



# THE REDLAKE



NUMBER 41

10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL EDITION

WINTER 2018

## From the Editors

The Redlake is 10 years old! Good going for a small hamlet news letter. There always seems to be something going on and in general well supported by locals and from the local villages around. I think we can be proud to have such a variety of events and groups that get together to keep this lovely area going. Thank you to everyone who helps contribute and we look forward to any news and groups that want to form in the future. Cheers everyone!

*Jeremy Jameson*

*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.

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



## TEN YEARS OF REDLAKE

It hardly seems possible that this is our *tenth* year of publishing The Redlake. Michael Macturk was our chief editor (the one who wrote the 'Editorial') and the following quote is taken from our first edition:

*'Our editorial policy is to be stimulating but non-partisan, report on local events that have happened and publicise those about to happen. But to be really successful we do need your input, whether as a letter or a short article on a local topic or just let us know what you'd like to read about.'*

I still have the notes that were made when Michael, Christine Page, Jane Kent and I first took up editorship of the newsletter. One of the decisions which took the longest time to resolve was what to call our new newsletter. Something with 'Redlake' in it was quite obvious, but what? The Redlake Review; The Redlake Replies, The Redlake Responds, The Redlake Respondent, The Redlake Rag (it might have been reduced to 'The Rag', not our ideal image). Thank goodness we opted for just 'The Redlake' in the end; it seems to have worked well. We made the decision to keep the

newsletter to just four A4 pages and have stuck with it. This means that all of it is easily read; it focuses the mind when writing an article which has to fit, but also leaves 'copy' for the next edition... and the next... and the next; hence the fact that we are still producing The Redlake 10 years later and no-one seems to have got bored with it yet.

Ann Arnold very kindly produced drawings for the front page and to fill in any odd spaces that may crop up and Christine put together the design.

Money was needed, of course, to pay for the printing (another reason to stick to one sheet of A3 paper). Initially we raised money ourselves; we held a Social Evening where I showed slides of a trip I did with a friend, two horses and a dog, we received donations from various people and organisations and a small local grant. Since 2012, The Redlake has been funded by the Village Hall and is now printed in the village. Last autumn I updated contents and an index for all 40 Issues and in doing so have discovered some fascinating facts; we have featured 40 couples' or individuals' lives as profiles or sadly, in obituaries. There

have been 20 articles on local history; 31 items of news; 48 miscellaneous articles; 15 'Ins and Outs' (I think we missed some of these); 8 recipes; featured 8 local businesses and every issue has it's Farming Column, Gardening Notes, Recent Events and Diary Dates. For some reason we managed to include two articles on The Smithy (#3 and #10), so that was when Christine started making a record of what we had featured in each issue. The hardest part of writing for the Redlake is the problem I now have... of running out of room...

Of course, every copy is available to download from the website and if you would like a copy of the contents and index for the 40 issues, they will also be available to download: [www.chapel-lawn.co.uk](http://www.chapel-lawn.co.uk).

*Becky Sherman*

## CHAPEL LAWN SIGN REVAMP

The Village sign has had a bit of a face lift as it was looking a bit tired and damaged. With the help of Graham Arnold, Sarah and Simon Jameson and Patrick Cosgrove, it is back to its original glory. See above.

## OBITUARY

**John Wilde****‘Two Funerals and a Wedding’**

I still have a blurred photo of Stokesay Castle taken from the train on a snowy January day in 2010. I was on my way to Bristol for a cousin's funeral and I was looking out at the countryside with particular interest. John and I and our four cats were living in a cottage in a hamlet in South Cheshire. After ten years we were thinking of moving further south to be slightly nearer my family in Devon but not too far from John's friends and family on the Wirral. I made a mental note that the hills started at Church Stretton and the floods started at Leominster, anywhere in between would be ideal. That is how, 11 months later, we came to drive down to Chapel Lawn to get the keys from Vi and Steve Sherring who had selected us (and the four cats) to be their new tenants. Before moving, reading back copies of the Redlake online did give me an insight into the people of Chapel Lawn. They still drank sherry when they went carol singing and were preoccupied with lambing. Very different from the dairy county we were leaving where scotch was the drink of choice and the timing of events revolved round milking. We were obviously moving into a very posh place!

