

The Cleobury Clarion

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MARCH 2023

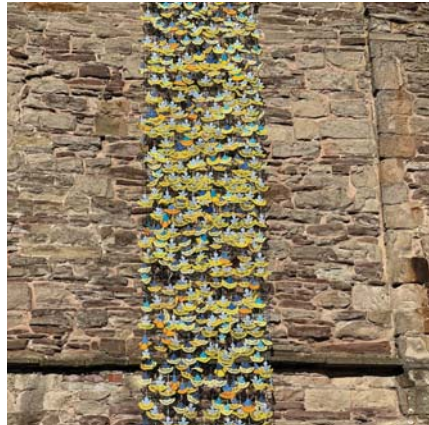
OUR NEW TOWN CLERK

With the retirement of Matt Sheehan from the post of Town Clerk as a result of ill health, there has been something of a silence about his successor. In Matt's absence Dorothy McBride has covered for him as well as serving as the council's Responsible Finance Officer. She was working as Parish Clerk for Hopton Wafers at the same time.

It won't come as any surprise to hear that Dorothy has been appointed as our Town Clerk, with such proof of her ability shown in recent months. Our congratulations to her and our best wishes as she takes on the challenge.

That means she has stepped down from her Parish Clerk position in Hopton Wafers and you find an advertisement for that post on Page 49 of this issue.

THE ANGELS OF UKRAINE



The Ukrainian flags crocheted by the women from that country currently living here in Britain. Each flag represents a child known to have died in that dreadful conflict. It was hung on the tower of Saint Mary's church on February 12th and then moved into the building for all visitors to see.

The service that day gave prayers for the country and their National Anthem was sung. The Angels here are led by Svetlana, a refugee living

with Paul and Sally Serrell-Cooke. The welcome given to refugees from war is another example of the simple kindness in communities like ours.

OUR CLOCK IS BACK



The fine old clock that has graced the tower of Saint Mary's since 1772 will be back in full working order by the time you read this. Cumbrian Clocks starting carrying the works back uptake tower on February 20th. Chris Kippin took this shot of the original installation plate. Listen for the chimes.

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The Cleobury Clarion, March 2023

Volume Eighteen - Edition Ten



*Cleobury's Cub Scouts.
See Page 9.*



*Britain's Oldest Bellydancer.
Page 19*



*Red squirrel - so rare today.
See Page 23.*

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CLOWS TOP GARDENING CLUB

7.00pm March 22nd is the Spring Show. Schedules will have been available at the February meeting, and at the Clows Top shop. There are 12 classes, for daffodils, tulips and shrubs. Always a wonderfully cheering sight.

The speaker is Pip Smith, his subject "The Fragrant Garden" He is a garden designer with over 13 years of experience, based in Droitwich. He trained at Pershore College of Horticulture, and has worked at several local gardens, including Wollerton Old Hall.

His aim is to bring all year fragrance to the house and garden. This may be in the form of cut flowers and fragrant bulbs for the house, as well as flowers and shrubs to scent the garden all the year round. There are of course many lovely smelling winter plants, and Pip will be bringing a list of everything he mentions for us to take home and refer to in the future.

Remember to bring your "flower of the month" and magazines to swap. Tea/coffee and biscuits are available as well as the opportunity to chat to Pip and other club members. Extra parking will be available at the rear of the Clows Top Victory Hall.

Judith Lawson

ROGER SKELHORN

The passing of Roger Skelhorn, long term Deputy Head Teacher at Lacon Child School, was a sad loss to both his family and the town. He was a tireless worker for the school and later as a mentor

via the parish church and related charities. His daughters write:

We would like to thank everyone who attended Roger Skelhorn's funeral at St Mary's on 1st December, those who sent messages or cards and supported the family at such a difficult time and those who gave to the collection in his name.

£1379.25 has been donated in his name to Parkinson's UK, via the collection at the funeral and an online tribute fund hosted on the Parkinson's UK website. (<https://roger-skelhorn1.muchloved.com>)

Tributes or any further donations can be made via the address above.

Roger's daughters - Katherine, Jo and Laura

TRYING TO HELP

With so much tragedy in the world, the dreadful war in Ukraine now joined by the force of nature in Syria and Turkey, the need for aid to just keep survivors alive is huge.

I have talked about this to too many people who refuse to donate because they say the money will be used by corrupt operators of all sorts. One cannot deny corruption, but I cannot accept the idea of denying aid to such an obvious and urgent need. If that makes me a softy, I'll wear the badge with pride.

I made a donation to the UNICEF fund for the Syria/Turkey victims and next day had an acknowledgement from them stating that the money had reached the children affected by the quake - seven million of them. Leading a

comfortable life here in rural Shropshire is no reason to ignore such suffering. *JR*

WE ARE LOSING ADVERTISERS

That's not something many editors would boast about, but there are good reasons in this case.

Andy Taylor called to say he would not be renewing his ad. His health is not good and the lovely job he always made of getting bodywork back to gleaming was not making a decent wage. The editor suspects that his choice of a Soul Red Mazda may have had something to do with this, because it's a very expensive paint and Andy knows how often he did little jobs to keep the old BMW looking decent. Mister Bumperscuff, we'll miss you.

Then Robert Bradley's better half called to say they'd not be renewing, because they were so busy with their log business they wanted a breather to catch up on stock. They couldn't keep pace with the demand their Clarion advert generated.

Forgive me saying so, but what an advert that is in its own right! I'll not make silly claims or boast, though I do know there are traders who use the Clarion and no other publication. Mr Bradley, happy to help whenever you feel the need of another advert. *JR*

ST DAVID'S DAY

A Welsh theme marks the Saint David's Day lunch at Oreton's Melville Chapel on March 8th. Come dressed in Welsh style or as you please, to enjoy soup and Welsh cakes, starting at 12.30 and ending at 2.00.



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COUNCILLOR SALLY BURNS

I was worried who was going to present the Clarion Cup to the 2022 winner. A call to Dorothy McBride brought the answer: "Sally Burns, the new councillor." The first time I'd heard the lady's name, and it seemed a good idea to find out a little more. Her email's on the council's website and one phone call got a meeting arranged.

She's a native of Kent, who likes the quiet countryside of Shropshire that reminds her of the backroads of her youth in the far south east corner of England. Life (lets not mention house prices...) drew her north to settle in Bayton where her daughter flourished in that lovely primary school before a move that looks pretty final, into Cleobury. You can tell how settled she feels when she speaks of Lacon Childe School and the way it brought her daughter's talent out. It will take a lot to get her away from this, her settled home of maturity.

She works as a midwife in the Telford and Shrewsbury Trust, is married to David, with whom she shares the care of two dogs and an inkling to find and restore an elderly Lambretta scooter. Listen to her warm affection for this town ("I do prefer to call it a village") and its community spirit to see why she applied for the seat when there was a vacancy on the Town Council. She didn't make it first time, but when another vacancy cropped up she was the chosen one after a penetrating interview. I

personally feel happy that the selection was demanding instead of the old style of selecting a candidate who was known by one or more of the established corps.



Councillor duty. Handing over the Clarion Cup to winner Jo at Red Hare.

Mrs Burns being a councillor, what does she see as matters she wants to pursue? "I'd like to see a Women's Club, rather like the Men's Shed, to help those in need. But I do need to know more about what those needs are." That's clear thinking; I wasn't surprised to learn that she has worked as a volunteer at the Food Bank.

"Sounds like Learning by Listening," this mere male suggested. When she agreed I realised she has a clear mind and a capacity to find out. "Young people are lonely, not just old folk," she explained. Early days in her career as a councillor, but enthusiasm for the job and an appreciation of the area are a great starting point. She's available on 07932 541 209.

PARISH HALL NOTES

Aprilfest

Why wait until October? No need to travel to Munich. On April 14th, at 6.30 for 7.00), a "Bavarian Evening" takes place in the Parish Hall. It is being held by the hall committee and the Friends of St Mary's to raise funds for the parish hall and the church. Sponsored by Hobsons, beer, food, fun and lots of laughter are promised with music provided by the 'Barry Schmidt Oompah Band'. Time to dust down your lederhosen and dirndls. Tickets are £15 – call 01299 271713 or 01299 272820, or online at www.cleoburyparishhall.uk/oompah.

