

THE REDLAKE

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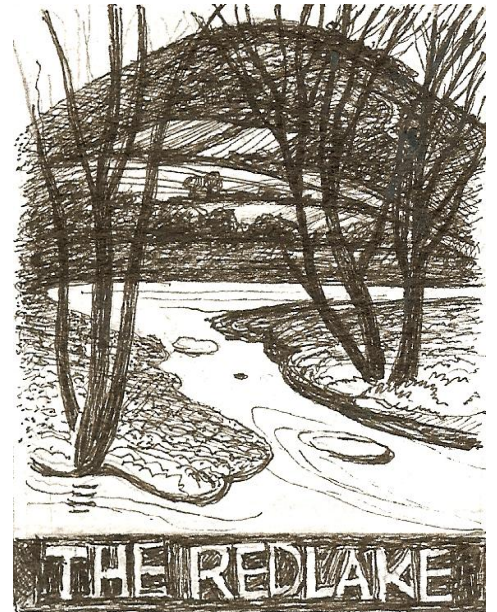
From the Editors

TIME TO GO

The four original editors have published *The Redlake* for almost six years (23 issues) and three of us have decided it is time to stand down and hand over the reins to others. Fortunately Becky Whitton remains as editor and has recruited a new team consisting of Angela Ogden and Jeremy Jameson. We, the original team, have worked well together and have enjoyed our stint and hope our efforts have been of some value to the community. The character of Chapel Lawn has changed during the past six years and we feel sure the approach of the new team will suitably reflect these changes. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the people who have contributed towards previous issues, as without their input *The Redlake* would not be able to continue.

We would also like to say a big 'thank you' to Barry Palmer who walks many miles up and down this valley delivering the paper.

The Redlake is published by The Redlake Valley Hall Committee and neither the committee nor the editors can accept responsibility for any opinions expressed by contributors in these pages. The editorial team reserves the right to edit contributions as it believes appropriate. The Redlake is funded by grants and donations and it is our policy not to accept paid advertising due to restraints on space.



St. Mary's Church Restoration Fund

Two successful events during June have raised over £4,000 for the fund.

A Flower Festival was held on one of the first sunny weekends of the month.

This was a real community event with many people helping before and throughout the weekend and local visitors flocking in from out of the area, including former Chapel Lawn residents. Fifty five 'Farmers Breakfasts' were served on Saturday morning, and 550 plastic ducks swam down the River Redlake in the afternoon for the duck race. On Sunday afternoon over seventy people enjoyed the "Voices of the Valley Concert", followed by a delicious tea in the village hall. Throughout the weekend the Church was open for visitors. It looked and smelled wonderful with varied flower arrangements, artwork, and enormous papier-mache bugs, beetles, butterflies and ladybirds made by local children. It was a truly lovely weekend enjoyed by all.

At the end of June the Auction was held. Over seventy people and local firms had donated promises and items. The items varied from loads of firewood, to furniture, to a free skip. The auction was conducted by a veteran auctioneer from Clun, Tim Wood. Great fun was had by all and as the beer flowed, the bids went higher. The astonishing sum of £2,430 was raised towards the grand total of £4,152.

Many thanks to everyone who helped, supported and contributed to these events.

Di Cosgrove

Breaking News

If you have been wondering why you haven't seen the vicar in church or riding around the lanes on her horse recently, it is because she has broken her ankle.

Last weekend, Diana and her fellow crew members stopped for a picnic lunch after rowing eight miles across the sea from St. David's to Skomer Island. Having had a rest and being warned to watch out for puffin burrows on

the path, Diana stepped in a rut instead and broke her ankle! It was then up to the local young and handsome Coast Guard to wheel the vicar in a wheelbarrow up slopes, down dales and along rocky paths and near vertical cliffs to get her to the support boat, which she had to climb down 30 steps to get to. Finally secured in the boat, with ice packs and peas strapped to her ankle, Diana was taken back to St. David's and from there to hospital.

I am led to believe that she was offered the services of an Air Ambulance or a wheelbarrow pushed by a lusty youth – well we know which she chose! She is well on the way to recovery and frustrated at not being able to drive or ride, but Diana will be 'back in the saddle' from 6th August and will be taking services the following Sunday. We all wish her a speedy recovery.

Becky Whitton

Nick and Angela Ogden.