I met John when he came on a management course I was running in St. Annes on Sea. We were married in the Register Office in Sale Town Hall, an event notable for the crying of our friends' baby, John's mother's dog wetting the carpet, the Registrar addressing us as Kevin and Moira and the rain which poured down for most of the day.

As time passed we discovered a shared love of cats, Croatia and Monte Negro, canal holidays, photography, quizzes and computers. We bought one of the first PCs to come into this country and John taught himself programming. He later moved from local government and ended his career, cut short by ill health, as Managing Director of a Software house developing software for the legal profession. He never forgot his early training which encompassed so many disciplines including building, food hygiene, meat inspection and health and safety. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the law covering all aspects of environmental health which came in useful, particularly in setting questions for the Shropshire Village Halls Quiz which he joined as a Quiz Master in 2011. When eating out he could recognise Vietnamese River Cobbler masquerading as premium cod. He always queried such things quietly, politely and would never, ever accept an offer of not paying for the meal. The ethics he espoused as a local government officer stayed with him throughout his life. Joining the Llanfair Singers brought him much happiness as well as a new career - falling over in English Cathedrals! His peripheral neuropathy was getting worse which made walking difficult, and falling likely, as he could not distinguish surfaces beneath his feet. He joked about it but he was in pain most of the time. It saddened him that he could no longer do many of the things he had enjoyed in the past such as gardening, wood working, electronics and cooking. He still had music, though and he and Graham Arnold used to enjoy listening to music and talking about life, the universe and everything.

John was very much a performer and a singer of some quality, particularly in his younger days. He could have been a stand-up comedian – his joke telling in the bar at conferences was legendary. He had a Liverpudlian's sense of humour and a great affection for the city of his birth but a deeper love for the countryside. Our lives were enriched by our move to Chapel

Lawn and John loved everything about it. If our wedding had been somewhat unconventional then John's funeral arrangements certainly were. He and I discussed them and I agreed to follow his wishes, which I did. The fireworks were an added extra!

*Carolyn Wilde*  
Hither Cwm

### FROM OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

When Becky asked if I would submit an article "News from The Obley" my immediate thought was "not a lot happens!" However, to put Obley on the map so to speak, here are a few reflections on the past and present. Obley is a hamlet, located a mile northeast of the village of Chapel Lawn and two miles west of Hopton Castle in the Civil Parish of Clunbury. In the mid 1800's Obley was classed as a township on the southwest extremity of the Clunbury Parish, comprising 1,025 acres 3 roods and 33 perches of land. In 1841 there were 30 houses and 164 inhabitants. Currently there are 12 houses and farms, including the chapel and Sandbank which are holiday homes. Sunday school was held in the chapel, led by Lily Grubb and Dot Lewis, the late Mr. Frank Huffer's mother playing the organ. In the past I believe Obley was able to support its own football team. We welcome new residents to The Obley, at both English Cottage and Lower House. As I am compiling this The Barn is now for sale. Also good wishes go to Margaret Grubb following surgery and it is hoped to see her out and about in the near future. Mrs Rose Morris, nee Roberts, lived at Pool House Hollow Farm with her parents, two sisters and one brother. The children attended Chapel Lawn School with a number of children from The Obley. This entailed a lengthy walk via Bergam Hill or Hodre when there was snow. Quite a walk for youngsters homeward bound. There are many stories of heavy snowfalls, 1947 and in the early 1960s. I remember Alan leaving his mini-van in Chapel Lawn for six



weeks around the end of the 1970s due to the snow and ice. Thankfully, these conditions are now rare, and vehicles/tractors are able to clear the tarmac quickly.\*\* The current residents have a variety of occupations, several retired, which is quite different to the mainly farm and countryside work of years ago. One gentleman purchased rabbit skins which were taken to Birmingham for treatment to be made into coats. The Sandbank cottage was occupied by Mr. Davies, the roadman, what we would give now for this type of service. This is now a holiday home. The summer brings dust and the winter mud. In her book *Idler on the Shropshire Border*, Ida Gandy refers to bank notes festooning the hedge rows – we are continuing to look.