Flicks in the Sticks

On March 18th at 7.30, we will be showing *Ticket to Paradise* starring George Clooney and Julia Roberts.

David and Georgia, two divorced parents who can't stand each other, head to Bali after their daughter, Lili, announces her plans to marry a local islander she just met while on holiday. They decide to put aside their differences and work together to stop the wedding, believing that doing so will keep Lily from making a dreadful mistake similar to their own. Tickets £5. Bar, tea and cake available.

AMBITIOUS ADAM

Adam Ponsford has an Afternoon Tea on March 18th, with support from the Padstow Tea Company. Book your place with a call to Adam on 01299 841032, to support his African trip.

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CLEOBURY'S CUB SCOUTS

The scouting movement goes back a very long time, to its founding by Robert Baden-Powell in 1910. They've come a long way, keeping up with the times to appeal to bright young people who want to make a positive contribution to their world. The base in our town is the old Pump Room by The Wells in Church Street and I was made welcome by the Cub Scouts, one group in the movement, catering for boys and girls from eight to ten years old.

There's a strong family feeling, with dads Matt, Tim and Dwayne there to watch and assist. I was struck by the neat and clean appearance of the place and asked who was responsible? "We are," was the firm reply. "If we use equipment we take care to put it back where it came from." Anyone who's been in my office will know I wasn't a scout in my youth; they were given much better advice than me.

The Pump Room is shared with other sections of the movement, Beavers for up to eight years and Scouts for up to 12. The whole movement built around teaching tidiness and cleanliness as they help others.

When we finished talking, the group were off with adult guidance to collect food contributions from the Co-op, Londis and Select and Save, to be taken to the Food Bank that night.



Delivery made!

That's just part of what these youngsters do. They'll also deliver leaflets and offer help when it's needed. Rather like the caring adults who offer similar help - really good members of our community.

FRIENDS OF SAINT MARY'S CHURCH

Secretary Diane Waddington advises that the Friends' Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.00 on March 13th, in the church. The Friends are keen to

get additional members involved and all parishioners are welcome to attend. Diane is on CM 272820

BEATLES FEST

The Regal in Tenbury have a special anniversary to celebrate in April. It will be 60 years since the Beatles played there! It's no surprise that the news is headlined "Before Abbey Road there was Teme Street", a great touch.

It all kicks off on the 14th, with the great poet Roger McGough, Beatles historian Mark Lewisohn, a talk by "Before Abbey Road..." author Andrew Lowe, an evening with The Mersey Beatles and finally Robin Nolan, fan and friend of the great George Harrison will give performance on a selection George's original guitars. It seems that no less an artist than Willie Nelson once said: "You play a mighty fine guitar, Robin Nolan." That's quite some praise for the man.

Tickets are on sale now and if you buy a pair to treat the one you love, they come at a discount. Long live love!

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CLEOBURY W.I.

February's meeting was well attended, when we were joined by several visitors and new members. The focus of the evening was Dance for Health and Well-being with Holly Joynson, known to members who attend her Adult Ballet and Nifty Fifties dance classes in the Parish Hall. Holly explained how dance developed through the ages, with changing styles of dress influencing what moves could be made. She highlighted the benefits of exercise to music both physically and mentally, and stressed that this can even be done while seated. An energetic and fun dance session followed, using top hats, canes and ribbons as props. Holly certainly put us through our paces and put a smile on everyone's faces!

At our Annual General Meeting on March 14th we will be looking back over our very successful Centenary year and forward to an exciting programme of activities for the year. Nominations are open for new committee members as a few have decided to step down.

We have had a record number of new members this year. Subscriptions will be £36, due from 1st April and can be paid

by cash, cheque or bank transfer.

For further information or to join WI, you are welcome to contact Judy 01299 270983 or email judysant10@gmail.com
Val Sniadowski

HELPING THE HOUNDS

After reporting the gathering of sighthounds last year, I gave the group a tankard with a greyhound shaped as the handle. It had been a gift years ago and I was happy to find an appropriate body to donate it to.

Imagine my surprise when Jill Parker reported that it had fetched £70 at an auction in support of the hound group. In fact the whole auction raised an amazing £16,539 to help raise funds for a van to transport injured and sick sighthounds! The cup was bought as a late Valentine's gift for a lady's husband and he apparently loves it.

CLEOBURY FESTIVAL

Just a reminder about this year's Festival, one of the major social events in Cleobury's calendar. It will be on June 24th, running from 12.00 noon until 7.00 and will be on the sports field at Love Lane. Booked so far are a dog show, falconry

display, trade and hobby stalls, games and performances with a lot more to come. The point of contact for any bookings or queries is Chris Smith on 07977 296 335 or clsartcontact@gmail.com

More next month - expect the list of happenings to grow!

LUDLOW ROTARY CARES

This is the name the Rotary Club of Ludlow has given to a scheme arranging funding up to £500 for events within 15 miles of Ludlow. Over the past eight years they have invested over £40,000 raised in local community events!

There's no restriction on the type of event, it simply has to meet a community need and also comply with the Club's aims. More details on www.ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk

Organisations need to get their applications in by April 17th. A shortlist will then be drawn up and those listed will be invited to an evening event at Ashford Carbonell Village Hall on May 23rd. There they'll be able to meet other applicants and members of the Rotary Club. Cheques will be handed out soon afterwards.

This is a great opportunity to boost your local event.



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Lunch club	11:30am - 12:30pm	£4.00
Afternoon Session	12:30am - 3:00pm	£10.00
After School Club	3:00pm - 5:30pm	£10.00

CLEOBURY GARDENERS

March is a month which straddles two seasons and our weather is unpredictable, but you might have time to consider the following ideas.

Have you thought of creating a Pollinator Patch? A square metre or so will suffice, filled with early flowering, nectar and pollen-rich, single bloom flowers eg. wallflower, crocus, primrose, bugle, hellebore and clematis up a wall or obelisk will provide food at this time when it is in short supply, to encourage the newly-emerged pollinating bees and other insects to beat a path to your door. Plant the patch, and they will come. Just the thing for the children to share in.

Another job, preferably before the garden comes fully to life, is the installation of water butts, as many as you can, good for the environment and your wallet. A big roof will feed a big butt, but even your small shed roof will capture sufficient rain to fill a smaller one. Water diverter kits are widely available and easily installed into existing downspouts. Site where most

convenient for use in your garden and elevate the butt to ensure your watering can slides under the tap.

Then there's the lawn. For now give it a light trim. Adjust your newly sharpened blades to their highest level and cut high, little and often for the next few weeks. Cutting too low can weaken the grass.

Not enough work? Then here's some more jobs to do for the month of March:

Finish pruning the roses. Apply manure or rose fertiliser. Start hardy annuals and tender veg seeds in greenhouse/window sill.

Plant out first early potatoes in trenches.

Plant onion and shallot sets
Prune Buddleja Davidii,
Hydrangea Paniculata,
Clematis Group 3, Lavender,
Ornamental grasses

Remember to garden as though you will live forever. Talk to you next month. Enjoy your garden.

Linda Ashman, Sec, Cleobury Gardeners.

CLOWS TOP

Victory Hall has had a busy February and is gearing up for March, including the return of

the popular Barn Dance on Saturday March 18th when Cats Whiskers will making sure that everyone can enjoy another fun evening. There will be a Jumble Sale on March 25th, starting at 1.30pm.

The Wildlife Club meets on the last Friday of each month and the speaker on 31st March will be Gary Farmer, talking about grasshoppers and other insects.

For details about the Wildlife Club or tickets for the Barn Dance, please contact Steve Woodison on 07738014884 or scw1960@hotmail.co.uk

To book the Hall or find out about activities, please contact by ringing 07738 014884 or 07379 959895, by e mail admin@clowstopvictoryhall.co.uk or visit the Clows Top Victory Hall Facebook Page.

CHARITY LUNCH

Thursday March 23rd at 12.00 upstairs in the Market Hall.

