

THE REDLAKE

NUMBER 37

WINTER 2017

From the Editors

Happy New Year to you all! I always like knowing the days are getting lighter for longer, even if it is only a couple of minutes everyday and the snowdrops are edging their way through with a glimpse of spring to come. There are some good films coming up in the next couple of months hopefully to suit everyone's taste and we look forward to seeing you at some of the events listed in the diary section. There is also a new piano in the village hall for anyone who would like to use it personally or for musical evenings! We would also like to offer our condolences to the Stead family for the loss of Doug Stead before Christmas in a tragic accident.

Jeremy Jameson

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More information & photos of some of these articles are available on the website at <http://www.chapel-lawn.co.uk/clnews.html>.

A SHORT STORY.

My grandparents owned and ran an off-licence in Penge, Kent in the 1920's and I remember Grandma telling us this short story about two rats.

Along with selling alcohol, they also sold pickled onions & eggs etc. to supplement their income. At four o'clock you could almost set your watch by this event; two rats would scuttle into the parlour along a shelf above where a barrel of eggs was kept. One rat would get into the barrel and turn onto its back and clutch an egg to its chest, the other rat would grab this rat with the egg by the tail and pull it out of the barrel and along the shelf where they would disappear with it to obviously share in the spoils.

This became quite an event with the locals who would almost cue up to watch it unfold. Grandma could have supplemented her income more by selling tickets!

Graham Arnold

Chapel Lawn has received a Ben's Bell

When Jan and I arrived in Chapel Lawn this year for our third visit with

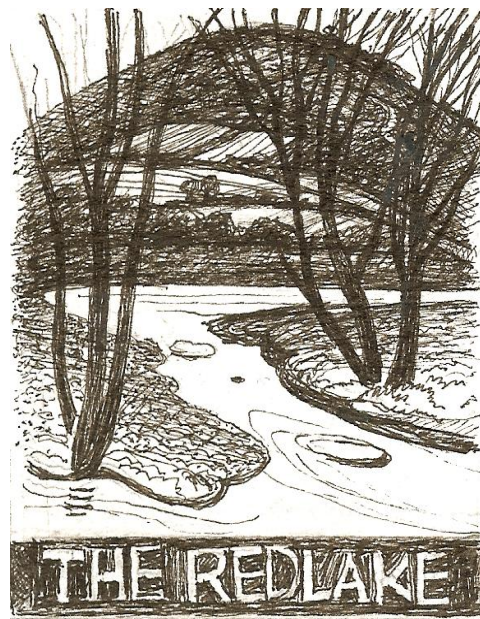
friends Carolyn and John Wilde, we brought with us two 'Ben's Bells'. One of them we left on a coastal path in Pembrokeshire and the second is hanging from a tree in Chapel Lawn.

What is a "Ben's Bell"?

A Ben's Bell is a bell hanging with a small heart or other ceramic image in bright colours with the words "be kind" inscribed on it. The bells were first made in Tucson, Arizona, which is our home town.

What was the reason for the bells?

The Ben's Bells Project (bensbells.org) originated in the pain and grief Jeannette Maré and her family experienced in the unexpected death of their three year old son, Ben. After Ben's death, the family began looking for coping mechanisms and the design of Ben's bell was the result. On the first anniversary of Ben's death, hundreds of Ben's Bells were distributed throughout Tucson, hung randomly in trees, on bike paths, and in parks with a written message to simply take one home and pass on the kindness. Today, thousands of volunteers make the bells and distribute them.



The mission of *Ben's Bells* is 'to inspire, educate, and motivate people to realize the impact of intentional kindness and to empower individuals to act according to that awareness, thereby strengthening ourselves, our relationships and our communities.'

What does finding a Ben's Bell mean?

There are several ways to respond to finding a Ben's Bell. You can look and admire. You can take it from the tree and hang it in your own yard. You can put it where someone else will find it. Or you can use it to thank someone whose kindness has been important to you.

