

THE REDLAKE

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From the Editors

Today the role of volunteers is better appreciated as about 70,000 of them have played a significant part in making the Olympics such a success. Volunteers also work at our local level and perhaps we don't always realise how much time and effort they put in, whether it is in running a group or society, fettling up the village hall, creating a Community Benefit Society or dealing with church repairs. I have observed some of the effort on behalf of the church: dealing with English Heritage, the Diocese, architects, builders, sundry specialists, making various applications, obtaining various grants, sorting out the Sturchley Trust and so on. All volunteers deserve our thanks and perhaps it would be nice to tell them so occasionally.

Editor No 4

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FLORRIE MIDDLETON HITS THE HIGH NOTES

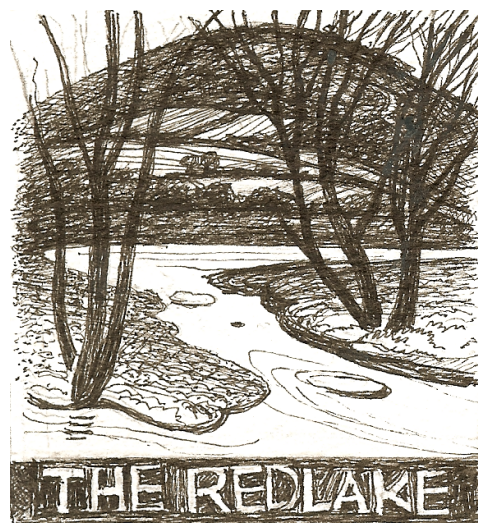
In 1951 the Misses Evans, the school-teachers at Chapel Lawn, and Florrie Middleton organised a day's outing for the village to the Festival of Britain. At that time Britain was clawing its way out of the grey, post-war austerity years, so to celebrate the country's growing confidence in itself, and to boost exports, the Festival was staged in London on the south bank of the Thames. A coach was hired from Knighton for an early start, and after picking up most of the party in Chapel Lawn it set off via Clun where it collected a few more. This photograph was taken of the whole party in front of the Dome of Discovery. The Dome, designed

by architect, Ralph Tubbs, held centre stage at the Festival and contained exhibitions around the themes of The Land, Earth, Polar, Sea, Sky, Outer Space, The Living World and The Physical World. Just behind the group the tops of a pair of sculptures by the

world-famous sculptor, Barbara Hepworth can be seen.

The group did not spend a great deal of time at the Festival site as a boat trip down the Thames had also been arranged. The weather was good, although at one point on the river there was a brief shower which necessitated sheltering the boat beneath Tower Bridge. Florrie Middleton, perhaps with a farmer's eye for an opportunity,

promptly stood up and entertained the whole boat to a solo rendition of? There is no record of what song she sang. It was certainly well received as she sat back down to rapturous applause. Was it 'Underneath the Arches', or 'Old Father Thames Keep



Rolling Along', or even 'London Bridge is Falling Down'? If anyone knows the answer, please write to us at The Redlake and we'll publish it in the next edition. And have we got the right names for the faces? *Patrick Cosgrove*

Pictured Left to Right:

Front : Frank and Hilda Huffer, Elizabeth Rycroft (Clun - the curates' daughter), Miss Driscoll (Clun), Jean Bufton (Clun), Doreen Morris (Bergam), Renee Price (Council Houses), Miss Caroline Evans

Middle: Beryl Wilding (Lynaven), Dot Lewis (Llanadefy), Connie Huffer (Brook House, Pentre), Miss Eleanor Evans, Olwyn Price (Council Houses), Florrie Middleton (Wood House), unknown (hidden)

Back: Percy Lewis (Llanadefy), Tom Harris (Hodre), Harold Middleton (Chapel Lawn farm), John Wilding (Lynaven), Jack Adams (The Smithy), Bill Collins (Clun), Mr Preece, (Camp View), Enid Price (Council Houses), Mary Robinson ?(Pentre),

Frank Collins (Clun), ???? (with hat), Joe Robinson (Quarry farm, Pentre), Frank Harris (Rockhill), Joe Price (Council Houses).

Photograph courtesy of Mary Ellis, Clun. Memories courtesy of Bill Collins, Clun. Extra Help with identification: Vera Price and James Middleton.



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Profile**Pat Hancock**

If you climb beyond Obley and bear left you come eventually to Pool House Hollow Farm, the home of Pat and Alan Hancock, who came there 34 years ago to farm, although Pat's early life had no connection at all with farming.