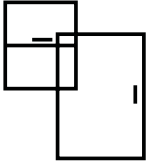
Join us to enjoy soup with an international flavour, crusty bread plus a cheese platter and fresh fruit.

Payment will be by donation to support Christian Aid in its work with the world's poorest people.

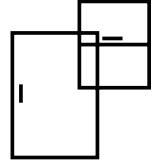


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Curlew and Lapwing survey

Have you heard your first Curlew of the year yet? If so, please tell us. They usually start returning in late February, and continue to arrive throughout March.

Our survey aims to find out how many breeding pairs there are, and where. We need to know that before we can try and help them. 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, but that's an optional extra.

The area 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.

If you regret the disappearance of Curlew and Lapwing from the local countryside, and want to do something to help stop it, we would like your help, please. New helpers will be very welcome.

In 2022, we located about eight breeding pairs of Curlews in the area in April, similar to the last couple of years, but a lot less than the 13 pairs when we started in 2012. Are there more? Where are they?

The survey is easy to do, and only involves 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 if you want to come. Whether you join in or not, please let us know if you see Curlew, Lapwing or Kestrel anywhere in the area.

You can read about the Shropshire Ornithological Society (SOS) *Save our Curlews*



campaign on the SOS website
www.shropshirebirds.com/save-our-curlews/

We still need to monitor the local Curlew population, and check all the pairs we do find, to see if they produce young, and if any fledge. So if you can do so, please help.

A Bird Group meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 20 March, at the Recreation Rooms, 22A, Clee Hill High Street, to present the results of our work in previous years, and plans for 2023.

All welcome.

THE READING GROUP

A surprise awaited us in our book group box, a substitute titled 'Get Shorty' by Elmore Leonard. A satirical novel most members would not have chosen off the shelf. Definitely something unusual.

Set in the USA, featuring low life gangsters and movie makers discussing a film structure and plot, which was of interest. A couple of good characters who improved when the various strands of narrative came together. The American writing and dialogue wasn't much appreciated. Could not compare with film version as no one had viewed it. Elmore Leonard (died 2013) was a very prolific writer, known mainly for western and classic crime novels. Very popular but not generally with our group.

The read this month is 'Less' by Andrew Sean Greer, winner of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. We will all express opinions on March 20th at the library.

Deana Kimber 01299 271754

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TINA STARS

What would you do if your partner was invited to appear on television? You'd be more than pleased to hear that you were invited as well and if it meant a long drive you wouldn't hesitate to drive him or her there. Whatever time it took, any decent person would gladly do it in support of the one who made your life better.

Tina Hobin, well known in this part of the world as both a belly dancer and tutor with a wish to see people keeping fit, is the lady in my life. We enjoy time together and laugh a lot, so I got the car filled up and ready to head north to the Channel 4 studios in Leeds. A day away from the phone and the computer - great!

Tina's been working away at publicising her dance classes and books both old and due out soon. She does have more energy than you'd expect for one of mature years, but a spot on Steph's Packed Lunch was hers, where she was billed as "Britain's Oldest Belly Dancer". That was a brave move - who could expect a lady happy to be called old to perform well enough to entertain the watching public?

We arrived late in the afternoon after a long drive, thanks to the chauffeur taking a wrong turning. I used to know my way around Britain, but they've changed a lot of roads since then. Dinner and bed early, to be ready for a 10.00am start, when we were guided to the studios; really office spaces converted. Producer Rebecca met us and explained the routine to Tina before we went

to the dressing room for her change and do her make-up for the cameras. She was clearly nervous, but as a veteran she soon clicked as Rebecca took her through the sequence again.

What struck home was the friendliness of the place, the casual dress of the crew, from cameramen to star of the show Steph, who greeted every one of her show guests. I was just there as Tina's gofer, but was allowed to move around. I did so with care, keeping out of the way as cameras checked shot locations and lighting, warning anyone not a familiar face to be careful of the cables strewn across the floor. I counted five cameras spread around the area we were in, with settings for the likes of cooking.

I was shown to the Green Room as the 12.30 'On Air' time approached. A comfortable upstairs place with room to sit and relax as the time to hear Britain's Oldest Belly Dancer approached. It was a cosy chat about her dancing life, with a few laughs thrown in - my lady is good at laughs.

She was dressed in a sleek light purple outfit that looked great; even better when she showed off the basic moves of this ancient dance. She'd brought a selection of outfits and offered nominal skirts to the show guests who'd volunteered to try the steps as raw beginners. As the mid Eastern music struck up, Tina's three novices went gently through the movements, the guy who featured in the cooking section looking very smooth and athletic while a less

smooth lady lost her decorative belt twice.



Few ladies look as slim and elegant as this dancer at the age of 82.

(Photo by John Hands)

The relaxed happiness of the day really caught on, with Tina joking as she called out instructions to her band of novices. The music faded as the programme moved on to an advert break, the whole studio crew including the cameramen clapping. Hostess Steph gave Tina a big hug, clearly very happy with the way the chat and dancing had gone.

We drove the 150 miles home in a happy mood and in the morning friends who'd seen the show were full of congratulations and soon there were radio stations on the line. It says a lot for the lady's talent and determination to stay fit that she's been taking loads of phone calls while trying to get her new book finished. Too old at 82? Don't you believe it.

Tina's dancing and fitness classes are on every Thursday from 7.00 in the Market Hall. If you want to know more, she's on CM 272882 or tinahobin1@gmail.com.



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

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Thursday 2nd. 10.00.
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Thursday 16th. 10.30.
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THE FOOTPATH ASSOCIATION

Spring has arrived, well according to the calendar March is the first month of Spring! As I write this we are still having night frosts but the signs of the changing seasons are around us: bulbs in flower, catkins on the hazel trees and the distinct sounds of the dawn chorus all herald warmer days. The full moon on March 7th is the Worm Moon, named by the Native Americans after the worm trails visible in the ground after the snow thaws.

Closer to home the ever popular Snowdrop Country Walk at the beginning of February proved to be just that. It was dry but cold as the walkers enjoyed the route through the Mawley Estate. The display of snowdrops didn't disappoint, among the trees groups of the small white blooms poking through grass and dry leaves. Sunday March 5th at 10.00 am is the date and time of the next Country Walk. The Work Parties start in the third week of March after the Winter break. A repair schedule has been compiled for 2023 but this can be amended if you think something should be brought to our attention. Please use the link on the CMFA website.

Last month a group of CMFA members met at Hartlebury near Kidderminster for the February Social Walk. The six mile route wound itself around Hartlebury and Whitlunge ending for refreshments at a local pub. This is an area that I don't know very well but the walk looks interesting, passing Hartlebury Castle and using part of the Geopark Way long distance path with the added advantage of no significant hills!

Walking for Health continues twice a month, rain or shine. We generally keep to routes within Cleobury Mortimer during the wet Winter months however on February 8th after a few days of hard frost we were able to walk to Pinkham and back along the grassy path behind Mill Farm. The 8th and 22nd are the dates for March and don't forget afterwards the coffee and cake at the Coco coffee morning.

I have recently read *The Old Ways* by Robert Macfarlane. The book follows the author's 1000 mile journey along the ancient networks of paths, drovers roads and even sea paths in UK and abroad. It gives a different perspective to the landscape by combining natural and social history with geology, archaeology and literature. I don't often recommend books as likes and dislikes differ but I loved this one.

Information about all the CMFA activities are on our website www.cmfa.co.uk and on Facebook.

Veronica Hargreaves

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As I got to know the forest years ago I learnt to see squirrels' dreys: nests of twigs and leaves high enough in the trees to be out of reach of marauders like me. More recently I've learnt to recognise the damage that Grey Squirrels do to trees, especially our Wyre Forest oaks. If you look towards the tops of young trees you can often see that they have been stripped of bark, sometimes so thoroughly that the top has died off. This means that the tree will never produce good timber. Taking this idea further, you realise that the older, well-formed trees around you put on most of their growth before the Grey Squirrels spread across the UK following their introduction from North America in the late 1800s.

