exposed to enemy cannon fire. You do begin to understand why men

were served with a measure of rum to deaden the noise and keep their spirits up.




Max 'Horatio' Keen in the mood of explanation and expressing the fear that fighting men experienced.

At the end of the evening the long applause said it all about a show that moved the audience from laughter to near tears and back again. When Chris Woodward asked if they would like to invite Max Keen back again there was a loud chorus of approval. He agreed to come back, probably in another guise, to explain part of our history in an easily understood way. History lessons were never this good in my schooldays. *Jim Reynolds*

A promotional poster for the Cleobury Country Farmers Market. The background is dark grey with a rainbow-colored wavy border at the top and bottom. On the left, there is a circular logo for "Cleobury Country Farmers Market" featuring a church spire and a sun. The text in the center reads: "CLEOBURY COUNTRY FARMERS MARKET IN AND AROUND ST MARY'S CHURCH SATURDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2022 FROM 9.30AM TO 12.30PM". There are several stylized flowers in yellow and orange on the left and right sides of the poster.

People when thinking of having Home Care often ask who are your staff? What sort of company are they?

TLC are a family run care provider supporting people with Disabilities, Dementia, Aging Population and Acquired Brain Injury to remain living at home for as long as it is safe to do so. Clients when considering home care will often find it difficult to accept and wonder about who are the staff and what qualifications they have? I cannot speak for other companies, however in our company it is made up from many sectors of our society and when these are put together, we have an Outstanding Team. 

One of those sectors are the future NHS professional, we have Daisy who is in her last year of her training to be a midwife, Lucy who is working towards the end of her training to be a Physiotherapist. Christina and Aila about to start their journey into nursing. We have further staff who have just been accepted into the NHS. These lovely kind young adults not only study many hours both in university, on hospital wards, they also give to us and have helped us support our clients for many years! Most joined us while still at college.

TLC have ex-nurses that come to us after raising their family and some, in recent times have re-joined their colleagues in the NHS.

We have staff who have raised their kids and now want a career, TLC will train or retrain people to help people reach their full potential and become one of our Outstanding Team.

We encourage kind caring and honest people of all ages and backgrounds who want to make a difference to people's lives to join our team. TLC invest heavily in people with ongoing support and training to help our new colleagues achieve their goals and reach their full potential. Once initial training is complete and they have been assessed as competent, TLC Induction Manager and our Training Manager will support staff through to achieve their Level 2/3 in H&S Care

Our Training

TLC's Training Team offers full free training on site and support staff through their Care Certificate. We have strong connection with an outside Training Provision who help our staff to achieve their Level 2/3 in H&S Care. Currently we have 32 members of staff that have already achieved Level 2/3 in Health and Social Care. We have qualifications at level 4 and five of our Senior Managers have Level 5. All staff that are new to care are required to achieve Level 2 within the first two years of their employment.

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COVID-19 Update

All our staff are provided with full PPE's including Gloves, Full Aprons, Sleeves, Visors, Gloves Surgical Masks.

Video training on Donning and Doffing PPE's sent out regularly.

Staff sign health declarations daily, Staff have weekly Covid-19 test. Most of our staff have now been vaccinated against Covid-19. TLC work closely with government regulation and update our risks assessment accordingly.

PETER JOHN OSBORNE

The number of friends and admirers who gathered at the Wyre Forest Crematorium on November 29th for Peter's funeral was a testimony to the regard and respect in which he was held.

The collection taken at the service was donated to the County Air Ambulance and amounted to more than £700.

CLOWS TOP GARDENING CLUB

A warm welcome to Judith Lawson, the new correspondent for the Clows Top Club. She reports:

Alf Jenkins will be our speaker on February 23rd. He is well known for his fascinating and knowledgeable books and talks on Clee Hill and the surrounding area. We are very much looking forward to hearing from him again, an event which has been delayed since 2020!

Clows Top and District Gardening Club meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month, at Clows Top Victory Hall. Doors open at 7.30pm for the speaker at 8pm. Annual membership only costs £10 per year. There is a charge of £2 per meeting to cover costs

of refreshments etc. Visitors pay £3.

At the time of going to press, the programme for the year has yet to be finalised. It will include some outings to local gardens of interest.

Do come and join us on the 23rd February. We will be delighted to see you.

Judith Lawson

NEW WILDLIFE CLUB

A new wildlife club started on the 28th January and will be meeting every fourth Friday in Clows Top Victory Hall between 7.00 and 9.00pm. Members will have the chance to show pictures and exchange sightings of wildlife seen in the local area. Plus we aim to have a speaker every month. Those booked so far are on Bats, Bee Keeping, Mammals, Deer in the Wyre Forest and Butterflies.

Kicking it all off in January was a talk and static display on Owls. Anyone from the age 10 upwards is invited to come along, with Under 16's accompanied by an adult. There will also be tea and coffee, snacks and a licensed bar. Just turn up on the night. Queries to Steve Woodison 07738014884. Future meetings are on Feb 25th, March 25th and 29th April.

FROM THE BANDROOM

The band would like to give special thanks for all those who kindly contributed to our funds during the busy Christmas period, we have donated some of the money to charity.

Our Christmas concert in the church went down really well, with a varied programme, mulled wine, mince pies and a fantastic raffle. Thank you to the friendly staff in the Wash House for selling the concert tickets.

We are now rehearsing for the area contest in Corby on 26th February. The title of the music is The Aeronauts by Goff Richards, an enjoyable but challenging piece. Now we are in the second section, it all gets that little bit tougher!

If you have a special occasion coming up and fancy something a bit different, you might consider booking the band to play. We are looking at doing many more private functions, we have previously played at weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, building openings – it doesn't have to be a full band, we can tailor to your requirements.

For a quote please contact our secretary Amanda on 01584 891199. *Katie Griffiths*

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Afternoon Session	12:30am - 3:00pm	£10.00
After School Club	3:00pm - 5:30pm	£10.00

**COUNCILLOR
SIMON HARRIS
WRITES**

The debt burden after the festivities can make January a very bleak month with a long time until the next pay packet arrives. It is too easy to run into debt, and this can be overwhelming. Shropshire is fortunate to have a non judgmental charity that can assist. For example by advising on long term financial planning to ease day to day, month to month stress. Christians Against Poverty (capuk.org) have a local branch in Bridgnorth and can be contacted on 0800 328006; the Hub in Cleobury has leaflets. This charity is there to assist all.

Shropshire Supports Refugees. Last summer we were asked to assist refugees from Afghanistan as they were airlifted to the UK. About 200 people were housed in hotels in Telford. By and large, it now seems possible that only one family will settle in our County; but the situation is fluid. Shropshire's response was overwhelmingly generous and over the Christmas period

clothes and toiletries were distributed; homeless charities also benefitted. Furthermore, work continues to assist in upgrading English language skills. Shropshire has declared itself a City of Sanctuary - see cityofsanctuary.org. If anyone has any ideas on what this can mean in practical terms do let me know: phone 07833 094145 or email me on simon.r.harris@shropshire.gov.uk

Simon Harris

NEEN SAVAGE W.I.

We held Advent Soup Lunches throughout December which proved very popular and we were delighted to make a donation of £705.75 to the Severn Hospice. A further £191 was raised by the Stottesdon and Cleobury Support Group from the raffle. Thank you to everyone that came along each week to support us and the generous donations from local businesses - Mawley Milk and Ashleys Bakery - and the members of Neen Savage WI for delicious soup, crusty bread, puddings and cream.

*Catherine Evans
President*

OUR SHOEBOXES

So where did they go this year? I got a phone call at the beginning of this year to tell me that they'd just arrived at Belarus and would be given out to children on January 6th, which is their Christmas Day.

Our final total this year was 937 boxes. Amazing! I can remember quite a few years ago, giving out the boxes in Belarus - very cold and snow everywhere. How lovely to know we've given so many children their once-in-a-lifetime present. Thank you for all you've done.

Jenny Vanderhook

**ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION LUNCH**

The Cleobury Branch Annual Lunch will be on Sunday, March 20th in the Sports and Social Club on Love Lane. Gather at 12.30 for the lunch at 1.00.