Pat was born in Crewe, Cheshire, where her family, both of her grandfathers and her father, worked for British Rail - a major employer in Crewe. Pat's mother was a dress-maker and Pat remembers long hours, as a girl, pinning and tacking for fitting, the garments her mother cut out. She also helped her mother with smocking. There would be a pattern which involved printed rows of dots and Pat would put running stitches through them and then pull them up to ruche the material so her mother could do the fancy stitching. Pat says all the children were expected to do a lot around the home since besides dressmaking, her mother also worked in a fishmongers. Her father, in his spare time, was a football league referee and was, Pat remembers, always extremely smartly turned out - her mother would even boil and iron his bootlaces!

Pat's childhood was very active, she had five girl cousins who she saw frequently and she was very keen on swimming. She was also a member of the Guides through her teenage years,

eventually becoming a Company Leader. Pat was closely involved with the local church. She says it was normal to attend church three times on a Sunday. It hosted a very lively youth club which regularly put on dances, shows and plays, most of which involved Pat.

After secondary school, Pat went to college in Chester, where she did Business Studies and shorthand and typing, she then joined the British Rail offices in Crewe. However, she continued at night school for two or three evenings a week to develop her skills and eventually taught shorthand herself for ten years at evening class.

When Pat joined British Rail in the late fifties everything was done on paper. She worked at Crewe station in the typing bureau, one of 22 typists producing schedules for the rolling stock and reproducing them on Gestetner machines. She reckons she typed thousands. The Bureau was run 'with a rod of iron' by a supervisor - Miss Trapp. It was organised like a school room, the typists at desks, in rows, no talking allowed. Miss Trapp was at the front and if she detected an untoward sound or movement she would lower her glasses slightly and peer hard over the top. It was enough! The room was by no means silent, there were 22 typewriters all clacking away - and if Miss Trapp had cause to leave the office 'all hell was let loose!'

One day a young man recently back from National Service appeared with papers for typing. Pat says he was rather shy and beetled straight across to Miss Trapp and out, but 17 year old Pat had noticed him. It was Alan. They met through a mutual friend and on Friday the 13th of February Alan took Pat on their first date (Pat says Friday the 13th has been lucky for them ever since). Alan managed to have a puncture - really - on the way home. 18 months later they were engaged and in another 13 months married when Pat was still only 19.

In the meantime Pat left British Rail and went to work for the Engineering Department of Rolls Royce, but she found it very boring and returned to

BR as a secretary, in a Portakabin, the only woman with 33 men working on the Crewe to Manchester electrification.

After Pat and Alan married they bought a new house in Nantwich. They got the deposit by working long hours. Alan, who was a Clerical Officer at BR during the week, spent the weekends labouring for the Permanent Way Working. In Nantwich Pat went to work at the Cottage Hospital as a secretary to the Administrator, Medical Social Worker and the Matron. Eventually she herself became the Medical Social Worker until pregnant with her first daughter Sally. - 'there was no maternity leave in those days'.

Alan had always wanted to farm and he and Pat bought a smallholding near Audlem where they bred pigs. They had a lively boar who looked very frightening. One day he escaped and visited the village pub where the landlord and the locals hid, while Pat led him peaceably home clutching his ear. Although Alan was still working with BR, now with two children, money was tight. Pat went back to work in A&E at a local hospital. She worked in the evenings and at weekends as the 'dogsbody' part of a team, where she saw more than her fair share of drunks, overdosers and accident victims. She booked people in, contacted relatives and gave a hand wherever was necessary and says that although the role meant she saw much trauma and developed a slightly warped sense of humour, she loved it.

The smallholding didn't entirely satisfy Pat and Alan's desire to farm. They decided boldly to give up their jobs and try to buy a farm in South Shropshire where land was cheaper. They came across Pool House Hollow, looked over the land, looked through the windows and made an offer all without entering the house. Pat says they were greatly helped by the seller, Jesse Wood, who over time sold them more land and bought from them their first lot of broken mouthed ewes. He and their other farming neighbours gave them an enormous

amount of support in sheep management and slowly the enterprise developed. However they needed some money coming in and Pat went to work at Caleb Roberts. After about 12 months she moved into an administrative role at Knighton Hospital. As the NHS re-organised Pat undertook management studies, worked longer hours and gained promotion until eventually she was managing the hospital. She later became locality manager and before she retired was in charge of both the hospital and the residential home, Cottage View. This she really enjoyed as it meant engagement with patients and their families. During all this time Pat was taking annual leave to help with the lambing - 'tiring' - but a job she loved.