The native Red Squirrels are slightly smaller and more lightly-built than the Greys. The newcomers compete with them for food: even taking hazel nuts before they ripen. They breed successfully, often with two litters of kits a year, and carry the 'squirrel pox' disease which is deadly to the Reds. After nearly 150 years the Reds have retreated to the remoter areas – Cumbria, The Highlands of Scotland, mid-Wales, Anglesey, the Isle of Wight and some other islands such as Brownsea in Poole Harbour.

An interesting response to this situation is to re-introduce Pine Martens. In Ireland where Pine Marten populations are high, they appear to have reduced numbers of Grey Squirrels allowing Red Squirrels to increase. It is thought that they harass the Greys to the extent that their breeding is disrupted. However, over most of the nation woodland owners opt either to do nothing, or trap and shoot the Grey Squirrels but nothing so far seems effective in stopping the relentless domination of the American super race. If nothing is done our native squirrel may

become extinct in these islands within 10 years.



England's native Red Squirrel, a species under serious threat but clinging on. How sad it would be to lose them.

Now, however, there is hope in the form of fertility control. On a recent visit to the Wyre Forest, Rebecca Isted of the Forestry Commission, who is working on a draft 'Grey Squirrel Action Plan', indicated that a chemical contraceptive could soon be cleared for use by landowners. It would be administered through a bait of hazelnut spread in boxes which other species cannot access. (A sad waste of Nutella, if you ask me!)

Thanks to Rosemary Winnal who has allowed me to use her photo of a Red Squirrel, obviously not in the Wyre Forest!

Linda Iles

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Philip Dunne's Letter from Westminster

Our health service has been in the news lately, and not always for the best of reasons. The service is under pressure following COVID-19 and high levels of seasonal flu.

We all admire the immense dedication of those who work in our NHS, as shown when we came together during the pandemic to clap their commitment.

I have spoken to staff across the NHS in Shropshire in recent weeks, who have made me aware of the pressures. This is mainly due to the rise in demand for healthcare as our population ages, compounded by the backlog of treatments not able to be done during the pandemic.

But this is also due to staffing shortages, with high vacancy levels in many areas and specialities, and recruitment into rural areas among the most difficult to fill.

These pressures have led to unprecedented strike action by health workers. This is not all about pay, but pay demands are a big part of the present disputes. So, what is the Government doing?

Well, first increasing the budget for both the NHS and social care significantly, by £7bn over the next two years. The Department for Health and Social Care budget for 2023/24 will be £182bn, one in every six taxpayer's pounds planned to be spent by the Government.

To put this into context, there was a claim on a bus in 2016 that the NHS would get an extra £350million a week. In this coming year, NHS England will get almost £600m a week more than in 2016/17.

Secondly, increasing the number of doctors and nurses working in the NHS. When I was Health Minister, we increased the number of training places for doctors and nurses by 25% each. These additional nurses are joining the workforce now, and the doctors are in training roles. Last year, the number of

nurses increased by 10,500 and the number of doctors by 4,700.

Third, on pay, every member of the more than 1.2m staff on the NHS pay scales (pretty much everyone other than doctors & dentists), received a £1,400 pay rise from last April, which was a 9.3% increase for the lowest paid. Health unions should engage with the Independent Pay Review Board and NHS employers to make their case that the coming year settlement should reflect more of the inflationary pressures we have seen since last April, rather than focusing on the year before.

I have long called for a Long-Term Workforce Plan and am pleased the NHS is finalising such a plan to be published soon, which will consider the number of staff needed to address patient need.

There are 23,000 more primary care staff working in general practice than in 2019, with a 19% increase across practices in the Ludlow constituency. This is a good start, but the NHS requires reform of various working practices, which currently work against filling rotas, such as experienced consultants and doctors retiring early due to high pension taxes and far too much reliance on agency staff.

There is also a new Urgent and Emergency Care Plan for acute hospitals, intended to tackle hospital discharges, increase bed capacity, and reduce pressure. With an investment of £1bn, the investment will deliver 5,000 more beds and over 800 more ambulances.

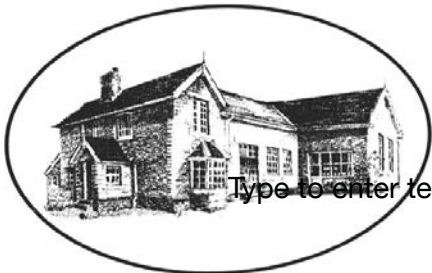
We need the NHS more than ever, and there is clearly an enormous amount to do to get back on track. But I believe the commitment is there from the public, staff, and Government to ensure the NHS has a healthy and viable future.

Philip Dunne



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WHY GO TO THE MEN'S SHED?

This is a rather special message. Anthony Peterson tells his tale bravely and honestly.

I have depression. I'd rather cut my leg off with a rusty spoon than talk about it in public, but it's something we need to talk about to break the taboo around mental illness. I've lost two close mates to suicide so I know the devastation it can cause.

I regularly pop into the Men's Shed for a cuppa and a chat. I've helped with community projects and I've learned how to use woodworking tools which is brilliant because I'm a DIY novice. The shed environment is positive and encouraging regardless of your skill level. I'm toying with the idea of building a garden table for my wife who is very rude about my DIY skills!

There's only one golden rule – What is said in the Men's Shed *stays* in the Men's Shed.

Who goes?

Men from different walks of life: farmer, carpenter, IT consultant and chartered surveyor. I think the members have a strong sense of belonging and shared camaraderie, and devote time to worthwhile community projects.

When and where?

It's informal. Pop in for a cuppa and have a look around.

Tuesday and Wednesday midday to 4.00., plus Friday 2:30 to 4.00 (more of a social occasion at the Cleobury Community Hub)

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across from the Cleobury Seafood and Freezer Centre)

www.cleoburymortimermessh.ed.co.uk

THE BRITISH LEGION

The Branch held its February meeting at the Talbot, the first of those alternating with the Sports & Social Club. The agenda was reduced as planned and we discussed mainly the programme for the year. The first event is the Annual Lunch in The Parish Hall on March 26th with food provided by Clock House; Mark Baldwin will talk on the Great Zeppelin Raid of January 1916. All (members and non-members) are welcome. Tickets are £17 per head and are available from me (271384), Ron Breakwell (270830), Mark Baldwin (270110).

We are planning to hold an event over the Coronation weekend; information will be published shortly. Our next planned event is a coach trip to an evening at the races at Worcester on 26 May; all of our events by coach will only go ahead if there are enough people attending so please book as soon as we release the details. If it goes well there will be a similar one in September. Our usual events – the Auction and the Poppy Appeal Concert Supper - will be going ahead in the autumn.

As I said in last month's Clarion we are looking for new members. You can join online at britishlegion.org.uk/join or call 0808 802 8080. If you prefer, you can contact me at cleoburymortimer.chairman@rbl.community or Branch Secretary Paul McLellan at cleoburymortimer.secretary@rbl.community. Nick at the Talbot

also has details. Anyone can join, you don't have to have served in the military to become a member.

Branch meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7pm, alternating between the Sports & Social Club and one of the town pubs. The next meeting is in the Sports & Social Club on 8th March.

Mike Hermolle – Branch Chairman
01299 271384

CLARION

ADVERTISING

There's a boastful plug for our advertising on Page 5, because in one case a local supplier is struggling to keep up with demand. Not all local newsletters have the same effect, as a recent conversation with a new advertiser made clear.

This company is looking to expand their coverage of this area and they've been calling to ask what coverage they'd get and how much it would cost. A common sense approach for any business.

But the lady we spoke to had struggled to get such information. One response said they couldn't tell how many issues they would be printing and another could not give a price! In fairness, if the first respondent had small circulation they would be more vulnerable to price changes as their printer would not be buying stock months ahead. Our printer, Badger Print at Shifnal, does commit ahead and we benefit from less price circulation.

Changing costs do make long term prices difficult, but the Clarion advertising rates have changed once!



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The Breakfast Club = Getting Up To Date

December

Mark Baldwin tackled a brand new topic, The Zeppelin, with a lightning-quick survey of the history of this rigid inflatable aircraft, invented in 1900, paying particular attention to the Great Raid of January 1916, when nine Zeppelins came to bomb the Midlands and Liverpool. Poor navigation meant that none got as far as Liverpool, but one did bomb Kidderminster.