Why did we leave one in Chapel Lawn?

Ben's Bells are about more than being "nice" or polite. They are an invitation to an intentional act of kindness. We want to thank our friends Carolyn and John for the kindness they have shown us over the years. And we want to help create kindness after a very, very difficult year, both in the U.K. and the U.S. for all of us, regardless of political affiliation.

By Judith McDaniel & Jan Schwartz

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PROFILE:**Bryan Whittall 'Postman'**

Christine Oakley and I spent a jolly afternoon recently, talking to Bryan about his days as a postman in the Redlake Valley.

Bryan was born at the Turnpike in 1935, he left school at the age of 15 and took an apprenticeship at Griffiths' garage Leintwardine for a period of 5 years. This was a hard job, 6am – 6pm five days a week, so when the opportunity arose to join his father as a postman in Bucknell he needed no persuasion. Bryan's grandfather had been a postman for 40 years and his father for 25 years. They were all Bucknell born and bred.

Bryan was a postman for 13 years, the last four using vans, but prior to this on bicycle and on foot.

In 1973 the service moved to Craven Arms and was administered from there, however the post office in Bucknell, which was their headquarters, is still in existence.

There were four postmen, a post woman and a postmaster based at Bucknell and covering an area out to Presteigne, Wigmore, Knighton and Clun.

Letters were delivered by van from Craven Arms, the postmen sorted them early every morning into their rounds; the postmaster delivered any telegrams. The postmen wore uniforms of navy blue trimmed with red and were provided with red bicycles, caps and canvas bags for the letters, later they had smart grey suits and ties.

In Bryan's grandfather's day, the post came by mail train to Bucknell station, the mail bag was dropped at 4.45 am and his grandfather put it on a four wheel trolley to push it to the post office. The mail train travelled from York to Swansea daily.

Bryan's day began at 7.00 am for the sorting and then his first stop was Christine Oakleys' house at 7.40 am.

From there he progressed on his bike, delivering to all the houses on the lane, (no e-mail then, so lots of letters!) fortunately no junk mail either!

Bryan's round included:-

Honeyhole, Obley, Nettledale, Pentre, Upper Lye, Lower Lye, Menutton, Woodside, Hobaris, Bryncalled, White Hill Bungalow, Bergam, Hodre, Vron; Tyncwm or Woodmans Cottage was unoccupied so Bryan never went there. In all he covered 28-30 miles. How did he reach the houses high up the hillsides? He walked, leaving his bike on the lane with any parcels secured on the carrier.

Bryan knew all the houses and families by name and many welcomed him with cups of tea, if he was on time in Chapel Lawn, Grannie Middleton might offer him a cup of tea, but if he was late he might catch the sharp end of her tongue! She might say 'Bryan, your grandfather used to be here at 7.30am!'

When he reached the Smithy, Bryan would have his packed lunch and maybe a glass of cider which was always available there. The Smithy was the centre of the village and always full of gossip. One day Jack Adams who lived there and kept dairy cows and bees, decided to move some of his bees up the road in his van, he recruited his father Fred to help him, but on the way the bees escaped and stung them both badly, Jack ending up in Hospital!

George Adams was a casual postman, he lived at the Rock, Pentre, he didn't have a uniform and his round included, New Invention, Wax Hall and Five Turnings. Bryan would meet George at the Smithy at 10.30 am and

exchange bundles of letters. Occasionally a supervisor from Shrewsbury would come on the round with Bryan and on those days there would be no tea or gossip.

Having completed his round, Bryan would return to Bucknell, emptying the postboxes on the way, then there would be more sorting of the letters collected and at 4.00 pm off he went on his bicycle again to empty the boxes a second time; all the letters would then be sent to Craven Arms.

In 1971 there was a postal strike from the 1st January to 8th March. This resulted in the postal workers getting an increase of 10 shillings a week in their wage packets, but it was also instrumental in rationalizing the service, so that it moved to Craven Arms in 1973.