*Pat Hancock*

\*\* NB – These notes were written in November – and then came the white world of 8<sup>th</sup> December, did I jinx the weather pattern?

#### OBITUARY

### 'Vera' Bowen (Veronica Bernadette)



Born in Liverpool (Parbold) to Patricia & William Baines on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 1944. Vera lived with her Gran & her father, as her mother had sadly passed away when she was very young.

She went to a convent school and one of her best things was Scottish dancing which she was so good at, she won many a dancing competition. Vera always loved to dance as those of us can testify to, as whenever there was music put on at the Village Hall, she would be the first up to dance and probably the last one to stop!

After school, Vera trained as a NHS nurse and eventually specialised in burns. She married Ron Hill in 1965, settled in Liverpool and had two children, Billy and Linda.

She and Ron divorced in 1986 and she moved to East Grinstead to a specialised hospital for burns in the early 80's where she worked for a number of years. Amongst many of the injured people she treated was Simon Weston, who is remembered for being badly burned on the 'Sir Galahad' during the Falklands War. Her job took her abroad as well to Saudi Arabia, where she looked after a gentleman called Lord Stanley for a while.

Ken met Vera while she worked in East Grinstead, in a retirement home as carer/nurse. Ken used the home as a base as he was working locally in Seven Oaks as a Forester in 1986/87. His mum's sister, Thelma, was head cook and Thelma's husband was head groundsman. One day, Vera asked him to collect up a dozen baby ducklings that had escaped and spent the whole afternoon chasing ducklings around the grounds and getting them into a cardboard box to take to the lake, with much amusement. They started dating in 1988 and they decided to make a home where Ken was brought up; they moved to Chapel Lawn in the Summer of 1989 and they got married on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 1992.

Vera became involved in village life and was a member of the W.I. amongst many other organised local events. She was always the life and soul of any party and enjoyed a drink or two (or three!) She was a very good cook and would make superb quiches at the drop of a hat for any event that needed food.

Vera loved to travel and up to a couple of months before her death went to Germany to visit her good friends, Manfred and Brigitte. Ken said he always admired the way she would just book a holiday and go without a second thought, whether it was to Spain or Australia.

Ken remembers a trip to Australia in 1997 where he went 'walk about' for a few days and then on a shopping trip in Sydney where a large beetle flew down

Vera's top; whereupon she hastily stripped off her top and danced around while the beetle crawled away unhurt as they were all laughing.

Vera and Ken used to spend a lot of time travelling around the country in their camper van for his work, which she loved to do. She would make tea and bacon 'butties' for all the drivers that came on site and many a dog walker.

Vera would take in all kinds of pets and they did get to 6 cats, 2 dogs and a few hedgehogs in the end. It would probably been a lot more if Ken hadn't politely said, 'I think we have enough'.

Vera was one of life's characters, who could be quite forthright and probably ruffled one or two feathers as she would speak her mind, plain and simple. But she had a heart of gold and was truly a considerate, caring woman, as many a person can testify to in Chapel Lawn who have been helped by Vera over the years.

Our thoughts go out to Ken, Billy, Linda and grandchildren; Pyper, Conrad, Beccy, Laura and Charlotte.

Recently Laura gave Vera a great grandchild named Poppy Veronica.

As most people wrote in Vera's remembrance book, the overwhelming thoughts are, she will be sorely missed.

One of Vera's favourite sayings was 'Get a life'... I think we can all agree she made the most of hers.

*Ken Bowen & Jeremy Jameson*

#### SEASONAL GARDENING NOTES



It has been said that a rose, is a rose, is a rose. This certainly cannot be said of a snowdrop, even though many people may be unaware of the hundreds of varieties now available. The differences between most of these hundreds are pretty minimal to anyone other than a committed galanthophile, as the growing numbers of snowdrop fanciers are known. Some named varieties are too freakish to look much like the traditional Fair Maid of February, but some make delightful additions to the early season in the garden, being different enough to warrant their space, but not too