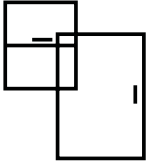
Tickets are £16.00 and available from Ron Breakwell on CM 270830, Mike Hermolle on 271384 or Mark Baldwin 270110. Our speaker has yet to be confirmed; details in the March Clarion

Mike Hermolle

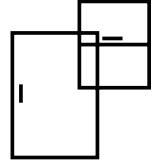
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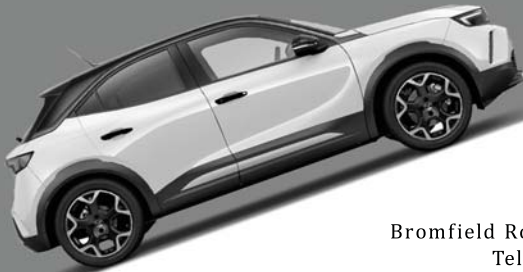
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Nigel Caldicott, who has good knowledge of these matters, reports:

On December 7th Cleobury Community Hub was the venue for the first meeting hosted by the Armed Forces Outreach Support and supported by the Cleobury Mortimer Branch of the Royal British Legion.

The Outreach Support organisation has been set up by Shropshire County Council with government funding allocated to each County some time ago as part of the Armed Forces Covenant initiative.

Sarah Kerr, an Armed Forces Veteran, has been appointed Outreach Support Coordinator for Shropshire and heads a Covenant Team whose aim is to provide help and support to all military personnel and families. Working with service charities and organisations Outreach signposts to ensure that current and former military personnel have access to the right support. The Covenant team can be

contacted by e mail at SAFCC@shropshire.gov.uk.

Arrangements are going to be made for another meeting and details will be published in the Clarion

Nigel Caldicott.

**MINI-BUS TO COCO
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Co-Co is setting up a mini-bus service to take people to and from the twice-monthly Wednesday coffee mornings at the Market Hall. The bus will accommodate wheelchairs, but not mobility scooters, and will pick up people from their own homes and take them back again. The cost will include coffee/tea and cake and will be £5 for those living outside Cleobury Mortimer and £4 for those who live in the town. The service is due to start on March 9th. The route taken will depend on where potential service users live, however it is envisaged that it could serve local areas such as Doddington, Earls Ditton, Hopton Wafers, Mamble, Clows Top, Bayton, Neen Savage, Kinlet, Farlow and Oretton. If you are interested in this service, please send an email to giulia.johnson@yahoo.com,

marked "Co-Co Minibus", giving your address and phone number; alternatively phone 01299 270647 and leave a message. Co-Co will then get in touch to let you have further details.

Giulia Johnson

**NEW FACES AT THE
MARKET**

The first Farmers' Market of the year on January 15th was not wildly busy, but there were interesting newcomers to chat to. Like Norton Woodworking from Hopton Bank, with a range of novel items from hardwood offcuts. I suspect I'll be using an elm chopping board soon...

And Cath at the Doorstep Baker in Bewdley, is a strong supporter of the real bread campaign. She bakes in her own kitchen, not using any additives and offers a range of bread, croissants and a variety of baked foods. I bought one of her sourdough loaves and very good it was. She offers a home delivery service; I'm going to sign up and will keep you posted on what comes to my door every week. The first choice will be croissants, a favourite of mine. Watch this very edible space! *JR*

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CLOWS TOP VICTORY HALL

The funding target for a replacement roof has been reached and work should be undertaken in the Spring. We have created closer working relationships with Rock and Bayton Village Halls which should prove to be mutually beneficial. The first issue of our newsletter has been distributed to local households.

Local resident Bill Lennon, armed with his trusty acoustic guitar and versatile vocal style, has kindly agreed to perform acoustic classics during the Social Night on Friday 18th February and will donate all proceeds to the Victory Hall 'Raise the Roof' Fund. Tickets will be £5 each and can be booked via the CTVH Mobile 07379 959895 or will be available at the door.

The newly formed Wildlife Club will next meet on Friday 25th February. The Social Nights programme will be continuing with a wide range of activities on the first and third Friday evenings of the month. Social Night dates for March are 4th and 18th

There will be a Jumble Sale from 9.30 on March 19th and a

Table Top Sale at 10.00 on April 30th; £5 per table.

For details of how to book the Hall or to find out what is happening, please ring the CTVH Mobile 07379 959895, visit Clows Top Victory Hall Facebook page or email contact@clowstopvictoryhall.co.uk

Nigel Caldicott

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

In January we were entertained by Angela Drennan, who humorously recalled some highlights of holidays over the years. As a child, growing up in Weston-super-Mare, she spent much of her time on the beach, which was close to both home and school.

As a teenager, while employed in a bank, she had a brief holiday in Sweden, but it was slightly prolonged by snow, which delayed her flight back to England. The bank were unsympathetic, and argued that she should have come back by boat instead!

This was the first of many adventures undertaken over the years, one of which included the spine-chilling message from a pilot approaching an airport 'The right-hand undercarriage is stuck in the stowed position,

but don't worry, I think I can land without it.' In the event, the wheels descended just in time, and all was well.

One year, seeking to book a visit to the Galapagos Islands, Angela was not impressed by a Kidderminster travel agent who asked whether these were 'part of Greece'. She decided to take her custom elsewhere.

Having relatives in the USA, Angela has crossed the Atlantic many times, and in later years, she often holidayed with Brenda Grant, with whom she clocked up an enviable list of destinations, including Morocco and Egypt.

All in all, she provided us with a wonderful reminder of what foreign travel used to be, and maybe will be again, 'when we get back to normal'.

Our next meeting will be on 8 February, Cllr John Greaves will talk on 'Climate'. To attend, please contact Angela Drennan on 270636.

WISE WORDS

You come from dust
You will return to dust
That's why I don't dust
It could be someone I know.

Patricia Reynolds

The editor's older sister, one of our readers in Los Angeles, USA.



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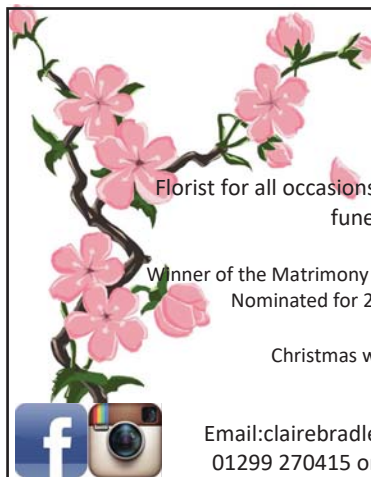
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Stepping Out! Who's Walking, When and Where.

STRIDE & STROLL'S BIRTHDAY

Kidderminster Stride and Stroll Walking Group celebrates its 20th Anniversary in 2022. To mark the occasion a tree was planted where it all started, Jubilee Gardens in Bewdley.

Phil Oliver and Sally Blowing started the walks in association with the District Council and Wyre Forest Visitor Centre as part of the national 'Walking the Way to Health' initiative. Walking as exercise satisfies the requirements of Phase IV in the recovery cycle of heart patients.

The first walk took place on June 1st in 2002 and twenty people enjoyed the stroll.

Barrie and Brenda Jones assisted Sally with planning routes and finding parking venues. They added organised training for the new Walk Leaders, setting the inclusive feel to the group which endures today, allowing us all to benefit from the improvement to our physical and mental health by walking in a friendly group.

The Tree Planting Ceremony took place in Jubilee Gardens on December 10th. A Commemorative Plaque was placed in the Cardiac Rehabilitation Centre at Kidderminster Hospital when it reopened in January. All past and present members of Stride and Stroll are invited to a Celebration

Picnic Walk on The Anniversary in June.

About one hundred walkers step out with Stride and Stroll every week. Divided into separate ability groups walking varying distances at different speeds. Everyone is welcome to join us.

To find out more go to:

[h t t p s : / / www.strideandstroll.org.uk](http://www.strideandstroll.org.uk)

Or call 07871 599863

Sue Humphries

Stride & Stroll Walk Leader

ROCK

PATHFINDERS

Walks for this month are:

Thursday the 3rd. 10.00 start from New Bulrush Top Car Park, Kingsway, Stourport DY13 8AS.

Thursday the 17th. 10.30 start from the Button Oak Inn, Kinlet DY12 3AQ.

As usual, everyone is welcome to join the walks, but dogs are not allowed. More details on the website: www.rockpathfindersuk. If you prefer human contact, call Alan on 01299 400304.