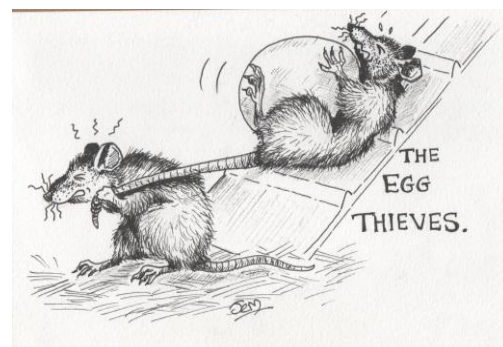
The postmen worked in all weathers five days a week and half a day on Saturday. Sunday was a day of rest and Bryan was Church warden for a spell and still is a bell ringer.

The postman, like the milkman, was a vital point of communication before we had telephones and the internet and his arrival must have been viewed with much pleasure in some of the more remote locations.

When the postal service was moved to Craven Arms, Bryan returned to motor maintenance and coach driving, but that's another story.....

Bryan lives in Bucknell near to one of his three daughters and two granddaughters, sadly his wife died in 2004.

Christine Oakley & Pat Jameson

CARTOON CORNER

RAPID RESPONSE UNIT.

Last Wednesday night at 10.30pm when most people were thinking of turning in for the night, the Church Bell started ringing! First thought was; 'are we being attacked from the air?' (watching too much Dad's Army). Second thought; 'is someone in trouble, is there a fire?' The bell stopped ringing, but by now the Rapid Response team were on the case. James was in his car before anyone could close their curtains. He was following a BMW that had parked by the stall and was now heading through the village. He followed it until it turned off the road. James carried on, and then turned round to see if it was still there, but by now the BMW was heading back through the village... but with a bit more of a turn of speed. Patrick and Di (the second quick response team) were coming out of the church to see if there was any damage done. On seeing James following the car, Patrick remembering 'Starsky & Hutch' wanted to jump through the open window of the Discovery. But being 4ft off the ground it would require going home to get a step ladder and then the advantage would be lost, so he went down the health & safety route, opened the door and got in. The chase was on.

By now the car was heading towards Bucknell and they caught up with it by the Vron; the BMW driver decided to open it up some more. So now they were travelling at speed and Patrick was really impressed at how the Discovery was handling, but if anyone knows these roads better than James, I would like to meet him. They were gaining on the car in front, which by now is travelling at what might be termed an alarming rate and the adrenaline was pumping, they were now only a few meters apart.... **but now**, they see a car coming towards them!! James is standing on the brakes with the ABS cutting in and not helping the situation and they are at the tightest part of the road; things are not looking good. Fortunately, the BMW in front decides not to plough into the oncoming car and takes on

the hedge instead, mud and branches are flying everywhere; at which point James follows it into the hedge thinking 'what the h... the BMW has removed most of the obstacles in the way and there are already scratches down my car'.

Luckily no harm was done and at Bucknell the car driver called it a day and pulled over by which point Patrick now has a phone signal and has phoned the police and given them the car's reg. I mean, talk about CID! After enquiring what they had been up to, that the police had been notified and they would be hearing from them, they left them to go on their way.

So - a couple of things. Firstly, apologies to the people in the oncoming car who had probably come here for a quiet 'get away from it all' retreat, but were witness to something out of 'Grand Theft Auto'.

Secondly, if you get the urge to do a bit of campanology late one night, you could very well be joined by the 'A-team'. And finally, which one is Starsky and which one is Hutch?

(I know this sounds an over dramatic story, but there have been things stolen from farms, outbuildings and the produce stall recently and cars speeding through the village. So if you see a car acting suspiciously, please take the reg. number, as the police then have something to go on.)