If you travel down the Chapel Lawn Road towards Bucknell and turn up to the left for Pentre Hodre you will see an enormous, intricate and beautiful tudor style chimney. This surmounts the home of Nick and Angela Ogden and their two sons Callum and Fraser.

The house itself is not as yet quite as gorgeous (of which more later). Angela proudly declares herself Scottish as both her parents came from Fife. She was born and brought up with her younger brother in Surrey and Hampshire and was educated at a local convent. After 6th form Angela trained as a corsetiere, and worked in London at both Dickens and Jones, and Harrods. Her job involved fitting women with appropriate undergarments. She says her training means she can tell the detailed size, shape and build of people just by looking at them - so remember that next time she is gazing at you interestedly and you think she is finding your conversation fascinating!

Later Angela retrained in secretarial skills and eventually worked for a company importing Italian furniture. She had a very explosive Portuguese boss who would throw his briefcase down the stairs at one moment and present her with flowers the next. Despite his volatility Angela worked for him even after she had moved to the Welsh borders. A constant, throughout Angela's life, and indeed to the present day, has been a love of horses and she worked in all of her free time and holidays at the local stables.

Nick was also brought up in the Home Counties. His father was in the Merchant Navy and was rarely at home until Nick was 5, when he took

a shore job with P&O. Nick was sent to boarding school, Ardingly College near Hayward's Heath in Sussex. In the early seventies, when Nick was 12 and Angela 7, their respective families moved next door to each other on to a new estate in Camberley. So their relationship started early, but not always happily. Nick remembers tying Angela to a lamp post and she announced to her parents that he was a horrible boy! But when some years later Nick acquired a large old Granada car Angela would frequently hold the tools for him as he tinkered with it. Eventually they started going out together, but neither set of parents approved of the five year age difference and for 18 months they were banned from seeing each other.

They say the secrecy of the continued meetings added a definite excitement to the relationship. When Nick finished school he started to train in Estate Management and then went to London to study building surveying and briefly worked for a firm of Chartered Surveyors. During all this time, at the weekend and during his holidays, he was going home and working for a builder. He eventually decided that he enjoyed the hands on aspects of building much more than the surveying work. So when he was offered a full time job, he took it and started a career learning the skills of the trade he has followed ever since. After some years he moved to work for a builder who was interested in older buildings. Between them, Nick and his boss also set up and ran an architectural salvage business. Nick took over the stock when his boss retired and is still making use of it. He says when they moved to the Marches in 1988 they brought one load of furniture and 4 huge loads of building bits. In 1984 Nick had bought a small Edwardian house for restoration. But as his fondness for older buildings grew he determined it would be the youngest house he ever bought. He and Angela were introduced to this area by friends and true to his decision in 1988 they bought a 400 year old house in Wigmore. Nick

then proceeded to "knock hell out of it". So much so they could not live in it. Angela continued to work in Hampshire and commuted backwards and forwards living with her parents and Nick stayed with his parents who had, very thoughtfully, moved locally. When order was finally restored Angela got a job with a firm of Estate Agents in Hereford. She then worked for a hospitality company which organised corporate packages. It was an eye opener to discover the huge amounts companies would pay to entertain their clients at places like Murrayfield, Wimbledon and Ascot, but as a job, great fun. Unfortunately she said they had rather old fashioned views about the status of women, and she discovered, found pregnant women unacceptable! In between having Callum in '90 and Fraser in '94 Angela also worked at Craven Grain Storage and as a business researcher. More recently Angela has worked at the College for the Blind in Hereford, firstly in the Estates Department, but then began helping some of the students. She found this work so stimulating and rewarding that she eventually took her teaching degree there and in the fullness of time became a Department Head. After her father died in 2006 she resigned to give regular support to her mother. Nick meantime was working in the building trade As well as doing a huge amount of building restoration throughout the Marches, Nick worked as part of a team constructing oak timber framed buildings, garages, workshops, studios etc. The sites extended right across the UK. From 1995 onwards Nick has worked for himself and has continued to work on old buildings throughout the area. One of the houses which is an ongoing project, is his own; bought at an auction in 1997 along with 10 acres. Nick and Angela realised that the main house needed a lot of work to restore it and was going to take some years to complete. Initially they had a mobile home but with no plumbing, electricity only on an extension lead, and exposed to the extremes of weather with two small

children they tried to move into the house. However, sharing their meals with teams of mice had little appeal, so Nick converted the cow shed and the family, one dog, four cats, and two snakes have lived there happily for some years with 3 horses and 6 chickens nearby. Angela insists they have a definite target of moving in to the house by her 50th birthday which gives Nick plenty of time! If it eventually matches the quality of the completed chimney it will be very special.