This sent a shock wave through Britain. Never before had ordinary people been attacked directly. Our defence systems were improved and, as a strike force, Zeppelins were replaced by conventional aircraft.

After WW1, airships provided luxurious travel. Landmark events were the crashing of Britain's R101, and the fire which overcame the Hindenburg when landing in the USA in 1937. It seemed that the days of the rigid airship were over, at least for passenger travel.

The dream has not completely expired. A British company has built the Airlander 10, a semi-rigid airship, carrying 10 tons. A Spanish company has reportedly ordered ten of these. Will we see these gentle giants in our skies in the future?

January

Chris Kippin explained the achievements of Lewis & Clark, US Army officers who led an expedition crossing north America from East to West. As no European had penetrated much beyond the Mississippi, the obstacles between the Mississippi and the Pacific were unknown.

The United States had, by the 'Louisiana Purchase' of

1803, bought a huge area, stretching from New Orleans to Canada. US president, Thomas Jefferson, commissioned this expedition to investigate its resources, particularly to discover whether there was a water route between east and west coasts.

The expedition started in May 1804 at St Louis, when 42 men struggled up the Missouri by keelboat, then by smaller flat-bottomed 'pirogues'. These were abandoned, and the explorers continued on foot into the Rocky Mountains.

This called for undaunted courage. The expedition was completely out of contact with any support. Major difficulties included lack of food, mosquitoes, and hostility of some native Americans. Considerable courage was necessary if the expedition was to survive.

They reached the Pacific mid-November 1805 and had to walk back through the mountains. They reached St Louis in September 1806, bringing numerous maps and sketches, and specimens of previously unrecorded plant and animal life.

February

Pat Smith revealed something of her work at Berrington Hall, a Grade I neo-classical house, now owned by the National Trust. It was designed by Henry Holland in 1778-83 for Thomas Harley, a successful banker, and one-time Lord Mayor of London. In 1957, it was passed to the Treasury, and thence to the National Trust. Although its West Front has a massive entrance, the house is quite small, having a mere six bedrooms. Some of the most interesting features of the house

are the Marble Hall, with its splendid marble floor and seven mahogany doors leading into the rest of the ground floor, and the cantilevered staircase, lit from above by a glazed dome.

Pat came to Cleobury eight years ago, having left Kent. An early visit to Berrington led her to volunteer offer her services. With Pat the NT got a lot more; she provides visitors with the history of the house and its contents, and also uses her artistic skills to paint a series of pictures showing how the Hall's earliest residents would have actually put on the clothes necessary to keep up with the fashion of the times.

She has been especially concerned with one dress. This is about six feet wide at the hips, so must have been frightfully uncomfortable to wear, and very difficult to walk around in. It had been sold off from the house in the 19th century, but was bought back at a recent auction, and now amazes visitors, who try to envisage the problems of wearing it.

Pat provided us with some interesting insights into the sensitive way the guides have to approach visitors, not every one of whom appreciates being given a wealth of historical information.

Finally Pat showed us a slide of a *trompe l'oeil* cast iron fireplace she had painted to fill in a gap in one of the bedrooms. So realistic is it, that from across the room, a visitor would not realise that it isn't the real thing.

The next meeting of the club will be held on 14 March, and will incorporate the AGM.



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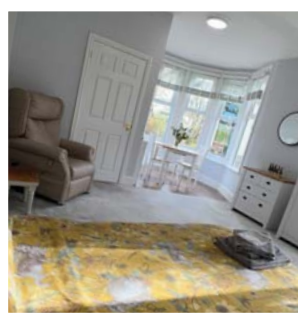
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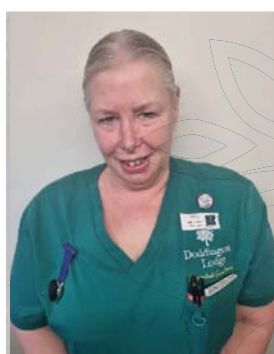
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Doddington Lodge is a place where friendships are made and special moments are shared. We organise many fun activities that everyone can get involved with, whether that's a sing along, arts and crafts, collecting fresh veg from the allotment or just 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.



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Thanks to our incredible Domestic Team, Stacey, Paula, and Debbie, as well as our Senior Carer and IPC Lead, Wendy, who wears her IPC badge with pride. Doddington Lodge has achieved a stunning 5 Star rating for Infection Prevention Control. Everyone on the Doddington Lodge team is committed to ensuring this exemplary standard of cleanliness is maintained at all times. Yet, we couldn't have done it without these four wonderful lady's who always go above and beyond to make sure we are being the best we can be at all times, and with Wendy's keen eye for detail, it's no surprise why we've been rated so highly. Well done everyone!

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Doddington Lodge, Residential Care Home, Doddington, Nr Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire DY14 0HL



Come along!
Coffee morning
on Friday 10th
March 2023



Join us for a warm cup of cheer and plenty of laughs at our monthly **Doddington Lodge Coffee Mornings!**

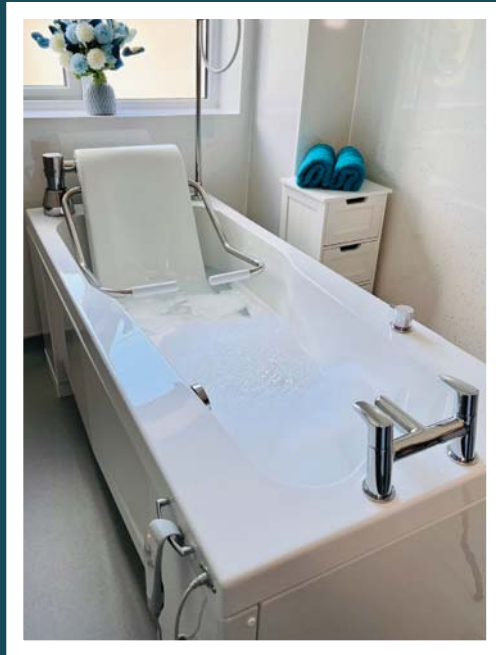
Every 2nd Friday of the month, come together with residents, family & friends over tea or coffee. Enjoy freshly baked cake as well as the Doddington Lodge monthly raffle.

For only £2.50 per person – including your beverage and slice of cake – join us for our first get-together on Friday, March 10th, 2023, from 10 am until midday.

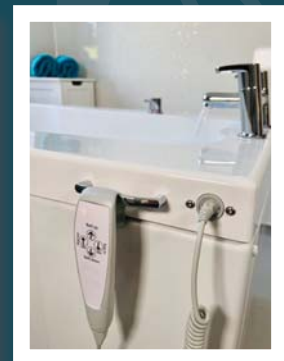
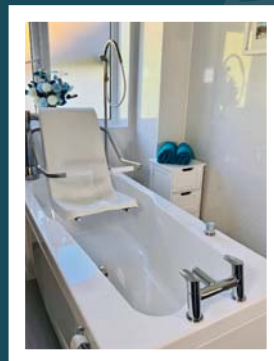
A warm welcome awaits on these frosty mornings - We look forward to seeing you!

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Sorry to hear that Jenny of Shoe Box fame is pottering off to Hampshire. She will be missed. So I will be doing the Shoe Boxes for the foreseeable future. There's no way I can match Jenny, but I will try. My contact number: 07976 307 889. KEITH BALMER

MORE ABOUT SHOE BOXES

For Boys and Girls:

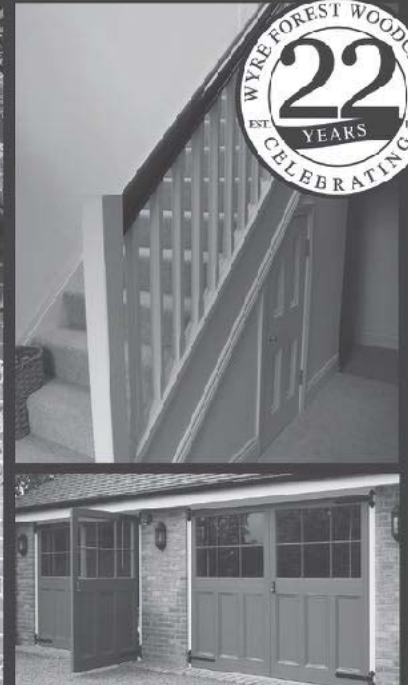
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Clarion Clippings - The Local News

VLADIMIR

I promised to let you know what was happening with my nasty little intruder, but only if it was good or amusing news.