CMFA

2022 began with the welcome return of the New Year's Day Walk. The weather was fine and twenty nine walkers enjoyed a rather muddy walk around Mawley Hall. Five people followed the shorter route. It was decided that we would not provide the traditional food at the Kings Arms after the walk. With the rising cases of Covid 19 in Shropshire and across the country our priority is always the safety of people taking part in our events.

In December six people cleared holly and hawthorn hedges along the footpaths around Lea Farm. At this time of year the paths are very muddy or hard with frost, making it difficult to work on the stiles, gates and hedges along the footpaths.

Twenty two people met on January 12th for the first Walking for Health of 2022, on a dry and cold day. We followed a route around the firm paths of Cleobury ending back at the Market Hall. The Coco coffee was suspended during January due to the high indoor Covid risk. The future opening dates are being reviewed but hopefully in time for our walks on Feb 9th and 23rd.

The days of mid January were crisp and frosty with the sun shining low through the morning mist, perfect walking weather. For one of our walks we went up Tenbury Road past New House Farm and then along footpaths to the South West. Mist filled the valleys of Rivers Rea and Teme with random clumps of trees poking through giving an unearthly feel to the scene. We took a circular route through Southwood Covert, past Southwood Farm and along the Neen Sollars road. Returning to Cleobury past the wonderfully named Dirtybridge Covert and Barnslands Farm. A fabulous morning out! The route we followed was based on CMFA Leaflet 9 Hobson's Choice.

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The forest is really beginning to wake up now. On sunny days I hear bursts of woodpecker drumming and the Blue and Great Tits are busy round the bird boxes intended for more distinguished occupants. Brimstone and Peacock butterflies wake from hibernation and bring a touch of summer to the late-winter garden, making me anxious for their survival in our capricious weather.



You may spot a single bumble bee out and about, seeking a meal of nectar and warming herself in the sun before embarking on the serious business of starting this year's nest. The queens are the only ones that survive the winter, hibernating in the soil after mating at the end of the previous summer. A disused mouse nest makes a perfect home (perhaps you remember 'The Tale of Mrs Tittlemouse' by Beatrix Potter?) and she may collect additional dry grass and moss. She then places a heap of pollen in the nest, lays about a dozen eggs in it and surrounds them with wax which she produces from a special gland on her abdomen. (This information comes from Collins' 'Insects of Britain and Northern Europe' by Michael Chinery,

though Beatrix Potter is pretty accurate too!) She also provisions the nest with a store of nectar in a little wax pot. After sitting on the eggs for 5 or so days the larvae hatch and grow (via pupae) into the first workers of the new colony, and they will take over the job of collecting food and tending the larvae which hatch from further batches of eggs laid by the queen.

The photo was taken by Rosemary Winnall and shows a male White-tailed Bumble Bee – one of the six species of bumble bee common in the Wyre Forest. All bees, and indeed all insects, are currently threatened by pesticides and habitat loss on a national and global scale. My recent copy of the magazine of the West Midlands branch of Butterfly Conservation tells me that Professor Dave Goulson, a popular writer and campaigner for recognition of the key importance and plight of insects in our world, will be giving an online talk at their AGM in May. His is a voice of authority and surprising humour, and if you can't join the talk you can still read his books, several of which are available in our libraries.

We can all do our bit to support populations of insects. Early flowers such as Red Deadnettle and Dandelion are vital sources of nectar for many species and by allowing them to grow in odd corners of our gardens we are helping to maintain the balance and richness of nature. We should also pause before reaching for the pesticide sprays or slug pellets, which do harm way beyond the target species.

Linda Iles



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Philip Dunne's Letter from Westminster

Last month, the Environmental Audit Committee, which I chair, published the report from our inquiry into Water Quality in Rivers in England. As readers will be aware, I have been at the forefront of the campaign to clean up our rivers in recent years. But when I was researching the problem for my Private Members Bill, I was hampered by a lack of data on the quality of water in our rivers.

So the Environmental Audit Committee set out to get to the bottom of this issue through an inquiry, taking evidence from water companies, regulatory bodies, scientific experts and campaign groups – and our report lays bare the scale of the challenge. Only 14% of English rivers meet good ecological status, with pollution from agriculture, sewage, roads and single-use plastics contributing to a dangerous ‘chemical cocktail’ coursing through our waterways.

Until the passing of the Environment Act last year, which brought into law many of the key principles behind my Private Members Bill, there had been a lack of political will, for decades, to improve water quality, with successive governments, water companies and regulators seemingly turning a blind eye to dumping sewage and other pollutants in rivers. This is now changing, with real public desire to see this problem sorted out.

But lack of publicly available data has been an issue, which has hampered the ability to monitor water quality in rivers and detect pollution incidents, in turn limiting successful enforcement by the Environment Agency. Technology is coming to our aid in enabling monitoring in real time, which the Environment Act will require to become available to inform the public. Having arranged a pollution monitoring trial project in the River Teme, I know it can be done. I am keen to do more, as I successfully encouraged Severn Trent Water to nominate the Teme at Ludlow as one of its first sites for bathing quality water. So if anyone is interested in helping with this initiative, please get in touch.

I have argued that the public deserve to know how clean their local river is, not least when the pandemic has seen a significant increase in use of our rivers for recreation – whether angling, wild swimming or canoeing (or perhaps even paddling coracles in Shropshire!). So in addition to publicly accessible information, our Committee has called for at least one widely used stretch of river to be improved to meet bathing quality status, in each water company area, by 2025.

Sewage is not the only issue, and agriculture does play a part. Intensive livestock and poultry farming is putting pressure on particular catchments, such as the River Wye. We called for limits on new intensive units where catchments are already under pressure from excess nutrient load. Equally, there is action we can take in our homes. Fats, oils and greases, and cleaning and hygiene products containing plastic, are causing constant problems for drainage systems when they are poured away in sinks or flushed down the toilet. I am supporting two Private Members Bills, one to require filters to remove plastic microfibres being flushed away from clothes washing machines, and another to prohibit the manufacture and sale of single use cleaning and hygiene products containing plastic, in particular wet wipes, which do not biodegrade.

Some people have focussed on the issue of public or private ownership of water companies, but based on my extensive engagement on this topic, I have found this is something of a red herring. Capital investment in water treatment by water companies in the first ten years of privatisation was roughly double the ten years prior to privatisation. But I do accept those companies which routinely discharge beyond their permits should consider bonus levels for executives. A problem of this scale is not fixed overnight, but I shall keep campaigning until our rivers are restored to become once again the clear arteries of nature, safe for the public to enjoy.





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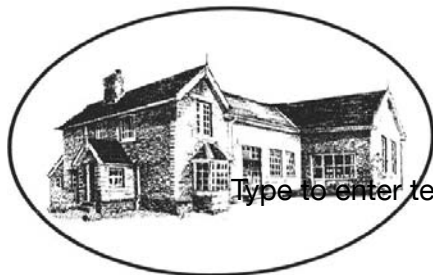
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CLEOBURY W.I.

Since the last edition of the Clarion, Cleobury WI have been busy with Festive walks, catering for the town lights switch on and our Christmas dinner which was magnificently catered in the Market Hall by Wendy and her team from the Kings Arms. January saw us 'Beating in the New Year' taught brilliantly by Clare Hadwell, leading a rhythmic fusillade on drumsticks. More used to working with 5 year old children in Primary School, Clare coped well with WI members having equally as much fun, especially when drumming a pantomime of the Three Little Pigs!

We are looking forward to our next meeting on February 8th when Alf Jenkins, well known speaker and author will be talking on 'Accents of the Clee' in the Market Hall at 7.30pm. Visitors are invited at a charge of £5 to include refreshments. Another date for the diary is 24th February when the Winter Warmer Lunch returns from 12-2.00pm in the Market Hall, home made soup and a spectacular choice of WI puddings for £5, supporting the local British Legion, all

welcome to come along to this friendly event. Updates are posted on the Cleobury WI Facebook page or contact me on 01299 270983. *Judy Sant*

THE READING GROUP

We enjoyed a festive gathering in December with drinks and nibbles and even managed to talk about our recent read. One member enjoyed Red Dust Road by Jackie Kay, so much they purchased a copy, whilst another thought it was boring. The rest of group had mixed feelings about this autobiographical novel of Jackie's journey. Tracing her birth parents took her from 1960's Glasgow to Lagos.

