

THE REDLAKE

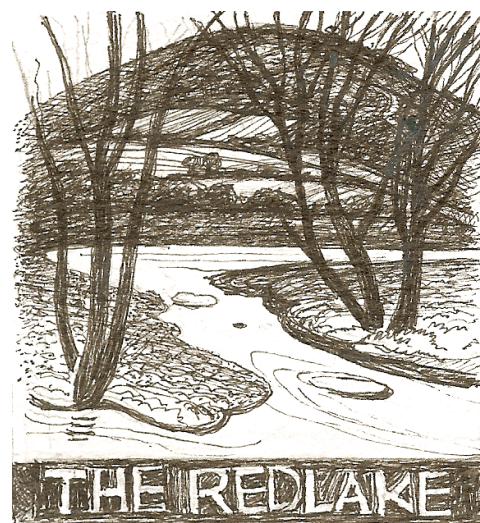
NUMBER 16

AUTUMN 2011

From the Editors

Picture, if you can, a small group of village elders staring at an album of undated local photographs trying to remember when the pictured events actually took place. In particular we were trying to put together the story of the bonfires which took place on the top of Caradoc, especially the one when the gorse caught fire and three fire engines were called out: we eventually worked out that it was in 1995, only sixteen years ago, but it was hard going. Memories can fade quickly and the moral of this story is that if you take photographs of an event please make sure that the particulars are entered on the back for the benefit of those who come after; history begins the day before. *Michael Macturk*

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FROM THE HOSPITAL BED

First of all thanks to everyone who has visited, sent messages, cards, and offers of help following my moment of inattention: it is much appreciated.

One minute you are thinking about getting lunch, the next you are wondering if it is a case of somehow getting to the phone or staying on the floor until Sunday lunchtime, watched by a somewhat surprised cat. Well, the phone just won after over an hour and thereafter things moved faster. A paramedic from Ludlow came in about 20 to 25 minutes (although I was not taking notes), an ambulance arrived from Hereford a short time later followed by a helicopter from Cosford and, thus, five attending personnel all told. The helicopter landed in the field next door and I was in the Royal Shrewsbury by five o'clock where I was diagnosed with a broken hip.

I do not know how the grapevine worked but my stepdaughter Anne-Louise from Bishop's Castle was there shortly after, until I was allocated a bed in a ward. Eventually I was left reassured that everything would be OK at home.

Michael Macturk

REDLAKE ARTISTS

The Redlake Valley Artist group held their first ever joint art exhibition at the village hall in Chapel Lawn on 15th September. Not quite knowing what to expect beforehand, we were delighted with how the show went and the number of visitors (and repeat visitors!) we received. The temporary 'café' selling tea and cakes was nearly always on the go and the hall became the social focal point of the village for a few days, which was delightful.

Several artists received commissions from the show and some have been invited to show at the Bleddfa Christmas art/craft fair and at the new arts initiative in Wigmore (Acre of Art). We had many, many wonderful comments from visitors and are very grateful to everyone who came along to support the show. It was incredibly hard work to organise and turned into a great team effort - all well worth it in the end! We plan to hold another exhibition in two years time. If there are any other Redlake Valley artists who would like to be involved in the next show, please let us know 528 546 or images@sarahjameson.co.uk

Sarah Jameson

WI HIGH JINKS

Every year at this time the WI has a group meeting with six other local institutes. This year Chapel Lawn, under the capable leadership of Di Cosgrove, was in charge of the organisation of the event and decided to have a Wedding Fashion Show - red carpet, bride and groom and all.

Members of the various institutes, including our own Thelma Lewis, modelled splendid costumes from Top to Toe in Knighton with great aplomb, striding down the catwalk swinging their bags - and hips - as though they had been doing it all their lives! The highlight of the evening was the appearance of the bride, Christine Rogers from Chapel Lawn, tanned, smiling broadly and looking truly exotic in a flame red basque topped wedding dress. The bridegroom, Jim (her real life husband), had not seen her previously in the outfit and looked suitably stunned when she appeared. The couple progressed arm in arm down the carpet and back, where they leaned towards each other... and kissed... and all around the room 100 W.I. ladies with one voice went "aaah"; a splendid moment, in a very jolly evening.