The best part of the past month was the report from Kidderminster Hospital to Dr Allsopp at the Cleobury Medical Centre, thanking him for referring this “delightful 84 year old gentleman.” I’ve kept the letter as proof of the level of

tolerance within the medical profession.

I’m considering starting a crowdfunding measure to raise enough funds to buy the lady a white NHS stick.

More after an operation at Redditch Hospital on February 27th.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The Police report an outbreak of sheep being killed in the area, sometimes with extreme cruelty. One incident at Little Stretton on

February 16th, near the footpath to Church Stretton, did you see any suspicious in the area? PC Jonathan Lightfoot on 07811 761 855 would be glad to hear from you if you can help.

He also reminds us that this is lambing time and asks if you are walking your dog in a field where sheep are present to keep the dog on a lead. Your dog may be well behaved, but some sheep are very nervous at the presence of a dog and be nervous.



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Sunday 12th March – 8.30am and 10am Eucharist
Sunday 19th March – 10am Eucharist
Sunday 26th March – 10am Eucharist
Thursday 30th March – 7.30pm Wholeness Service

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St John the Baptist, Doddington

Sunday 5th March – 11.00am Eucharist
Sunday 19th March – 3.pm Evening Prayer

All Saints', Neen Sollars

Sunday 5th March – 11.am Village Worship
Sunday 12th March – 11.am Village Worship
Sunday 19th March – 11.am Village Worship
Sunday 26th March – 11.00am Eucharist

St George's, Milson

Sunday 5th March – 6pm Evening Prayer BCP
Sunday 19th March – 9.00am Eucharist

St Mary's, Neen Savage

Sunday 5th March – 6pm Evening Prayer BCP
Sunday 19th March – 11.am Eucharist BCP

St John the Baptist, Kinlet

Sunday 12th March – 11.15am Eucharist BCP
Sunday 26th March – 6.pm Evening Prayer BCP

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Simon Morton - In The Garden

Supreme Snowdrops and Delightful Daffodils

It's a gobsmackingly beautiful morning.

That flavour of stark bright sunshine we get at this time of year is pouring through the window as I write. It warms my face and sparks wistful thoughts of lazy hot days and long cold drinks. As someone easily distracted, I immediately break off from writing to 'e-window-shop' new barbecues, steamer chairs and those fancy new beer pumps with overpriced Party 7 style kegs. The pages of marketing blurb that accompany each version of the beer pump promise to chill and serve a pint just like they do at any of the fine establishments in Cleobury (*insert name here - I am shamelessly open to bribes/sponsorship*).

After all, it's five o'clock somewhere, right?

Looking up from the allure of the web, it's evident that it's not just me that's feeling invigorated by the warmth of the rays - the garden is most definitely starting to wake from its winter slumber. The grass, which frankly never seems to have stopped growing over winter, has taken things up a couple of notches and is now calling for an early trim. Of course, this will entail coaxing the lawnmower back to life, accompanied by much swearing and hitting with a hammer (let the record state that I am NOT a mechanically-minded man), but I'm already looking forward to walking up and down in a (straight-ish) line.

Equally, the snowdrops are going great guns, covering swathes of the garden with their gentle swaying whitewash. I confess to previously not really taking much notice of the snowdrops in our garden. They appear at just the time of year that I am least inclined to meander and mooch - my preference is to dodge the showers, attempt to keep at least one pair of shoes clay-mud-free and stay warm. However, this year it's a different story, and I'm regularly surprised and delighted to see clusters of these bobbing beacons of joy popping up where I least expect them.

Surprise is a recurring theme in my garden at this time of year, mainly due to my complete lack of record-keeping. This means every Spring is a voyage of discovery as I try to figure out *what* I planted and *where*. For example, I know I planted hundreds of daff and tulip bulbs last year, but I'm buggered if I can remember what type and where - was it in pots or scattered across beds? And if so, *which* pots and beds? My time now is spent searching for the tell-tell sign of buds tentatively poking their heads above the parapet and then making a mental note not to step on or mow over said plant. My nerves are shredded.

Still, the sun continues to warm my face through the window, and the whole garden looks like it's preparing for a huge party. It's a happy time and feels like it's the start of something really rather special...

Simon



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More revelations about our battered and broken probation system as it has been revealed that one murder and two serious sexual assaults a week are carried out by someone on probation. This is partly due to a lack of experienced staff although I suspect that there is pressure to avoid adding to our overcrowded prison population. Whatever the reasons, it is a worry for the population at large.

Well done to Alan Guest for the fine job he did cleaning the pavements in the High Street. Shame it didn't last, so not at all well done to the dog owners who let their pooches foul the pavement and fail to clear it up and also to whoever dripped something all down the south side which has now dried and left a nasty stain (I think it was Western Power who were working in Bristol Place). Perhaps the rain when it comes will wash it off and perhaps it won't.

So, there is to be a crackdown on woodburning stoves due to air pollution caused in built up areas. These stoves have become very popular in recent years, largely due to people installing them for effect rather than necessity in newly gentrified areas. On the spot fines of £300 can be levied as well as penalties of up to £2,500 per DAY for the worst cases. Presumably most of these people will have gas fired central heating as well so it may come as a surprise to legislators that some people don't have that luxury. Can we expect to see Shropshire Council staff clambering up chimney stacks to monitor emission levels?. Probably not as they will be too busy fixing potholes – or possibly not as there will be money to be made from any fines imposed.

Meanwhile our Council Tax will be going up by 5% in April, one of the highest rises in the country. Strange how some councils can manage with smaller rises – Telford and Wrekin for example who are only putting their charges up by 2% and Central

Bedfordshire who are not increasing at all. I'm not sure whether this is a matter of geography or competence given that several Councils around the country have gone bust after making unwise investments. Talking about Council matters, The long awaited resurfacing of the A4117 from Mawley to the County boundary is now scheduled for the next financial year which starts in April. Meanwhile the potholes along that stretch have returned and are getting worse...

A former West Mercia Police call handler has appeared in court at Worcester charged with dealing in cocaine and cannabis. I suppose that everyone has to have a hobby but I think most of us would consider this inappropriate. Still, if you ring WMP about drug dealing in Cleobury and the call handler sounds really interested, should you be grateful for a positive response or worried that they are just checking out the competition?.

So farewell to Nicola Sturgeon who has announced that she is standing down as first minister in Scotland. Whether you love her or not, she was a formidable operator and has spent the last eight years running rings round various Prime Ministers and other Westminster figures although you might think they didn't provide much in the way of competent opposition.

Not sure if the latest transgender shambles has helped as there was a screeching U turn in the case of the rapist who claimed to be transitioning (although he claimed this just after he was charged...) and was finally moved to a male prison. Depending where you stand on this subject, he is either a tortured soul in the wrong body or a bloke with a wig. Still at least the decision in this case has prevented every rapist in Scotland trying the same tactic. There is also a query as to what happened to £600,000 donated to the party to fund the independence campaign which the Police are looking into.

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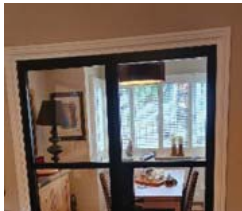
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THE CLARION SOCIAL CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2023

Wed 1st DOMESTIC RUBBISH COLLECTION TODAY

6.00 to 7.00. Late Night at the Food Bank, Market Hall.

7.30 Whist Drive at Doddington village hall. Sonia Pearsall 01584 890874

Thu 2nd 10.00 Rock Pathfinders walk out from Ombersley village. PAGE 21

Sat 3rd Cleobury Rugby Club travel to Market Drayton for an away game.