Woodland Fayre - Advance Notice

The Redlake Valley Community Benefit Society invites everyone to a woodland-themed open day at Chapel Lawn Village Hall on **Saturday 7th October 2017**. Following on from the very successful Wood Fair in October 2012, this event promises to be just as good and maybe even better. There will be a variety of stalls, talks, walks and displays for adults and children in and around the village hall – including the return of the beautiful draught horse, 'Elza'. Entrance will be by programme: £4 in advance or £4.50 on the day; children free (more information nearer the time). Andy Wigley (Historic Environment Manager, Shropshire Council) will

come and talk to us in the evening about Caer Caradoc hillfort and its place in Iron Age Shropshire and the Marches, which promises to be fascinating! If you would like to have a stall, or take part in any way, let us know? Updates and further information will be available in the next issue of the Redlake and on the website: <https://rvcbbs.wordpress.com>
Sarah Jameson – 01547 528546

Seasonal Gardening Notes



I don't do much in the way of autumn or winter digging here as I no longer grow many vegetables: the season is far too short in my frost-pocket garden so money and time were repeatedly wasted – meals of lark's tongues and Imperial Tokay would be cheaper than home-grown veg! But for those who can grow their own, digging should now be well under way, if not already completed, for frost to open the soil and break down large clumps. Huge ice-crystals – far more beautiful than anything grown in a chemistry laboratory – can be lifted from the cavities in the soil. Lying snow is also of great benefit to open soil – its moisture and minerals penetrate deeply. It is less helpful lying heavily on shrubs as its weight can easily snap branches – a broom underneath the stems (plus waterproof clothes) is a good way to dislodge it. A quick thaw followed by re-freezing is far worse for low-growing shrubs, whose outer stems can be sealed to the frozen ground, exposing the crown to the possibility of being burst apart by the expanding ice. Frost-heave in the soil can lift young plants and seedlings out of the ground – their exposed roots freezing to death. So beware before any early plantings.

Hannah Willetts

REDLAKE RECIPES.

Christmas Pudding Scones.

Ingredients

450g/1lb self-raising flour
55g/2oz caster sugar
½ tsp ground mixed spice
55g/2oz butter, diced
125g/4½ oz left-over Christmas pudding
250ml/9 fl oz milk

1 tbsp brandy, optional

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5. Add the flour, sugar, spice and butter to a mixing bowl or electric mixer and rub in the butter until the mixture resembles fine crumbs.
2. Break the Christmas pudding into tiny pieces and stir into the flour mix. Make a well in the centre, add half the milk and the brandy, if using, then gradually mix in enough of the remaining milk to make a smooth soft dough.
3. Lightly knead - being careful not to over-knead the dough or the scones will be heavy - then roll out thickly to a generous 2cm³/₄in. Stamp out 7cm²/₃in scones with a fluted biscuit cutter and transfer to a lightly oiled baking sheet. Re-roll the trimmings and continue stamping out scones until all the mixture has been shaped.
4. Brush the tops lightly with the remaining milk and bake for 15-20 minutes until well-risen and golden brown. Transfer to a wire rack and serve while still slightly warm split and buttered or spread with a little brandy or rum butter, if you have some left!

Clare Wright

Recent Events Nov to Jan 17

Early November and Beryl organised the hosting of the Village Hall Quiz Evening. It was a great success which everyone enjoyed despite the Chapel Lawn team not doing very well! The food was really tasty and the assortment of cakes went down very well. The Village Hall made an £80 profit and thank you Beryl for organising it so efficiently.

'Eddie the Eagle', the first film of our Autumn Season proved to be very popular. 'Our Kind of Traitor', a light-weight spy thriller was shown for our November flicks. December's film, 'Eye in the Sky' was also well received, but then Helen Mirren, along with Maggie Smith and Judi Dench always seem to bring in audiences. As usual, thanks to everyone who hosts the film evenings.