Our first meeting of 2022 went well, having read Lonely Londoners by Sam Selvon. Now we were transported to London in the 1950's, stirring memories for several people, for some it was the 60's. Written in Caribbean idiom, the meaning of some words was guess work. We were all interested in the detailed description of what it felt like to be a black West Indian immigrant in a strange country. They were not always welcome or treated kindly but this was generally dealt with

in quite a matter of fact way. A lively discussion was had regarding their ability to stay positive, their happiness, the wonderful characters and great descriptions. One point that bothered us was the way women were depicted, mothers were venerated but young women not looked on so well. A classic this month, Kim by Rudyard Kipling, to be chatted about on Monday 21st February. *Deana Kimber*

WILDLIFE MEETING

Clee Hill Community Wildlife group has an evening of short talks to be held on 8th March, 7.30pm at Clee Hill Village Hall. This is free, open to all and will help you find out the results from the work done in 2021 and hear plans for 2022. We are also hoping to have a local guest speaker.

Involvement with the group is free. No need to be an expert or skilled in identification, just an interest in our local area and its wildlife.

For more information about Community Wildlife Groups visit the website at www.shropscwgs.org.uk or email webmaster@shropscwgs.org.uk. *Chris Bargman*

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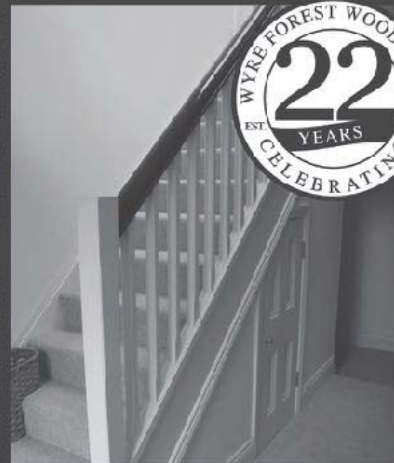
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Cleobury Mortimer Benefice Church services throughout the Benefice in February

St Mary's Cleobury Mortimer

Sunday 6th February – 10am Eucharist
Sunday 13th February– 8.30am and 10am Eucharist
Sunday 20th February – 10am Eucharist
Sunday 27th February – 10am Eucharist

'Drop in at St Mary's - every 2nd & 4th Thursday, 10.30-11.30am-

for coffee and a chat, if you are bereaved, feeling lonely and confused, have lost the confidence to go out or have no-one to talk to. This opportunity is free and provides a peaceful environment to sit in the company of others and listen and talk if you wish to.

St Michael and All Angels', Hopton Wafers

Sunday 6th February– 9.30am Eucharist
Sunday 20th February- 9.30am Eucharist

St John the Baptist, Doddington

Sunday 6th February – 11.15am Eucharist
Sunday 20th February – 3.pm Evening Prayer

All Saints', Neen Sollars

Sunday 6th February– 11.am Village Worship
Sunday 13th February – 11.am Eucharist
Sunday 20th February – 11.am Village Worship
Saturday 27th February – 11am Village Worship

St George's, Milson

Sunday 20th February – 10.am Eucharist

St Mary's, Neen Savage

Sunday 6th February – 6pm Evening Prayer BCP
Sunday 20th February – 11.am Eucharist

St John the Baptist, Kinlet

Sunday 13th February – 11.15am Eucharist BCP
Sunday 27th February – 6.pm Evening Prayer, BCP

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We would like to welcome you and your family to Doddington Lodge, our newly renovated, privately owned residential and dementia care home in the historic, tranquil hamlet of Doddington, Nr Cleobury Mortimer. Located on the beautiful Worcestershire & Shropshire boarder, providing picturesque views from every aspect of our home.

We have a modern bistro dining room and bar with a delicious daily menu created by our accomplished chefs. Individually designed spacious double rooms, allowing couples to stay together or beautiful single rooms all with en-suites and stunning countryside views. Even a hairdressing salon for a little pampering and provide a place of well-being.

Doddington Lodge is a place where friendships are made and special moments are shared. We organise many fun activities that everyone can get involved with, whether that's a sing along, arts and crafts, collecting fresh veg from the allotment or just simply helping each other with a crossword in our daily newspaper. Each day is different, we certainly have many happy moments...

Our home is a loving community and family, where you can consider Doddington Lodge a home away from home. We will provide you with all the key information, guiding you through every step of the process, whether you are staying with us for a short or long stay.



Rachel & Pat spending time with the residents to collect flowers & vegetables from the gardens



A very special visit from DML Racing, Worcester



"I began working at Doddington Lodge two years ago & what an amazing place to work, a beautiful home with great carers and management, lots of investment has gone into making it into such a wonderful place. Doddington is like my family and I will be forever grateful for having an opportunity to work here x."
Georgie - Carer



Welcome to Bob, staying with us for a short respite stay

"There is such a lovely atmosphere & many friendships made. Every step is taken to make each day enjoyable and for everyone to get involved with the activities."



"As receptionist at Doddington Lodge I really get to know everyone that walks through the door. It's such a fulfilling career. I feel I can really make a difference, spending time with our residents and families. I love my job and working with such a great team."
Lorraine - Receptionist

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COAL- R.I.P.

Kit Smith offers a memoir of a once powerful force



The coal chute, a memorial to coal in the Smiths' cellar.

I have discovered a coal chute in a dark and dank part of our Georgian cellar. Many other older houses in Cleobury will have had one, a garden coal shed or a coal heap. Our chute and cellar has been used for over 200 years to take delivery and store coal to be used to fuel five domestic open fireplaces. Between 1866 and 1934 local coal was used to produce gas and coke at the gas works on the site of the old Medical Centre at Pinkham, providing heat and light for

some shops, houses, the church and for street lighting. Cleobury had the distinction of having the third smallest gas works in the UK.

Coal has been mined locally, including from Kinlet, Mamble, Bayton, Pensax, Clee Hill coal pits and mines. Together with charcoal, coal has powered our industrial revolution changing our lives in so many ways and for ever. Nationally, annual coal production had risen from three million tons in 1800 to peak at over 292 million tons by 1913. The dramatic rise in production was matched by an equally dramatic fall in the next 120 years, especially since 1965. By 2019 the UK tonnage mined was down to two million levels last seen 300 years ago. National employment in coal peaked in 1920 at 1.19 million workers: more than 1-in-20 of the total workforce. By 2018 this had fallen to 669 workers with no deep

mined coal. Over a period of 220 years coal has had a profound effect on our lives.

At Christmas I asked my four environmentally minded granddaughters if they had ever seen or handled a lump of coal. Two had done so once or twice but were amazed to know what coal had done for them and their country. They knew however that 292 million tons of coal when burnt must have produced a lot of heat and energy but also a great deal of carbon dioxide and noxious gases as well as air borne particulates. Despite the advantages gained from coal over such a long period they were relieved to learn of the decline and imminent death of coal mining. I wonder if in years to come my great-grandchildren and their children will know of coal and its place in their history and their environment.

Coal. In Memoriam. R.I.P
Kit Smith



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SAINT JOHN'S DODDINGTON

What a joy to announce our first event of the year – Pancakes! Join us at Doddington Village Hall for pancakes and a cuppa, with a raffle of course, on Saturday February 26th from 2.30pm.

Back in December we were delighted to raise £97 for the Cleobury Mortimer First Responders with our Star appeal – thank you to all who contributed by donating and by the much-appreciated carol singing. As you may have seen our accessible path is nearing completion – we hope to have it in use soon, but we are saving the Grand Opening for warmer weather – put May 1st in your diary. For up to date news follow us on Facebook: @StJohnsDoddington, or check our website: www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10505/ Email: stjohnsdoddington@gmail.com [m Celia Gibb 01584 318036](tel:01584318036)

FAR FOREST AND ROCK BRITISH LEGION

At the end of December the Poppy Appeal efforts of the Branch have realised £8117

which reflects the public support for the Legion in its 100th year. Further donations are expected in the near future and Branch Poppy Appeal Organiser, Jim Woods, said “We are very grateful to everyone who contributed and are looking forward to being able to continue our support for the Legion’s vital work.”