Wed 8th DOMESTIC GARDENING AND RECYCLING COLLECTION TODAY

10.00 Walking for Health starts at the Market Hall, Church Street. PAGE 21.

10.00 CoCo Coffee Morning at the Market Hall

12.30 St David's Day lunch at Melville Chapel, Oretton PAGE 5

7.00 Royal British Legion meet at the Sports and Social Club. Mike CM 271384.

Fri 10th 8.00 Bingo Night at Doddington village hall.

SaT 11th Cleobury Rugby Club meet Newport here on our home territory.

Mon 13th 7.00 Friends of St Mary's Church AGM in the church. All welcome. PAGE 9.

6.30 Creative Writing Group meet in the town library to swap ideas and words.

Tue 14th 7.30am The Breakfast Club meet at the Golf Club to eat and hold their AGM. PAGE 29.

7.30 Cleobury W.I. AGM

Wed 15th DOMESTIC RUBBISH COLLECTION TODAY

7.30 Whist Drive at Doddington village hall.

Thu 16th 10.30 Rock Pathfinders walk out from Kempsey village church. PAGE 21

Sat 18th Adam Ponsford has Afternoon Tea at his place. PAGE 7

7.30 Flicks in the Sticks at the Parish Hall features 'Ticket to Paradise'. PAGE 7

Barn Dance at Victory Hall, Clows Top.

Mon 20th 7.30 Clee Hill Bird Group meet at Recreation Rooms, Clee Hill High Street. PAGE 17

Wed 22nd DOMESTIC GARDENING AND RECYCLING COLLECTION TODAY

10.00 Walking for Health Leave Market Hall and come back for coffee. PAGE 21.

CoCo Coffee Morning in the Market Hall

7.00 Clows Top Gardening Spring Show at Victory Hall. PAGE 5

Sun 26th British Legion Lunch, Parish Hall. Speaker: Mark Baldwin. Tickets: Mike CM 271384

Wed 29th DOMESTIC RUBBISH COLLECTION TODAY

Thu 23rd 12.00 Charity Lunch at Market Hall, donations to Christian Aid and its vital work.

Mon 28th 7.30 The Nearly Dead Poets' Society meet at the Town Library. CM 270642.

Wed 29th 7.30 Whist Drive at Doddington village hall.

Fri 31st Wildlife Club meets at Victory Hall, Clows Top. Subject: grasshoppers and insects.

8.00 Bingo Night at Doddington village hall.

AND LOOKING FORWARD TO APRIL:

Sun 2nd 10.00 CMFA Daffodil Walk and Rea Valley Amble. PAGE 21.

Wed 5th DOMESTIC GARDENING AND RECYCLING COLLECTION TODAY.

7.30 Whist Drive at Doddington village hall.

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS:

Monday 8.00 Bingo Night at the Market Hall. Suzanne CM 270003

Tue 2.00 The Friendship Club meet in the Parish Hall.

Thu 10.00 Drop in at St Mary's Church to chat and maybe share a problem.

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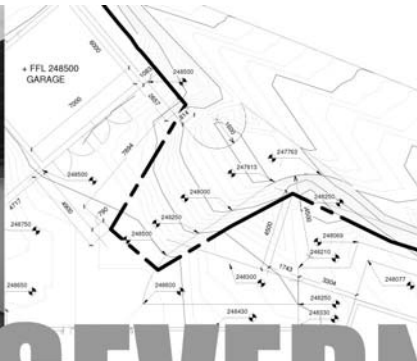
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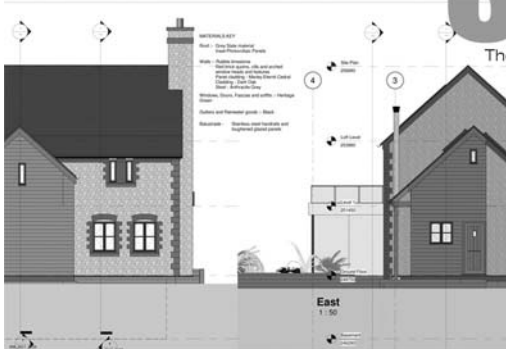


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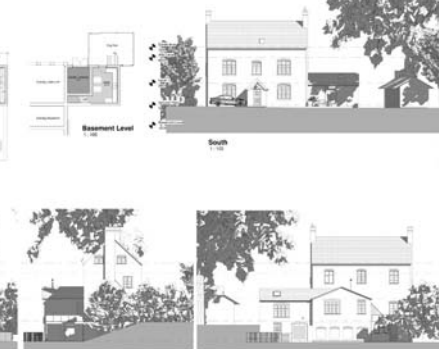
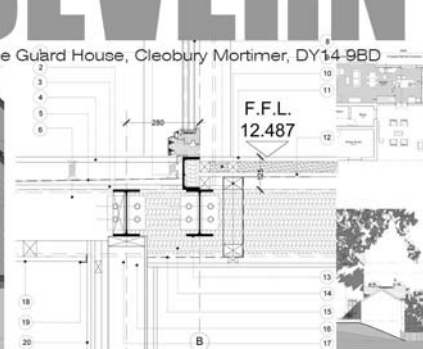


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Hopton Wafers Parish Council

Job Vacancy: Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer

Hopton Wafers Parish Council plays a vital role in representing the interests of our local community and by working together, we believe we can improve the quality of life and local environment for everyone.

A vacancy has occurred for a Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer to commence 14th March 2023 or as soon as possible after that date.

For this varied position, candidates must be computer literate and have internet access. Candidates ideally should have previous experience working as a Parish Clerk and/or have knowledge of local government, although training can be provided. Candidates should be prepared to undertake continued development training throughout their period of employment.

The Clerk is responsible for preparing agendas, taking minutes, dealing with correspondence, liaising with contractors and local government officials, managing of accounts to include keeping of cash book, bank reconciliations, preparing budgets, VAT returns, PAYE, organising audits and the administration of the Parish Council website. The Clerk ensures correct procedures are followed and advises the Parish Council to ensure that it acts within its powers. The ability to communicate well at all levels is essential.

The salary is based on 7 hours per week and will be calculated according to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) rates dependent upon qualifications and/or experience but will be within the range SCP 5-17 (£21,575-£24,432) pro rata, with mileage reclaimable at 0.45ppm for travel outside the Parish.

Attendance is required at the Parish Council Meetings held in the village hall at either Hopton Wafers or Doddington on the 2nd Monday of each month. Other extraordinary meetings may be arranged as necessary throughout the year.

For further details and an application form please contact: Cllr Mark Humpage

By email: mark@hoptonwafersparishcouncil.org.uk Or tel: 07971 603316

Closing date for applications: 7th March Interviews will be held: 7th March 2023

Hopton Wafers Parish Council

NOTICE FOR TENDER

Local highway and environmental maintenance work required.

Hopton Wafers Parish Council plays a vital role in representing the interests of our local community and by working together, we believe we can improve the quality of life and local environment for everyone.

As a rural parish we are seeking to recruit a casual worker to assist with local highway and environmental maintenance work. The hours will be dependant upon the level of work required and the seasonality of the tasks.

The nature of work will include: Tidying and strimming verges to improve visibility near road bends, at junctions and near signs. Carrying out periodic cleaning and painting of visibility fencing and signs. Clearing vegetation and debris from gully grids, drainage grips and culverts. Litter picking. Maintenance of bus shelters. Localised winter gritting. Other tasks may be required as the role develops.

Applicants should have local knowledge and be able to work on their own initiative.

For further information or to submit an initial interest/application form please contact: Cllr Mark Humpage

By email: mark@hoptonwafersparishcouncil.org.uk Or tel: 07971 603316

Closing date for applications: 21st March 2023

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Cleobury Clarion March 2023

Page 50



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



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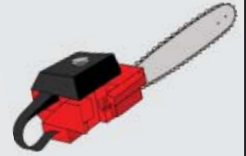

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Beware the “Ides of March”, that famous line from William Shakespeare’s play, Julius Caesar, when Caesar was warned about his impending assassination on that day. In modern times of today, we should not just think of the 15th of March as a day of heightened awareness, but sadly now, it’s every day of every month of every year. We now have to be ever more vigilant to the scheming, criminal motivations out to bring harm and distress to innocent people.