On Saturday 17th December, in place of the traditional Christmas Party, the Village Hall hosted a Country and Blues Night with two really excellent

live bands, Blue Moon and The Poobahs. The event was extremely popular and tickets sold out well in advance. It proved to be a fabulous evening with the hall decked out in its Christmas finery, wine and real ale flowing from the bar and a lovely selection of presents left under the tree for a free prize draw, courtesy of the Village Hall Committee. We were treated to a wonderful evening of superb music with the dance floor growing ever bigger as the audience could not resist getting to their feet. We are heartened by all those who told us what a great time they'd had and would like to thank Jack Brett of Blue Moon for arranging the event.

The day after the 'Country and Blues' evening, there was the more sober Carol service in the church featuring Jess and her Grandpa David singing 'Little Drummer Boy'. The Mudlarks put in their contribution of a couple of songs and Jemima and Eileen sang a very happy 'Jingle Bells'. Congregational carols, readings by some of the young man and women of the village and sherry and mince pies afterwards made a very convivial service.

A band of 12 carol singers went round the village singing Christmas Carols, which went down very well, and is a lovely tradition to keep going.

And to finish the year, the 2017 New Year DIY Party (or is it 2016?). As usual, a great little party, lots of chat, food and booze. Christine did as she promised and danced in spite of her sore foot. The event finished with singing 'Auld Lang Syne' in good traditional style with only a portion of the words!

FARMING COLUMN

Please go to <http://www.chapel-lawn.co.uk/clnews.html> to read the article written by John Phillips. We didn't have room to print it, so please have a look, as he has got a good farmers perspective on Brexit.

ANDREW LOUND PRESENTS "A LIBYAN SPACE ODYSSEY"

Thursday 27 April in Chapel Lawn Village Hall starting at 7.30 pm.

In 2006 a team of space science educators and scientists visited Libya to work with the Libyan authorities on a Solar Eclipse Public Awareness campaign and to study the total eclipse from the Libyan desert.

Andrew led the UK team and presents a fascinating, funny and dramatic story of this adventure of a lifetime. Beautifully illustrated with images and music, this is a presentation to savour.

TICKETS £5 including canapés and a glass of wine.

Details from Carolyn Wilde 01547530085

Diary

Flicks in the sticks: Saturday 28th January. Star Trek 'beyond'.

Science fiction & fantasy, action & adventure. 7.30pm Adults £4.50, children £3.50

"Marmalade Making". Tuesday 14th February. Chapel Lawn WI invites everyone to an evening with Vivien Lloyd, author & manufacturer. 7.30pm £3 including refreshments.

VH Committee Meeting. Wednesday 22nd February.

ODAS: Thursday 23rd February 7.30pm. Talk: "From the witches of Thessaly to the present day. The history of women in astronomy" Speaker, Carolyn Wilde.

Flicks in the sticks: Saturday 25th February. 'Deepwater Horizon' Action, Adventure & Drama. 7.30pm Adults £4.50, Children £3.50

Church APCM: Tuesday 7th March 7.30pm

Flicks in the sticks: Saturday 25th March. 'A Street Cat Named Bob'. Comedy, Drama. 7.30pm. Adults £4.50, Children £3.50

Woodland Fayre meeting: Tuesday 28th March at 7.30pm.

ODAS: Thursday 30th March 7.30pm "Images of the universe- my favourite picture & why" ODAS members.

Food & Flicks: Saturday 22nd April. 'A United Kingdom'. Biographical romantic drama about the first president of Botswana. Please reserve tickets if you would like the delicious 2-course meal. Food: Adults £6.50, Children £3.50. Film: Adults £4.50, Children £3.50. 7.30pm. Christine@techsyst.co.uk 01547-530258

ODAS: Thursday 27th April. Talk: "A Libyan Space Odyssey" Speaker- Andrew Lound. 7.30pm. Tickets on the door £5 includes canapes & a glass of wine.

W.I.- Meeting 2nd Tuesday of the month 7pm. Village Hall

ODAS on the last Thursday in every month. 7pm Village Hall