What the Branch has achieved in 2021 has shown that, despite restrictions it was possible for members to undertake a reasonably full programme of activities including 100th Anniversary of the formation of the Legion, Remembrance events and the Poppy Appeal.

The Branch meets at the Rock Cross Inn at 7.00 on the second Monday of each month and welcomes anyone interested in finding out more about the Legion or make e mail contact: chairman@farforestandrocklegion.org.uk. The Branch also has its own Facebook Page visit Far Forest and Rock Legion Branch. *Nigel Caldicott*

UP AND RUNNING AT THE REGAL

The Regal Theatre in Tenbury Wells is looking ahead with a show of confidence as they

announce some great acts booked to appear. The star attraction this month is that dour American comedian Rich Hall, who’s built his reputation on some acerbic films about his native land. And if you’ve seen him live on stage you’ll know he has a musical talent as well. He’s booked to appear for two night, the 25th and 26th.

Two days later, on the 28th, Irish legends The Fureys take over the stage with haunting music and their list of hits to make your toes tap and your hands clap. Great traditional sounds.

There’s a chance to become a Friend of the Regal. This will get you discounts on cinema tickets, early notice that gives priority booking for your favourites, VIP nights, brochures posted with details of coming shows and a Friends Newsletter. All this for just £30 a year, which could mean saving more than that cost if you’re a regular theatre goer with a broad taste. Talk to them on 01584 811442 or look in at www.regaltenbury.co.uk.

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Simon Morton in the Garden.

How Do You Measure Up?

Just over seven years ago, we moved to Neen Savage, one of the plethora of hamlets and villages dotted around Cleobury. Previous to that, we'd lived in a small mining village outside Leicester and, before that, a small market town in Oxfordshire. So, in summary, all pretty rural and relatively agricultural (for example, did you know that Leicestershire is the biggest producer of cheese in the UK - nope, me neither).

All of that said, there's no question that our move to Shropshire was one significant step deeper into ruraldom. Naturally, this was part of the appeal - remarkable countryside, friendly people, excellent fresh food. In short, your off-the-shelf 'Escape to the Country' cliché. Cleobury Country delivered on all fronts. Bravo (and thanks for the warm welcome).

Perhaps one of the most noticeable signs of how rural we've become is an as yet undiscovered interest in rainfall, specifically rainfall measurements. It might just be a Shropshire thing, or perhaps an unspoken obsession practised in only the most rural of communities, but I've never experienced such enthusiasm for measuring rainfall as I do here. It would seem to be a male-dominated pastime (*I see many a rolling eye from wives when the conversation heads this direction*), but the more local friends I make, the more often the topic of rainfall measurements comes up. I've also observed that there's a touch of competition hidden beneath the friendly banter. It would seem that the veracity of a chap's measurement is no joking matter.

These conversations can be a bit of a minefield for someone who is not fluent in the subject. "20 mil last weekend" is the passing comment from a friend. How the hell am I

supposed to respond to that? I look carefully into their eyes and search for facial ticks that might give me a clue. Should I respond with a sage "Pffft... *That's nothing, is it?*" or respond with an animated "*Blimey - I better get cracking with that ark*". I haven't got a clue...

I've been burdened with a similar challenge for most of my adult life when blokey blokes talk about football. Thankfully, after many an aborted chat over a pint, I've picked up several coping mechanisms. The first is to try and steer the conversation towards something that I have at least a basic knowledge of - music, films, greenhouses - and if that fails, call upon my secret weapon. Experience has taught me that if you ever find yourself in a similar football-related pickle, simply proffer the following question: "*What about the Chelsea, eh?!*". You can now sit back as your drinking buddy spews forth for another 10 minutes, during which time you can figure out how to move the conversation onto a topic you have some working knowledge of.

I just need to work on a similar response for my rainfall measurement obsessed friends. Any hints or tips would be gratefully received.

All of this said weather *has* become a more pressing conversation over the last month. Record temperatures between Christmas and New Year prompted a number of my overwintering bulbs to raise their tender heads, only to be blasted by an arctic wind that cut through the thickest clothing. Even I, the weather eejit, knows that this isn't normal and certainly not good for the garden or, more importantly, our farming neighbours.

The changing weather may be a sign of the future. Who knows? I have a few friends who I'm sure will proffer an opinion (along with supporting data from carefully taken and recorded measurements). *Simon Morton*

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CLEOBURY FESTIVAL

The Cleobury Festival is back again, coinciding with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on 4th and 5th June.

The committee has been busy discussing the event which will offer many opportunities for everyone, from our young to old in and around Cleobury Mortimer to participate and enjoy the weekend.

The events will take place on the sports field in Love Lane and inside at Lacon Childe School. The outside area will include a Youth Zone, Food and Drinks Marquee, an Events and Performance Zone and a Dog Show. There will also be an Emergency Services display area. There will be an Arts and Makers zone including wood working, jewellery makers, papercrafts, horseshoe sculpture and much more.

Dancers and musicians from the local area will perform and children will be able to play games, listen to storytellers and try their hand at being creative and having fun.

On Sunday 5th June there will be an Afternoon Tea Party in the main hall of Lacon

Childe school. This will be a ticketed event and demand is expected to be high. More details will be published on all the events over the Festival weekend as they are confirmed.

The Festival Committee are delighted with this opportunity to showcase our town and also be part of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth event marking Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Year. We hope people will save the date, come along and see what our community can offer.

If anyone has any ideas and would like to be involved, particularly if you would like to volunteer in any way, please contact Paul French.

01299 270010

07808 682715

paulfrench143@yahoo.com

BRIAN GADD

The Reverend Brian Gadd passed away at Kidderminster Hospital on January 12th after a long illness. He was 88 years old.

Many people in the town will remember him as a teacher at Lacon Childs School. He joined the staff

there in 1956 and retired in 1985 to concentrate on work for the church, and was ordained a priest in 1987.

He was one of the most gentle and quiet men you could wish to meet, with a rich voice that made listening to him give a service a gentle-on-the-ear pleasure. He married Margaret, a local lady and made his mark in the community as a bell ringer, a member of the town's Masonic Lodge and a smiling, approachable man who would help others in times of need.

I asked if he would read the eulogy to my wife at her funeral; he thanked me for asking him but did not think he was strong enough to handle the task. That was typical of his modesty.

Our sympathies go to Margaret and their son Nick and the rest of the family at their loss. Brian's funeral will be held at Saint Mary's church on February 3rd at 2.00. There will not be a service at the and in view of the Covid situation, there will not be a wake. As was his manner, he will leave this earth quietly, mourned by the many friends he made.

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More revelations are emerging about the awarding of PPE contracts. A great deal has been trumpeted about these contracts encouraging UK production but over 80% of the goods delivered were manufactured in China with the UK companies merely acting as middle men and taking a very healthy cut for their trouble. One owner paid himself a bonus of £15 million within a few months of the contract being awarded so nice work if you can get it (and you can if you know the right people...). I imagine the original bid interview went something like this: 'So, you want a contract to supply PPE, how long has your company been trading?'. 'Since yesterday'. 'Oh, I see. And what experience do you have of manufacturing this type of product?'. 'None at all'. Oh well, under the circumstances, I don't think you would be...'. 'But I do play golf with the Minister'. 'Why didn't you say so before? Here's a cheque for £2 million. Come back when you need more'. (this scenario no doubt repeated a substantial number of times across the country). What a farce.

The HS2 white elephant staggers from crisis to crisis with the north eastern section now scrapped. Perhaps it needs to be renamed HS1.5 or, based on the current estimate of costs, HS2.5 as these are around 2.5 times the original guesstimate. And there's a long way to go yet so plenty of time for further escalation and delays. The Government has offered £96 billion to the North as a consolation prize for 'levelling up' but not all of this is new money and, based on previous experience, any work started is unlikely to be finished on budget or on time. You might be wondering why railway projects are so expensive so here's a clue: A friend's grandson (16) was offered two days track work on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. It was basically labouring and they were hard 10 hour shifts but those two days earned him a total of just over £1000...

That other great white elephant, Hinckley

Point has suffered yet more delays. First it was faulty welding on components made in France and now an issue with the Chinese element. I wonder how much of the kit is being made in the UK. The latest guesstimate for opening is now at least 2026 instead of the original planned date of 2023...