Profile**Sarah & Simon Jameson**

Many of you will know of Simon and Sarah via the interesting and engaging array of cast concrete figures that used to sit in front of their house, the Stag's Head at New Invention. Recently you may well have seen their art work at the Redlake Valley Artists Exhibition held in the village hall. The event was instigated by Simon and Sarah, believing it was high time all the artists and makers in the Redlake valley got together to show their work. With help from Jeremy and Jemima, it grew into a huge collaborative effort involving 18 local artists and crafts people.

Although born in Cheltenham, Sarah was brought up in a little village in the hills just outside Llangollen. She is the oldest of four children - two sisters and a brother. She went to Aberystwyth University where she studied English Literature and Classical Studies. After university Sarah was uncertain what she wanted to do and completed a secretarial course, followed by some temping. She eventually got a job with the National Trust working as secretary/assistant to the Historic Buildings Representative for North Wales. This meant she was closely involved with properties such as Powis Castle, Penrhyn Castle and Erddig, helping her boss in his cataloguing of collections and writing guide books. The post was based in Llandudno, which has left Sarah with a love of that sedate town and more

particularly of the sea. Her work inspired an interest in art history, and Sarah secured a grant (happy days!) to do a nine month post-graduate course at the Courtauld Institute in London studying 17th century European painting. When the course finished, Sarah found work as a PA to the National Trust's Adviser on Pictures in London who advised the Trust on all their pictures and sculptures. This involved visiting properties to do inventories and keeping archives up to date. Sarah spent four chilly weeks alone one winter cataloguing the collection at Chastleton House, when the Trust acquired it, cycling to the house each morning down frosty Gloucestershire lanes. She says how atmospheric a historic house is when you stand there all alone in the early mornings or at dusk with no guide ropes or room stewards! She also helped her boss organise the National Trust's big centenary exhibition at the National Gallery.

On a day off in January 1992 Sarah travelled down to Brighton to see the Pavilion - but she never got there, for on a street corner she was stopped by a young man with a clipboard...

Simon was born in Dorking and raised in Betchworth with his brother Jeremy. He had a very happy childhood and much of their free time was spent messing about outside in the woods and fields or on the nearby river Mole. Their father was a mechanical engineer and was often making things - dinghies, go-carts with engines amongst other fun things.

Simon went to prep school and then to Lancing College in Sussex before doing a foundation course at West Surrey College of Art and then to Brighton Polytechnic for a BA in painting. It was a three year course during which time he lived in Kemp Town - the bohemian part of Brighton - with a group of friends and was the only one with a vehicle, a Land Rover painted in zebra stripes. Amazingly, it is the same vehicle that he still has today - 60 years old this year! During his three fun packed years as a student, Simon spent his summers

inter-railing including a trip to Denmark and Norway for his dissertation on contemporary Scandinavian artists. After his final year Simon took a 6 week painting trip to Morocco. On his return he was rootless for a while, doing odd jobs including working for his uncle doing up flats in London. Around this time he read a book which inspired him with "utopian dreams of making a better world" and it led him to join a religious cult. He stayed with the group for five years during which time he was based in Brighton. Eventually he began to get the urge to paint and do more creative things once more and whilst engaging with people on the street one day, he stopped a young woman...

Sarah continued to work in London, coming down to Brighton on weekends and Simon decided to leave the cult and started renting a studio to work from. A year later in 1993 they were married, living in a flat in Hove. Simon taught drawing in a local Community Centre and to older people in rest homes. He also painted murals in restaurants. Then a friend asked if he would make clay models of figures which could then be moulded and cast as house and garden ornaments. Simon was in his element. He developed a large range of designs - gargoyles, Aztec, Gothic and folk based images, altogether over a hundred different pieces, some much copied now by others, which his friend sold very successfully at markets in Covent Garden and Greenwich. He and Sarah began selling the casts at craft fairs around Sussex using his trusty old Land Rover. After a couple of years Sarah tired of travelling to London daily and started work for a visual arts publisher in Brighton running a European graphic design competition. She stayed there for about four years. But by then they had both decided that they wanted more than Hove could offer - some hills, countryside, a garden and maybe even a dog. They knew our local area a little as they drove through it on their way to see Sarah's parents in North Wales: so

they started to ask agents for details of properties and the Stag's Head was the first house they saw. In December 1999 they moved in. Life initially was not without its difficulties but they have steadily got things to their liking after lots of work on the house and garden and getting the old barn fixed up as a workshop. More recently, with help from Jeremy, they have completely refurbished the original stone cottage which they now let out. Simon has outgrown his workshop at home and has moved it to Squire Farm. He supplies shops and sells on the internet and at fairs around the country and paints and carves when he finds the time.