Their interest in old buildings has led them to become very involved with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and Angela is now the regional co-ordinator. Amongst other duties she organises meetings of members and visits to unusual and interesting old buildings, many of which are not normally open to the public. She also knits very stylish garments, occasionally for sale and, of course, rides as often as she can.

Nick, in his spare moments, is a fairly fanatical and excellent model maker. He is particularly interested in building dioramas associated with model railways and in pursuit of his enthusiasm has been all over Europe and to America several times. He took a diorama to Australia and ran a clinic on brick making, the bricks being sized about 7x3.5x3 millimetres! The finished products are delightful and amazing and some, along with Angela's knitwear, will possibly be on view at the Art Show in September. In recent years Angela and Nick have found the time to get more engaged locally. They frequently attend events and are now involved with the burgeoning Redlake Valley Art Group. Angela has recently been invited to join the Redlake Editorial Team to help move it forward. We hope that with their interesting skills they will be around for many years to come.

Jane Kent

Ceilidh

The third Saturday in May, in addition to the Flower Festival and Auction to raise money for the church, we had

the Cuckoo Ale Band who came to play for a ceilidh. There happened to be many other events on that Saturday and in spite of a lot of posters being distributed, only 22 people turned up. Peter had cooked 50 curries and had got a barrel of Clun Pale Ale in; all who came had a really fabulous time and no respite between dances as everyone had to dance every dance, the injured and the sound alike! So, given that we had half a barrel of beer (no, we couldn't finish it in one go) and 20 curries to dispose of, we had a 'Pub Evening' on the following Thursday. That dealt with the barrel and the curries, which all went down exceedingly well. There was another 'Pub Evening' during the Flower Festival and due to the insistence of Thelma and Carolyn, Peter donned his apron again and came up with bacon sandwiches at 10.00 pm in the evening; these very social, 'Social Evenings' look like they may become regular events!

Becky Whitton

Redlake Valley Artists

There can't be many small communities around that can boast so many artists and craftspeople in such a small area. The variety of talent is something to be proud of. We have a potter, jeweller, textile maker, printer, stonemason, photographer, sculptor, and many artists & illustrators working in a variety of mediums.

Two years ago, seventeen of them got together and formed the "Redlake Valley Artists" and put on a show in Chapel Lawn Village Hall, which was such a success, they have decided to do it all over again.

The show starts on Thursday 12th September with a preview from 6pm to which everyone in the Redlake Valley is invited. There will be wine and nibbles on offer. The exhibition will continue until Sunday 15th September at 4 pm. New for this year artists will be demonstrating some of their techniques on the Sat and Sun afternoon in the Church. Look out for the flyers and posters which will be going up now. More info:

www.redlakevalleyartists.co.uk or 01547 528546.

We really hope you can come along to see what talent we have in the Redlake Valley, and support them with their exhibition.

Stairway to Heaven?

Well in some people's eyes maybe... the Redlake Valley Community Benefit Society is planning to build some rustic steps for the quillet in Brineddin Wood. They will be climbing a steep gradient to the log bench deeper into the wood. We reckon it will take about 35 steps, of which 14 have been completed already. We also need a few more materials, and the Society would greatly appreciate donations of odd pieces of wood that could be used to construct the steps, and some spare galvanised pipe to use as stakes; Please contact Mark and Karen Limbrick 01547 530002 or Patrick 01547 530347.

Stop press! Just in time for this issue of the Redlake, HMRC has confirmed that the Community Benefit Society has been granted charitable status which means that cash gifts can be used to reclaim Gift Aid income. This is excellent news!

Farming Column

After a slow late spring and some areas of fields having to be re-drilled, crops are progressing well and with the hot weather, winter barley will be ready to cut about a week later than normal having been 3 weeks behind at one stage.

Hay and silage were gathered in under a week in superb weather, even with the new tractor driver in the silaging team getting very lost on the way to the next field, ending up in Obley and at Squire Farm looking for the next load. Still he had a smooth ride to the Squire along the resurfaced track, as my neighbour has now removed the speed ramps.