I see that Durham Uni is offering courses on sex work. I'm not sure that this is an ideal subject to spend public money on, especially when Durham has previously been noted for the excellence of their maths courses. Still, if nothing else, the maths might be useful for working out the bill...

Perhaps Boris Johnson might benefit from a maths course. His estimate of the cost of his pet project to build a bridge from Scotland to Northern Ireland was £15 billion. Now the project has been evaluated, the estimated cost is some £355 billion, so nice try but no cigar. I'm not even sure if that cost includes provision for removing the millions of tons of unused munitions dumped in the area after both World Wars which will be extremely unstable by now.

It's not a good time to be white... Apparently even Everest is considered 'too white'. My original thought was that this was because that's the colour of the snow, but apparently this is because few of those reaching the summit have been 'persons of colour' or whatever this week's trendy description is. Sadly this ignores the fact that the Nepalese have climbed Everest more times than any other nationality and that only five people have reached the summit more than 20 times – all Nepalese...

Students at Aberdeen Uni were warned that a book they were about to study contained descriptions of kidnapping which might upset them. The title of the book? 'Kidnapped' by Robert Louis Stevenson. Reading Uni has also deleted parts of an ancient Greek poem because they referred to ill treatment of women. Words fail me...

Ariadne J Grumpy

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THE SOCIAL CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY

Date	Time	Details	Contact	Telephone
Thurs 3 rd		BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECUCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY		
	10.00	Rock Pathfinders step out from New Bulrush Top Car Park, Stourport. PAGE 21		
Fri 4 th	7.00	Social Night at Clows Top Victory Hall. PAGE 19		
Tues 8 th	7.30am	Breakfast Club meets at The Golf Club. PAGE 19		
	7.30pm	Cleobury W.I. meets in the Market Hall. PAGE 27		
Wed 9 th	10.00	Walking for Health starts and ends at the Market Hall. PAGE 21		
Thurs 10 th		GREEN GARDEN RUBBISH WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY		
	10.30am	"Drop in at St Mary's" for a chat and a coffee if you're lonely.		
Mon 14 th	6.30	The Creative Writing Group gather in the library. PAGE 5		
Thurs 17 th		BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY		
	10.30	Rock Pathfinders walk from Button Oak Inn, Kinlet. PAGE 21		
Fri 18 th	7.00	Social Night at Clows Top Victory Hall. PAGE 11		
Sat 19 th	9.30-12.30	Cleobury Country Farmers Market, in and around St Marys Church		
	7.30	Flicks in the Sticks at the Parish Hall. James Bond – "No Time To Die"		
Mon 21 st	7.30	The Reading Group meets at the Library, Love Lane. PAGE 27		
Wed 23 rd	10.00	Walking for Health steps out from the Market Hall and return there with glowing cheeks!		
	7.30	Clow Top Garden Club meet at the Victory Hall. PAGE 11		
Thurs 24 th		GREEN GARDEN RUBBISH WHEELIE BINS EMPTIED TODAY		
	10.30am	"Drop in at St Marys" for a quiet chat and a coffee if you are lonely.		
	12.00	Cleobury W.I. Winter Warmer Lunch in the Market Hall. PAGE 27		
Fri 25 th	7.00	The Wildlife Club meet at Victory Hall, Clows Top. PAGE 11		
Mon 28 th	7.30	The Nearly Dead Poets' Society meet, greet and laugh in the library. PAGE 5		
		AND LOOKING FORWARD TO MARCH.....		
Thurs 3 rd		BLACK WHEELIE BINS AND RECYCLE BOXES EMPTIED TODAY		
	2.00	Rev Brian Gadd's funeral, St Mary's Parish Church		
Fri 4 th	7.00	Social Night at Clows Top Victory Hall		
Tues 8 th		Clee Hill Wildlife Group meet at the Village Hall. PAGE 27		
Wed 9 th		Mini Bus service to the CoCo Coffee Morning begins. PAGE 17		

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

The Friends of Cleobury Mortimer Library need keen younger blood to revive the group. The aim is to organise events that encourage people to discover and use this fine facility. If you're willing to help, please contact:

Jim Reynolds 01299 270642 or uncle,jim@icloud.com
 Deana Kimber 01299 271754 or geraldine.kimber@btinternet.com
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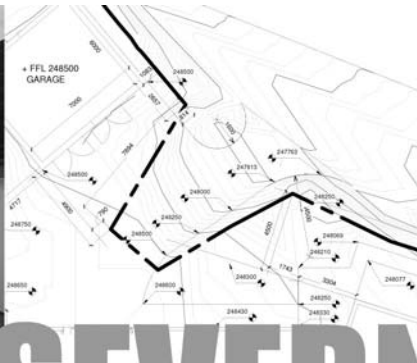
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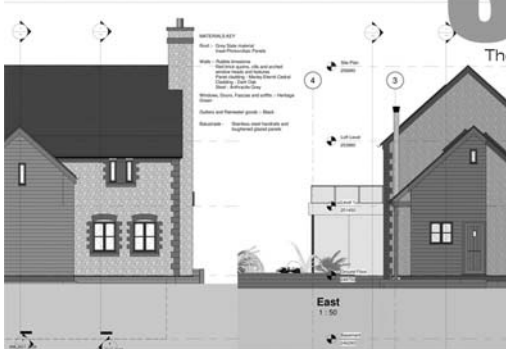
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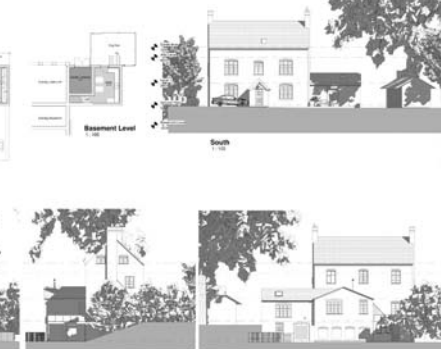
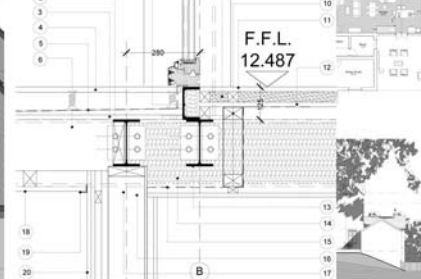


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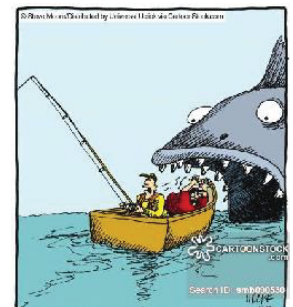
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Cleobury Clarion February 2022

Page 50



"We tried artificial flies. We tried lures. We tried live bait. Nothing works ... it's like they're psychic!"



"Blood-curdling screams. Hayes, will do nothing to help us catch a fish."

CLEE HILL WILDLIFE GROUP

**How many Curlews and Lapwings are there?
Please help us to find out.**

If you enjoy seeing Curlew and Lapwing, and would like to do something to help stop their disappearance from the local countryside, we would like your help, please. We need to know how many breeding pairs there are, and where, before we can try and help them.

The group is centred on the open hill land of Titterstone Clee and Clee Hill and Catherton Commons, extending approximately as far as Knowlegate and Knowbury to the south, Bitterley to the west, Cleedownton and Bromdon to the north, and Doddington to the east. The bird survey has been carried out every year since 2012, and we are doing it again this year. People who have helped previously will be asked to help again, but new helpers will be very welcome.

In 2021 we located about eight breeding pairs of Curlews in the area in April, similar to the last couple of years, but less than the 13 pairs when we started in 2012. Are there more? Where are they? If you can recognise Lapwing and Curlew (and preferably their calls), you can make an important contribution. If possible, we would also like you to record Kestrel, Cuckoo, and other target species.

The survey is easy to do; only three 3-hour visits between the beginning of April and mid-June. Simple instructions and a map to record your observations are provided, and there will be a training session. Whether you join in or not, please let us know if you see Curlew, Lapwing or Kestrel in the area.

Locating Curlews is particularly important, because we will be working again with the Shropshire Ornithological Society (SOS) *Save our Curlews* nest-finding and protection project. You can read more about this on the SOS website www.shropshirebirds.com/save-our-curlews/. This describes results, our future plans, and the evidence that predation by foxes and other predators is the main cause of Curlew's continuing decline. The annual release of millions of pheasants for shooting, only a third of which are actually shot, results in an over-abundant food supply which maintains the numbers of the Curlew's main predators. The project has been

funded by Shropshire Ornithological Society (SOS), an Appeal, and several grants.