Sarah came to New Invention with no work. Fortunately her old employer asked her to do some internet-based picture research for photography books which kept her busy for 18 months. In the meantime she started to build up a portfolio of jobs ranging from picture research, writing, proof reading, editing, secretarial and admin support and web design. In her spare moments Sarah has continued to develop her love of pen and ink drawing. She has no formal art training but uses her skills to produce delicate pictures and cards of "trees, hedges, hills, fields, vernacular buildings, birds, horses, longdogs and lurchers I see no reason to draw anything else". They did acquire a dog in their first year here, Teasel, who they lost very tragically in 2008. Teasel was a kelpie lurcher and that bred a love of lurchers, so much so that Sarah now spends much of her spare time helping Lurcher Link, a national lurcher rescue, editing and designing their newsletter, helping with fundraising and donating artwork for the cause. They now have a longdog, Millie and a lurcher, Scout. Simon and Sarah say they love living in the Redlake Valley, and they must have advertised it well for both Simon's parents and his brother now live locally. Sarah's only wish is that New Invention had a long sandy beach for the dogs to run out on in the mornings!

Jane Kent

RECENT EVENTS

Our new season in the re-furbished Village Hall kicked off to a rousing start with a social evening at the beginning of September. It was irrigated with a barrel of White Horse beer and fed with snacks and nibbles from various generous people; we had music and gossip and as The Chapel Lawn Produce Stall takings for the summer were being distributed during the evening, so they were being spent at the bar! We met some new faces and, headaches the next morning accepted, we all had a great time.



The first exhibition of work by The Redlake Valley Artists took place in September (see p1). The sheer diversity of exhibits was wonderful; the cars were parked nearly the whole way through the village on the preview night and I don't think the poor stewards had a moment's peace for the three days it was on. I cannot leave this report without mentioning the unusual 'Installation', created by the Un-co-operative Collaborative and named "Perpetual Reflectual". We will forgive anyone who thought the name was referring to how long you had to study the installation to make any sense of it!

The following Monday, the Chapel Lawn Air Gun club started its 2011-12 season with a practice evening. The Club now has about 10 regular members and a few others in reserve for matches.

On the last Saturday in September, the Flicks in the Sticks season started

with a rather disappointing audience for 'The Adjustment Bureau'. However, 'The King's Speech' last weekend was well attended and as it was my first hosting experience, I was very pleased! Don't forget the Live Band evening on 5th November – Be There Or Be Square!

Becky Whitton

Farming Column

The very welcome early fine spring gave crops and stock a good start to the year but the following dull, dry summer left grazing grass and water in short supply. Hay and silage crops were better than last year, cereals and potatoes in the valley yielded much better than expected.

There was always the threat of rain when harvesting and with black clouds looming I watched my neighbour head rapidly for the barn with both small bales and people falling off the load twice.

I helped Colin Jones finish combining some spring barley at Hodre as the weather was due to change. With two combines working in the same field it looked like the Earl of Plymouth's... about 25 years ago.

The potato harvest is a much more modern affair. I had a ride in the tractor pulling the harvester one evening, computer controlled variable speed GPS guidance and mapping, three camera monitors watching the harvester working and a control box for the harvester the size of a laptop. The aim is to lift and separate the potatoes from the soil, elevate them into a trailer pulled alongside bruising and damaging them as little as possible in the process. With the trailer out of position some of the time son was questioning father's ability to drive a trailer. Nice to know some things will never change.

James Middleton

Runes Competition Answer

The answer to the Redlake Valley Art Show Rune stone competition was: "Simon carved these runes" and the winner was Terry Badham of The Hollies. Congratulations, it was a tough nut to crack!

Redlake Valley Entrepreneurs

As these pages have highlighted on many occasions, Chapel Lawn is far from a retirement area. In fact, quite the opposite, here are just two examples:

WHAT'S IN A YURT?

Despite these economically depressed times the green shoots of entrepreneurship are sprouting up on Hodre hill in the form of Liz Campbell's green venture.

Liz, a keen natural gardener, is always on the look out for unusual plants that will suit the local environment and thrive. However, since moving to the area nine years ago opportunities to shop for a wide range of plants as well as good quality tools and garden accessories have proved frustratingly limited. So much so that the idea of setting up her own garden centre to plug this gap started to grow. Then, in September last year, fate presented the perfect solution: the chance to lease space on the same site as the Ludlow Food Centre on the A49 at Bromfield.