This month I am shifting the focus to those criminals who resort to a different approach, attempting to appeal to the basic generosity of our human kindness. I am referring to examples which have been reported recently on social media and in the press of scammers who have approached members of the public, for example, in car parks.

They have a sob story designed to prey on our natural instincts to help. An example of this is an approach made to drivers or passengers in locations such as Hospital or Supermarket car parks. The story goes. “I am sorry to trouble you but my Mum (or other close relative) has just been admitted to the hospital with (some serious condition) and I have no money for a taxi or to get petrol to get home” In a Supermarket car park this is modified to simply ask for money either to buy food for an ailing relative or fuel to get home.

In cases such as these, the approach is more targeted as the scammer can assess a victim from a distance and make a judgement as to whether or not they are likely to score and get a few pounds. There is little evidence that these approaches are significantly threatening, but people who have been approached state that they naturally feel uncomfortable, the scammer can be persuasive and in some situations people will hand over money just to get them to go away.

These modern day “beggars” are sophisticated criminals, rarely working alone but possibly in pairs or part of a wider organised criminal

group. If there is a gang of 2 or more working a large car park in a hospital for example, the takings could be very lucrative.

However, it’s a reasonable assumption that people do feel sympathies and do give money. So, beware that this is happening and as always think twice before parting with your money. Politely decline, roll your window up and drive away.

There have also been reports of the situation where drivers have been flagged down on our country roads by scammers claiming to have run into difficulties. This is a much less frequent occurrence but at best it is an attempt to extort money for fuel or whatever and at worst it’s an attempt to steal your car by persuading you to get out and help. In this scenario a second person usually is hidden and jumps into your car when you get out or perhaps just reaches in and takes anything of value that is in sight.

There are three key messages here. First of all be very wary of anyone who tries to flag you down on an open stretch of country road. Second, make sure your valuables are not in open sight in your car. Third do not leave your car unattended unless you lock it and take your keys. In all these situations call the Police either on 101 or 999 if you feel you are in any sort of danger. If you are approached in a Car Park scam, report it to the Security staff of that Hospital or Supermarket. They usually have CCTV which can be handed over to the Police if requested.

Don’t just be aware of the “Ides of March” stay wary and alert and safe every day. Enjoy March and the start of Spring.

Keep up to date with everything on the Facebook Group, **Cleobury Mortimer and District Neighbourhood Watch**

Nigel Reid



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Community Meeting Report

As a follow up to the public meeting held last summer, a Police and Community Together meeting was held at the Parish Hall on Wednesday 15th February. The meeting was attended by members of the Police Service, Town Council, Shropshire Council and the Primary School together with members of the public. Following an update by Sergeant Oen there was an open session for everyone to discuss community matters with representatives of the various organisations present. We are keen to build on this work and will hold these meetings every six months going forward.

We are willing to help set up Community Speed Watch in Cleobury Mortimer. This is a joint initiative with the Police to help reduce speeding but we need more volunteers to come forward so that we can start the process to set this up. If you are interested, please email the Town Council on council@cleobury.org.uk or telephone 01299 271154.

One of the main points raised at the Police and Community Together meeting was that the number of issues reported has decreased and we do live in a relatively low crime area. However, people are always encouraged to report any crime or anti-social behaviour. Please call the police on 101 if it is non-urgent. Alternatively you can email our local police team on ch.snt@westmercia.police.uk or make a report through the West Mercia Police website www.westmercia.police.uk. If you wish to remain anonymous you can report a crime through Crimestoppers either by telephone 0800 555 111 or online on <https://crimestoppers-uk.org>. Always dial 999 in an emergency, if you or someone else is in immediate danger, or if a crime is in progress.

If you have any issues with highways, parking, dog fouling, waste collection please report them to Shropshire Council Customer Services. Please telephone 0345 678 9000 or email customer.service@shropshire.gov.uk.

The Coronation

We are giving advance notice of a Coronation-themed window competition. There will be bunting and flags going up along the High Street and Church Street. More details will be announced next month.

Neighbourhood Development Plan - update

There is still time to have your say on the Cleobury Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan. The current Regulation 16 consultation period has been extended and is now due to close on 10th March 2023. The Neighbourhood Plan documentation can be viewed online at www.shropshire.gov.uk/get-involved/cleobury-mortimer-neighbourhood-plan-consultation-2023/ and a copy has also been made available for viewing at Cleobury Mortimer Library and Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury. Representations on the Draft Cleobury Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan may be submitted to Shropshire Council by emailing: planningpolicy@shropshire.gov.uk or by post to: Planning Policy, Shropshire Council, PO BOX 4826, Shrewsbury SY1 9LJ.



Our Services



SOLAR PV



EV CHARGERS



AIR SOURCE
HEAT PUMPS



GROUND SOURCE
HEAT PUMPS



BATTERIES



VENTILATION



UNDERFLOOR
HEATING



RADIATORS

About us

EnergyZone is one of the largest renewable energy companies in the Midlands, having provided domestic and commercial sustainable energy solutions for over 20 years.

Based next to Hobsons Brewery in Cleobury Mortimer, we are your local experts in renewable and low carbon energy.

The current energy crisis has been incredibly eye-opening as we come to realise how reliant we are on other countries for fuel. Wouldn't it be nice to become more independent and less reliant on the volatile energy prices... well, that's where we can help!

What can EnergyZone Offer?

- With over 130 years combined experience, we are keen to help with all your energy enquiries and deliver impartial advice.
- Totally free desktop quotes for Solar PV and Heat Pump systems completely unique to your property to show you exactly how much you could save.
- Self-consumption gadgets to help you utilise all of your generated energy. Whether its a Smart Electric Car Charger, Immersion Diverters or Battery Storage Units, we can help you become more independent from the grid.
- Ensure your heating is as efficient as possible, through underfloor heating installation, radiator upgrades and smart hot water cylinders.
- Advice on all Government Grants and Incentives.
- Local support with annual servicing through our in-house EZCare package.

Get in touch today to start renewing your energy!

For your peace of mind, EnergyZone has the following accreditations:



APPROVED INSTALLER



01299 270011



sales@energyzone.co.uk

Community Contacts for Clarion Readers

CEMETERY ADMINISTRATOR	Theresa Ray	07703 965 064	theresa.25016@hotmail.co.uk
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

Collect the Clarion in Cleobury from: Select and Save Grocery, Londis Store, Cleoburrs, Cleobury Cafe, The Severn Hospice Shop, Mid Counties Co-op, Purslows, and The Library.

Out in Cleobury Country at: Heath Farm Meats, **Bagginswood**; **Clee Hill Stores**; **Clows Top Stores**; The Sun and Slipper, **Mamble**; **Hopton Bank Service Station**; ; **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 APRIL ISSUE: MARCH 22ND

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS THE LAST POSSIBLE DATE TO RECEIVE REPORTS.

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eme CLEOBURY



FACILITIES INCLUDE:

- Gym 
- Exercise Classes 
- Sports Hall 
- Outside Astro Pitch 
- Netball 
- Tennis Courts 

OPENING TIMES

MON	7.30am - 10am 10am-12.30pm GP Referral 3.30pm - 10pm
TUE	3.30pm - 10pm
WED	7.30am - 10am 4.30pm - 10pm
THU	4.30pm - 10pm
FRI	7.30am - 10am 3.30pm - 10pm
SAT-SUN	7.30am - 1pm

Pre booking not required for Gym use.
Induction or Disclaimer required
in advance of use.

CLASS TIMETABLE

MON	9.15 - 10am 6.30 - 7.15pm	GENTLE AEROBICS BODY PUMP
TUES	9.15 - 10am 10.15 - 11am 6.15 - 7pm	YOGA YOGA TRX
WED	5.15 - 6pm 6 - 6.45pm	PILATES CIRCUITS
THU	6 - 6.45pm 7 - 7.45pm	STEP SPIN
FRI	6 - 6.45pm	STRETCH & RELAX

Pre-Booking required for Exercise classes
Book online or at the Centre



TEME CLEOBURY
LOVE LANE
CLEOBURY MORTIMER
DY14 8PE
☎ 01299 271317



 **DOWNLOAD OUR APP**





 www.teme-leisure.co.uk