A Bird Group meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 21 March, at the Recreation Rooms, 22A, Clee Hill High Street, to present the results of our work in previous years, and plans for 2022. All are welcome!!!

For more information, please see the Clee Hill pages on the Community Wildlife Groups website <https://www.shropscwgs.org.uk/clee-hill-wildlife-group/>

Leo Smith

TIME TO TALK DAY

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd

Here's an interesting concept from Mind, the mental health charity, who are out to make this the day of the nation's biggest mental health conversation. It's run by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness in partnership with the Co-op.

The aim is to create supportive communities by just having conversations with your family, friends or colleagues about mental health. As the charity wisely says, we all have mental health, just as we have physical health. By talking about it, we can not only support others, but ourselves as well. One of the tips they give about starting such a conversation is to take any feeling of pressure off by talking as you walk, just sitting side by side, maybe when cooking a meal or in the car.


You can get advice from the Mind Infoline on 0300 123 3393.

ADRIAN SATTERLY

The Clarion has published two appeals in recent months from a reader trying to trace the man who took a video film of their mother's funeral in Bridgnorth. They had paid Mr Satterly £525 for the service and he had not delivered the film. According to our reader he had stopped responding to their requests to let them have what they had paid for.

Eventually the videographer was identified after his photo appeared and our reader contacted the man, who had not been paid by Mr Satterly. He still had the film on file and supplied a copy to our reader at the price he'd agreed for the job - £420.

So this trusting person has paid Satterly £525 and received nothing. And more recently another £420 to the cameraman to get what they were entitled to. They are persisting with their enquiry and hope to bring the matter to court.



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Mondays - 9:30am - 8pm

Tuesdays - 9:30am - 9pm

Fridays - 9:30am - 5:30pm

We're back to our usual openings for the coffee shop and Climb61 with one change to our Monday evening activities. Our final bookable Bouldering Session will run from 6:30pm-8pm on Monday evenings.

FOCUS ON: 21st - 23rd February 2022 - Holiday Club

Due to our Christmas holiday club been cut short due to covid, we are holding a 3 day holiday club from Monday 21st - Wednesday 23rd February. You can book the holiday club through our website: www.smyp.org.uk

Don't forget our regular activities:

Mondays - Coffee Shop, Rock Tots, Kids Climbing Club, Youth Climbing Club, Climb61 Bouldering.

Tuesdays - Climb61 Bouldering, Coffee Shop

Wednesdays - Hub Youth - Wed 2nd first one of Feb (alternate weeks)

Thursdays - Hub Youth - Thurs 10th first one of Feb (alternate weeks)

Fridays - Climb61 Bouldering, Coffee Shop

Climb61 Session Times - To book: www.smyp.org.uk

Tuesdays - 9:30am-11am, 11:15am-12:45pm, 2:15pm-3:45pm, 4pm-5:30pm, 5:45pm-7:15pm, **(Mondays too)** 6:30pm-8pm

Fridays - 9:30am-11am, 11:15am-12:45pm, 2:15pm-3:45pm, 4pm-5:30pm

LADIES NIGHT - Thursday 24th February 6pm-8pm



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Welcome to 2022. I hope that some of you managed to have a restful Christmas holiday and in particular one where your savings and the money in your bank stayed safe and secure. For the last 13 months I have been writing articles with the sole desire of spreading the word as widely as possible about the disgusting criminal behaviour that is hiding behind the power of the Internet. Through the generosity of the editor of this publication I will continue to spread the word about this new form of crime which is sophisticated enough for even the most aware of us in the community to be caught on the hop. In days gone by, the average thief was portrayed as sneaking around in dark clothes carrying a crowbar and gloves with probably a mask. This ran quite a serious risk of being either caught on the job or later with the goods that had been stolen. Don't get me wrong, these crimes still happen in our community but the new forms of soft crimes that are invading our private space through the Internet are much more prevalent and much more insidious. The criminals operating in this secretive world who are experts in the use of computers generally operate as part of a greater organised crime group and use methods that are continually evolving to try and trick people into parting with goods, money or their personal details which can be sold on the dark web to other criminals. I am going to use an old Latin term which is 'Caveat Emptor' which is used extensively in the property market and basically translates as 'BUYER BEWARE'. No more so has this been important than in Email and Internet communications. Look at the following example (anonymised but a genuine example).

Chris was a mid-thirties adult who was very active on social media and used the internet extensively. Chris liked some of the items that popped up on Facebook asking about favourite car, first school, name of first pet etc etc and as Chris felt comfortable being on social-media, had declared basic info like birthday, places lived etc etc. What Chris did not realise was that every single piece of data that goes into social-media is stored sometimes temporarily or more often for a longer term in huge data facilities at the disposal of major organisations like Facebook (now called Meta) or Amazon. What Chris also was not aware of, was that

criminals watch these social media sites and use sophisticated computer technology to extract data about individuals like Chris which they use to build up very accurate profiles. This is just one step away from creating a 'cloned' version that can, and frequently, be used for financial gain. I have stressed in past articles the importance of using secure passwords for accessing anything that holds your sensitive data on the Internet. Bank Accounts, Credit Cards etc etc. Sadly, too many users think that they are ok and are still using passwords relating to something they remember easily. Last School, First Car, Pet Name etc etc. This opens the door to hackers and thieves who last year scammed billions from internet users around the world. Our example about Chris has resulted in a hacker relieving Chris of significant savings destined for a mortgage on the first house. **DON'T BE A CHRIS.** Review your passwords on the internet, don't use any password on more than one site and where possible use a **PASSWORD MANAGER** to securely store your passwords.

Before I finish for today, here is another example of a scam doing the rounds right now. Again this is genuine and came from a user on the **NEXTDOOR** web site. *"Tonight, I received a Whatsapp message from my son. He said he had trouble with his phone, so this was his new number. He also said he had to pay a bill urgently but could not get into his Banking App on his new phone. He asked if I could transfer money to the person he needed to pay"* This was a scam! The person video called her son and discovered there was nothing wrong with his phone and he had not sent the WhatsApp message. On this occasion a scam was averted. The moral of this story is, that if you get anything either an email or text or other form of message that you did not expect or just feel was not right, check first before taking any further action. This applies to any form of communication from Government, Banks, Credit Card companies or even Family. You could save yourself a lot of heartache.

Final tip, agree a secret password between close family and friends to ask for if you have any doubts about a communication you get that you are not sure about. **BE AWARE, STAY ALERT, STAY SAFE** and have a good 2022.

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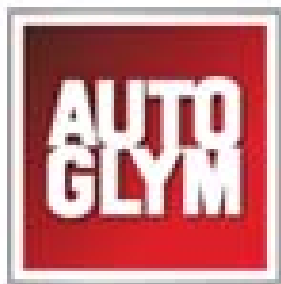
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What is Local Government responsible for?

Following a small survey on our website and social media we have reviewed the responses and noted that many people are not aware of what we, the Town Council do, compared with Shropshire Council. We hope the information below will be of help. If you are not sure where to report an issue please do contact the Town Council and we will be happy to help.



Education
Housing
Council Tax
Waste collection and recycling
Social Care
Public rights of way
Highways, gritting, and potholes
Public Protection/ Public Health
Planning
Libraries
Leisure and recreation
Some play areas
Car parks, blue badges and bus passes
Street lights on main road

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Email: customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk

Website: www.shropshire.gov.uk



Love Lane Play Area
Allotments (managed by community group)
Cemetery
Public open space – QEII Park, Playing Field
Christmas lights, Events and festivals
Bus shelters
War Memorial
Toilets
Some streetlights - on minor roads

Telephone: 01299 271154/ 07483 112290

Email: cleobury.council@gmail.com

Website: www.cleobury.org.uk

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our community volunteers who work with us on Christmas lights, Cleobury Festival, litter-picking in the parks and around town. Thank you.



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CARING FOR GOD'S LITTLE ACRE

A warm Clarion welcome to Anni Holden Calver, a lady who knows churchyards well:

I know it's February but if you pop into a churchyard nearby, you may be surprised at what you find. First mention has to go to the snowdrop. By now some of the South Shropshire churchyards will be carpeted with these tiny white flowers. They are not fazed by cold spells and even defy a blanket of snow too.