As agriculture is now classed as the most dangerous industry to work in, 29 people died in the year to March, 6 down from 35 the previous year my

insurers advised me to go on a health and safety course.

The course was quite useful, but the bit I remember most is when discussing noise levels, the tutor asked what happened at 115 decibels, a farmer at the back said "he generally left the kitchen"!

James Middleton

Breaking News. Cont.



Seasonal Gardening Notes

Comfrey should not be dismissed as simply the gangling plant along damp ditches, nor just as horse fodder. We too can eat it-in moderation: the young unbristly leaves make a delicious, cucumber-flavoured sandwich filler. Much more importantly, bees dote upon it, so even the wild comfrey, *symphytum officinale*, is worth growing in a large, rough area of the garden, where it can flop and buzz happily.

There are glamorous versions which are more border-worthy and just as valuable for the bees: the form 'All Gold' has large, brilliant yellow leaves in rounded rosettes, so has the appearance of a hosta without the slug-addiction. Once the flowers have finished, it can be cut to the ground to refurbish the golden cushion of foliage. *Symphytum x rubrum* is a much smaller plant with screaming pink flowers above the bristly leaves. It is a sterile cross, so you won't find it is a wonderful plant for growing in a dry shade under trees, this is a virtue, as you can build up a weed-suppressing

colony. It has soft, grey-green foliage and sharp white flowers at 2 feet.

My personal favourite, indeed a desert island choice without which I could not garden, is *S.grandiflorum*, in both its colour forms 'Hidcote Blue' and 'Hidcote Pink'. I have this spreading comfrey growing on the soaking wet stream bank and tight up against the bone-dry base of the house wall, and in each place it performs with aplomb for months on end-to my great pleasure, as well as the bees'.

Hannah Willetts

Diary Dates

- More at: www.chapel-lawn.co.uk
- 2nd Wed of month 7pm WI
 - Last Thurs every month ODAS
 - Saturday August 31st, Gig- "Dredd and the Badass Weeds", support by "Stringfellows" & "The Starkins" entry £3.
 - Sunday 8th September. Ramble & Lunch. Walk 10.30am, lunch 12-2.00pm.
 - Sunday 15th September. Pentre Hodre Pond Clearing 11am Please bring wellies & snacks
 - 13th-15th September. Redlake Valley Artists exhibition
 - Friday 27th September. Macmillan nurses 7.30pm.
 - Thursday 3rd October. Harvest Festival Supper 7.30pm.
 - Saturday 19th October. Church Concert

Redlake Valley in danger of Missing out on Superfast Broadband

In May, Shropshire Council and BT announced the national upgrade of broadband throughout the county. It became clear that BT intended to concentrate on connecting towns and cities first, leaving harder to reach rural areas until last. Also the rural broadband speeds are unlikely to exceed 2Mbps, whereas the towns are expecting more than 24Mbps. The forecast date for us to be upgraded is 2017 and it appears that if you are more than 1.5 km from a fibre optic fed cabinet you will see no change in the current speed.

Here are some of the consequences:

Businesses and farmers who have no alternative but to use broadband to make stock movement, VAT, Tax and other returns will be unable to do so. Children and students will need to travel somewhere else to do their projects and research; new businesses and people wanting to move to the area will look elsewhere and existing employers may choose to relocate. Whilst you might be happy with the current service, soon websites will become more and more sophisticated because 90% of the country will be able to use them; we will not. Failing to act now will mean we fall further behind and the rural decline will continue.

If you want to know more, please contact Patrick Cosgrove 01547 530347 or visit the Chapel Lawn website www.chapel-lawn.co.uk

From the South-west Shropshire and Marches Campaign for Better

If you haven't yet signed the e-petition to force Shropshire Council to debate it at a full Council meeting, please do so and ask friends and family to do the same. You can find the e-petition at the following address or "Google" Shropshire e-petitions.

<http://petitions.shropshire.gov.uk/petitions.ti/betterruralbroadband>

Chapel Lawn Air Gun Club

During September, the Air Gun Club starts it's new season and we will be looking out for new members. Not so long ago we had two teams of eight shooters, five of them women; we now have just one team and would love to see some new faces. We meet every Monday evening and plan to have an open evening in September (date to be announced) for new recruits to come along and have a go at shooting.

More information & photos of some of these articles are available on the website at www.chapel-lawn.co.uk