When Pat retired she knew she would miss contact with people and so went to work part time at Craven Arms library. She eventually moved, with the books, to the Secret Hills Discovery Centre where she made good friends with the young staff. Within the past year she has finally retired. However, time does not lie heavily, she and Alan have grandchildren they enjoy enormously, she walks, swims and does Yoga, and in the past few years they have discovered Travel! Alan, after discovering that visiting France without speaking French was a challenge, declared he would only go to countries where the locals speak English, so in recent years they have visited the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and are off to New Mexico in a few weeks. At the moment Pat is kept busy as Churchwarden at St. Mary's. She certainly has the background having over the years been treasurer and secretary of the PCC, done rotas and acted as sidesman. The church is not in the peak of condition and although much has been achieved by previous Church Wardens there is still much to do to secure the long term future of the building. But Pat likes a challenge and in between times she enjoys life to the full with Alan.

Jane Kent

Farming Column

I shall not make a direct reference to the weather otherwise this column with read like a transcript from the Mr Terry trial (footballer not the local councillor).

One observation - 1946 was a very wet summer, my father used to regale us with the story of how they finished hay harvest on 31st of October, we all know the legend of the following winter of '47.

We have survived another lambing. This year's students were a different kettle of fish being male and vegetarian they were probably the best duo we have had, superior strength being a major advantage over the female students. They even found time to go horse riding. Claudia also taught them how to make fairy cakes.

Once again the affluent farmers from Bucknell upstaged the rest of us. Not only do their ewes produce lambs already ringed but the rings are made of solid gold.

The Jubilee has been and gone. Some brave souls ventured to the top of the camp to light the beacon. Rumours that the rings were brim full of water being greatly exaggerated. One farming family from the top end of the valley got in first and lit their beacon a week early.

One of two brave souls snatched some hay and silage between showers, the rested waited impatiently for the jet stream to up anchor.

The musical evening to celebrate 60 years of the village hall split the farming community down the middle. Half sat outside enjoying a rare fine evening to talk about the wet weather, the other half were getting wet inside. Sods law still exists. Fearful of the continuous rain we took the plunge and bought a bale wrapper. The day I collected it was fine and sunny and we have not seen a spot of rain since. Many locals are attributing the fine spell to a local farmer's bad back which has prevented him from starting harvest. Apparently his first outing with the mower usually coincides with the start of the monsoon season.

Bob James

RECENT EVENTS

Jubilee weekend. 3/4th June

The weekend started grey and wet on the Queen's Jubilee Celebration Saturday and our proposed bonfire on Caer Caradoc had to be postponed. However, the wheelbarrow races had to happen and in true country spirit our 'queen' was elegantly driven in a tractor transport box from her residence to the Village Hall, unfortunately not attended by the 'prince'. Mona Owen waved regally from her seat under a large umbrella and the festivities carried on in spite of the rain. Michaela had made and iced a huge celebration cake and while James made a speech, the champagne flowed. The rain had kept a few of us huddling indoors, but plenty of people turned out to celebrate.

The following day, Monday 4th June was more propitious and James planned to light the previous day's bonfire during the evening, before lighting the official beacon. There was a tractor-trailer-bus service up to the Camp from the village though some people slogged up the hill to get rid of their suppers and carrying plenty of refreshment. It turned out to be a beautiful evening, Chapel Lawn had two bonfires, one-up on the rest of the country! It was amazing to watch the other beacons on the hillsides around light up and to think this was happening all over the country. If you have a Facebook account, you can see lovely pictures of both events on the Chapel Lawn page.

Strawberry Tea

As part of the Diamond Jubilee celebration the WI held a strawberry tea in the Redlake Hall. It was a delightful occasion. Former residents of Chapel Lawn came, old acquaintances were re-established and there was much gossip and laughter. About forty-five people enjoyed scones, strawberries, sandwiches and a good deal of jolly company.

Village Hall Anniversary 14th July

The Village Hall celebrated both its 50th and 60th Anniversaries in July and although we planned to make a weekend of celebration, due to the

proximity of the Jubilee event, it was decided to just have one day.

On Saturday afternoon, the hall was used to display the ten different organisations associated with the village. Members from each club or society provided a simple (or, in the case of the History Group, not so simple) display of the work they had done or were going to do over the years. Scones and tea were provided and people were able to come and browse. The 'stall-holders' all wandered around looking at each other's displays and we had a few other people turn up intermittently throughout the afternoon. Of course, they were all waiting for the evening's dancing...