And there is more to find - Crocus and daffodils are easy to identify and the yellow, violet and orange give our churchyards colour to boast about on a winter's day. If you are lucky, you may spot winter aconites, yellow petals making a pretty crown. Cyclamen can still be spotted, and another one to look out for, before the end of the month, is the pale baby yellow primrose, keeping up a show for many weeks.

Two other flowers you might see are winter heliotrope and winter flowering honeysuckle – yes it smells just like honeysuckle even on a freezing cold day! Before we know it, it will be March and the bluebells will spring up and wood anemones will grow with them.

Look around at the evergreens. The mighty yew trees will be providing warm cover for small rodents and birds, while their leaf drops can even hide a hedgehog. If it is a bright winter's day check out the ivy berries are already ripening. Can you spot any insects flying around, wooed by the sun's warmth? They make themselves a meal for many insect eating birds – nature can be cruel!

As February progresses keep looking up and watching the birds for signs of them pairing up, building a nest and producing eggs in March and April. See if you can spot birds sussing out those wooden bird boxes nailed up among the branches by the Churchyard Task Team members from Caring for God's Acre (CfGA). They are not in every churchyard that the Task Team looks after, but we are doing our best to put up more. The big ones are designed to attract owls!

All this colour and promise of things to come may surprise you but it is there if you look. Churchyards are very special places and locally are often around 1000 years old; older than the church building they surround. They have not been ploughed up between then and now. We are rewarded with a bio-diverse patch of land in nearly every village in Shropshire (and our neighbouring counties).

So resolve to visit to a churchyard near you, look around, look up and, most importantly, look after.

In February you can meet the Churchyard Task Team in Knowbury on the 1st. Acton Scott 3rd, Clungunford 8th, Burrington 15th, Eaton-under-Heywood, 17th and the last week of February is half term. If the weather is dry enough, take children and grandchildren to have a look around a churchyard and pop into the church – they are precious historic buildings, a gift from our ancestors.

*Anni Holden Calver, CfGA trustee & member of The Churchyard Task Team
Secretary of Shropshire Churches Tourism Group*

LACON CHILDE SCHOOL

With the retirement of Darren Reynolds from the headship of Lacon Childe School and its Academy supporting schools, Rachel Croxton-Broome will be the Acting Head Teacher until interviews have been conducted and the new Head installed.

We wish Darren Reynolds - no relation to the editor - a very happy and well earned retirement and Mrs Croxton-Broome a smooth running temporary position.

SOME SILLY BITS

The Grim Reaper came for me last night and I beat him off with vacuum cleaner. Talk about Dyson with death....

I was driving this morning when I saw a parked RAC van. The driver was sobbing uncontrollably and looked very miserable. I thought to myself 'That guy's heading for a breakdown.'...

When I was in the pub I heard a couple of blokes saying they wouldn't feel safe on an aircraft if they knew the pilot was a woman. What a pair of sexists! It's not as if she'd have to reverse the thing.



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Community Contacts for Clarion Readers

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CLEOBURY COUNTRY CENTRE		01299 272300	In Love Lane, 9 to 5 Mon to Fri.
CLEOBURY DENTAL PRACTICE		01299 271747	www.cleoburydental.co.uk
CLEOBURY CARERS	Michelle	01743 341995	carerssupport@shropshire.gov.uk
CLEOBURY COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES	Katja Jones	07966 080111	Tuesday and Thursday at the Medical Centre
CLEOBURY MORTIMER LIBRARY		01299 272301	Open 9 to 7 Mon, 9 to 5 Tues/Fri and 10 to 1 Sat.
LOCAL POLICE	PC Wayne Strangwood	07773 054 587	wayne.strangwood@westmercia.pnn.police.uk
CLEOBURY MORTIMER GUIDES	Fiona McCallum	07805 737 555	
CLEOBURY MORTIMER SCOUTS	Lowri Hughes		cleoburybeavers@gmail.com
CRIMESTOPPERS		0800 555 111	Free Police contact. Talk in confidence, to report any crime.
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE		0800 783 1359	Women's Aid, 24 Hour support:
HOME FROM HOSPITAL		01584 878046	Help over the first weeks back home from Age UK
MARKET HALL	Kim	01299 272732	markethall@cleobury.org.uk
MEDICAL CENTRE		01299 270209	Out of surgery hours, use the Shrop Doc Service.
SHROP DOC		111	Service available evenings and weekends
THE MEN'S SHED	Pete Blackburn	07776 243 584	petblack@me.com
THE PHARMACY		01299 270219	Closes for half day on Saturday. Delivers prescriptions
ST ELIZABETH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH	Angela Flowers	01299 270318	Sunday Mass at 9.00am
NIGHTINGALE NURSING FUND	Rosemary Abbiss	01746 718451	
TOWN COUNCIL	Clerk Matthew Sheehan	01299 271154	Cleobury Country Centre 9 to 2 pm, Mon to Fri. www.cleobury.org.uk . Council meets in the Centre on the first Monday of the month
POST OFFICE		01299 270211	In the Select and Save Grocery Store, Church Street
SAINT MARY'S YOUTH PROJECT	Mark Greaves	07828 116810	mark.stmarys@live.co.uk
SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL		0345 678 9000	
SOUTH SHROPSHIRE YOUTH FORUM		01584 874922	
VOLUNTARY CAR SCHEME		01299 666119	Mandy Smith
WASTE DISPOSAL		0345 678 9007	The contractor is Veolia
WATER SUPPLY EMERGENCIES	Severn Trent	0800 783 4444	
NEWLIFE CHURCH	Pastor E Stirrup	01562 630595	Sunday services at 10.30

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Out in Cleobury Country at: Heath Farm Meats, **Bagginswood;** **Clee Hill Stores;** **Clows Top Stores;** The Sun and Slipper, **Mamble;** **Hopton Bank Service Station;** Bennetts End Inn, **Knowbury;** **Ludlow Library;** **Mahorall Cider Farm;** The Colliers Cafe & Shop, **Rock;** The Fighting Cocks, **Stottesdon;** The Duck Inn, **Chorley;** The Live and Let Live, **Neen Sollars;** The Eagle and Serpent, **Kinlet;** Parker Motors, **Ditton Priors.** **Copies are also available from the Parish Churches in:** Cleobury Mortimer, Bayton, Doddington, Hopton Wafers, Milson, Neen Savage and Neen Sollars.

Missed your Clarion? Cleobury Mortimer Library keeps the current month's copy on file and all back issues are available to read as pdfs from www.cleoburyclarion.co.uk.

DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH ISSUE: FEBRUARY 20th. WOULD CONTRIBUTORS PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS LAST POSSIBLE DATE TO RECEIVE REPORTS.

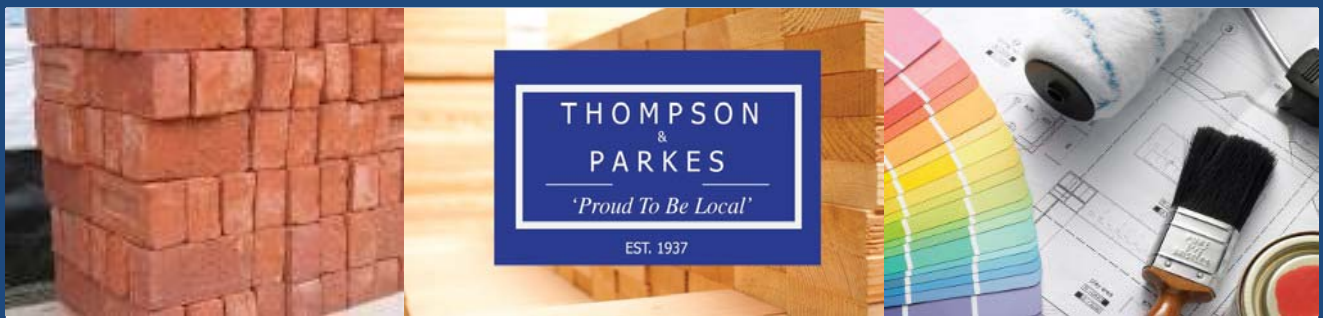
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