An inconveniently built swallow's nest and the slow cogs of the planning system have delayed the full-scale opening of The Plant Centre until next spring. However, while the main garden centre is being built Liz plans to meet the pre-Christmas demand for festive trees, wreaths, decorations, cards and gardening gifts from a large yurt erected next to the Ludlow Food Centre. The Christmas Yurt will open from 26th November up to Christmas

Eve and will showcase gifts and decorations, some of them hand-crafted as locally as Chapel Lawn, that will form part of a much broader range to complement the plants when the main event opens in the spring of 2012. For more information see www.ludlowplantcentre.co.uk

Let us wish Liz the best of luck in her new venture and hope it thrives.

MASHER'S BARN PRIZE

From a business being created (above) to a fully-fledge success story: Masher's Barn, owned by another local entrepreneur James Middleton, has been named runner up in a national competition to find the best converted barn holiday let.

Entries were judged by a panel, including the NFU and members of The Hosesons Group, that was looking for the most entrepreneurial farmers who had diversified and created a successful holiday letting business.

Lovingly restored to retain many original features the detached barn conversion was commended by holidaymakers for its exceptional quality and features oak and ash fittings crafted by Jeremy Jameson.

SEASONAL GARDENING NOTES

This is the time of year when many gardeners put the garden to bed for the winter - lights out, no more talking now, see you in the spring. They cut everything down, split up large clumps, and leave the borders like a tidy brown counterpane. It may look neat but, as the last two winters have shown, it does not suit every plant in every garden. So go gently with the secateurs: cut off seed heads, as their presence causes the plant to spend its last ounce of energy on thinking of the next generation, when what you want it to do is build up strong roots for the winter. But leave the remaining stems to add their protection to the crown. These can be tidied up in the spring if they stand proudly, or bit by bit if the gales wreck them. Protection of the crown gives cover to over-wintering insects too - not all of whom are enemies of the gardener: if the winter is kind, ground beetles will eat the slugs overlooked by thrushes and blackbirds. Of course, you could go the whole hog and plant your borders with so called prairie plants and big grasses. Photographs in the garden glossies of backlit borders crisped with hoar frost look wonderful. But do remember that the fashion began on the continent, where hotter summers than ours ripen the grass stems, then drier winters than ours encrust them with the sort of glitter we see only on Christmas cards. Here the prairie garden can look simply like a plate of boiled spinach.

Hannah Willetts

DIARY DATES

More at: www.chapel-lawn.co.uk
 2nd Wed of month 7pm WI
 Last Thurs every month ODAS
 Sat 5th Nov 7pm Live Gig: see below for details
 Wed 9th Nov 8pm WI 2011 Talk
 "From Lisbon to Lavenham on Horseback" by Becky Whitton
 Sat 19th Nov 7.30pm Flicks: Bridesmaids
 Thurs 1st Dec 7.30pm Wine & Puds (made by the chaps!)
 Sat 10th Dec 7.30pm Flicks: Bad Santa (15) (not for the sensitive!)
 Sun 18th Dec 3pm Church Carol Service followed by sherry & mince pies
 Sat 21st January Winter Food & Flicks: see below for details
 Sat 18th Feb 7.30pm Flicks: Senna (12A)

Bang Bang Romeo double bill with

Dredd & the Badass Weeds



Saturday 5th November
 Bar & Doors 6.45pm,
 Show starts 7.30pm.

Bang Bang Romeo are a proper up & coming talented band that you just wouldn't normally see out in the sticks. "Great sound, blasting vocals, and nothing you've heard before" UK Music Review. Dredd and the Badass Weeds with our own Ian Capmbell: "It's like Bauhaus meet Ornette Coleman with Bootsy on the bass" Hifiwigwam.com Entrance £4. Contact Liz Campbell 01547 530535 or mrs_big@live.com

Winter Food & Flicks

Enjoy a Scottish-themed winter feast on Saturday 21st January, including haggis, neeps, tatties and a wee dram, followed by the usual delicious puddings all cooked by the folks of Chapel Lawn.

Then be entertained by the 1949 Ealing classic movie Whisky Galore! Why not dress the part and wear something tartan?! Please book via Christine Rogers, tel 530258 or christine@techsyst.co.uk. Bar & Doors open 5.45pm, Food 6pm, Film 7.30pm Food & film £10; film only £4