Two barrels of finest Clun Pale Ale, a dozen bottles of wine, two boxes of lager and a rousing, carousing band in the shape of The Sultana Brothers kept over one hundred people on their feet dancing for more than four hours. Very sorry to those of you who couldn't come, but lived nearby; you missed an excellent evening.

Becky Whitton

Not just a retirement area...

Steve Daniell

aka Monraker Plumbing

Not always a plumber, I was born into a farming family in Wiltshire. I worked on the farm after leaving school eventually becoming a partner. But the farm was not big enough to keep all of us so I left, moving to Anglesey. I started as a handyman, turning my hand to anything that would give me a wage. And this is when I started plumbing. I went to college and after five years finished with NVQ level 3, City and Guild Level 3 OPTEC, Gas Safe and HGTAS. I have also worked with others on solar ground services and biomass.

Why choose South Shropshire? I wanted somewhere which offered peace and quiet, close to friends and family and not too far from urban attractions.

And why Mon Raker? The answer is too long for The Redlake but it has connections with Devizes, Anglesey and ponds.

SEASONAL GARDENING NOTES

A recent customer at my plant stall made me aware that there is some confusion regarding geraniums. Geranium is the botanical name of the bone-hardy stalwarts of the herbaceous border and woodland garden, rocky scree and wild garden. They are easy plants that give good flower colour for months, and have attractive, often scented foliage. Reliable in almost all situations (except a bog), they are the troopers to deploy when the rest of the regiment lets you down: when in doubt always plant a geranium.

Their common name is cranesbill, in recognition of the elongated seedpod. And this is where the confusion lies with the other geranium, as that is also merely a common name. The tender, brilliantly flowered, bedding plant is - botanically speaking - a pelargonium. They are related, to be sure, but are the cousins who emigrated to Mexico, so cannot be expected to enjoy an English winter.

Hannah Willetts

ST. MARY'S CHURCH FUND RAISING

English Heritage's grant of £32,000 has been increased by approaching £2,000 to date. Thank you to our donors. The Savoury Evening on Thursday, 22nd November will also host a Table Top Sale, this will be followed by an Auction on Saturday, 1st December.

Looking to 2013 there will be a Flower Festival and Gift Day over the weekend of 8th/9th June. Please watch this space for further information regarding a Church to Church Ride, Cycle and Walk.

Pat Hancock

Parish Council News

The PC has a new chairman, James McVicar, and vice-chair, Beryl Palmer, elected by a formal vote at the AGM in May. This is good news as both James and Beryl are very proactive and wish to engage the community in the many hot topics, like the current part-night time lighting debate. More information in the Clun Chronicle and the village noticeboard. Your other local councillors are: Keith Terry 01588 640754 & John Wilde 530085.

DIARY DATES

More at: www.chapel-lawn.co.uk

2nd Wed of month 7pm WI

Last Thurs every month ODAS

Sun 19th Aug: Hodre Pond

annual clearing 11am

Sun 9th Sep Ramble & Lunch

walks start 10.30am, lunch noon

- 2pm. Contact Beryl 530106

Thu 20th Sep Arts Alive: Baobab

Tree/Ancient Strings'n'Things

Food & Bar. Contact Ian 530535

Sat 29th Sep Flicks: The Best

Exotic Marigold Hotel 7.30pm

Thu 4th Oct: Harvest Supper:

7pm service followed by supper in the village hall

Sat 6th Oct: Bryneddin Wood

Community group open day.

Contact Karen 530002

Sat 20th Oct: Flicks: Woman In

Black 7.30pm

Sat 17th Nov: Flicks: War Horse

7.30pm

Thu 22nd Nov: Table top sale

and savoury pie evening for the Church funds 7.30pm

Sun 9th Dec: Flicks: On The Black

Hill 7.30pm

Sat 15th Dec: Village Christmas

party by the W.I. and village hall

committee 7.30pm

January 2013: Food & Flicks tba

OVER 100 ENJOY

CHURCH CONCERT

Chapel Lawn's annual 'Voices of the Valley' concert held at St Mary's church in May was again a resounding success.

Andrew Gibbs introduced solos by Nathan Davies, Bethany Davies, Becky Whitton and Chloe Lewis and the newly formed group 'The Mud Larks' with Di Cosgrove, Jemima Jameson, Eileen Lloyd and Becky Whitton. Pianists were Wayne Davies and Katie Mohammed. The audience sang 'O let him rise', a new hymn. The words were written by our vicar Diana Hoare and music by Richard Lewis.

To acknowledge the Queen's Golden Jubilee, God save the Queen was also sung. A great event followed by tea and delicious scones and cakes.

Di Cosgrove