outlandish to be unrecognizable. Double-flowered snowdrops are well known, but those with yellow, rather than green, markings are more unusual. 'Lady Elphinstone' is a good yellow, but may take a year or two to settle down into its true colour. *Galanthus nivalis* 'Viridapice' is a single snowdrop with all the normal green colouring on the inner skirts plus strikingly noticeable green tips to the three outer segments. 'Brenda Troyle' is a traditional snowdrop except that the flowers are well over an inch long on twelve-inch stems. The usual green spathes that stand outside the flowers are greatly extended to two inches long on the variety 'Scharlockii', so it is known as the donkey-eared snowdrop. And on 'Magnet' the pedicel holding the flower is extra-long, causing it to dance in the breeze. Instead of the usual narrow silvery grey foliage, *Galanthus ikariae latifolius* has broad and shiny, bright green leaves. None of these is difficult to acquire or expensive to buy, although some of the newest and most sensational varieties can cost over a hundred pounds per bulb. As soon as the flowers begin to fade, dig up a clump and separate the bulbs with their leaves still attached and replant them individually – 'in the green' as it is termed – to spread them throughout your garden.

Hannah Willetts

## RECENT EVENTS NOV - JAN

In November 2017, we heard the fantastic news that the Village Hall had been awarded £1765.01 from the local Co-op Group towards the **Redlake Valley Hall Outdoor Enhancement Project**, part of the Macturk Fund. The money has been raised over the last six months or so by Co-op Members who have voted for Chapel Lawn to receive their contribution. This has enabled us to buy two wooden picnic benches and shortly we will have a smart new sign fixed on the hall wall to tell everyone what this strange little building is! On November 11<sup>th</sup>, we were treated to a fine evening of guitar playing by two very accomplished musicians. Jack Brett from Bucknell invited his friend and fellow musician Joncan Kavlakoglu, to play at Chapel Lawn.

The hall was filled with both locals and outsiders. Jack played tracks from his new blues album and Joncan played his own songs in his own unique style which involved tapping percussive rhythms while playing the guitar. Both musicians were superb, and made for a great evening.

The film, *The Lost City of Z*, was reasonably well attended for what I thought was a disappointing film! *Tomorrow or Demain* (French) was a far more uplifting film. Our most recent film, Victoria and Abdul was both funny and very moving. The hall was packed and the evening was a great success. The VH committee are considering the purchase of a Bluray player so you can look forward to high definition for all future screenings.

Our Christmas show was the *Churchfitters' Christmas Cracker*, through Arts Alive. The Churchfitters were fabulously talented musicians; funny and clever. A brother and sister team with a French bass player who had made his own instruments. People who either couldn't get to see them because of the weather, or didn't want to see them missed a great show!

Becky Sherman

## FARMING COLUMN

The snow at Christmas was very seasonal and pretty but soon loses its appeal; having had the flu like many others, it made the daily work quite hard some days.

Both fodder and straw are generally in short supply and quite expensive so an early spring would be welcome.

Sheep pregnancy scanning went well with a reasonable crop expected. The annual cattle TB test was clear but next year we will have to test every 6 months as we are in a high risk area.

The environment Agency have been busy visiting farms in the area looking at dirty water running off the fields and feeding areas. They thought that the run off from my feeding pad went into the river but it only crossed the road and dispersed on a grass field.

With another neighbour giving up stock farming there will be very little stock left in the valley over winter if the trend continues.

The local NFU branch holds competitions for cereal crops and grassland each spring and I was very

pleased to win the grassland cup for a new grass ley on a field towards the Squire. I noted that the cup had been presented for over 50 years and this was the first time it had come to the Chapel Lawn Valley. It is usually won by farms in the earlier and more fertile Clun valley and Corvedale.

Brexit features in the farming press a lot. Mr. Gove has made some reassurances towards farming but with a shaky government anything could happen.

The NFU holds its elections in February with a lady, Minette Batters most likely to be elected the first female president. She has been described as being able to disarm politicians with humour and knowledge. I have met her and wish her the best in securing the future of farming.

James Middleton

## DIARY

**Town Council Meeting.** Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February 7.30 pm

**Parish Council Meeting.** Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 7.30pm

**VH Committee Meeting** Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 7.30pm

**WI** Second Tuesday of the month 7pm

**Arts Alive:** Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February "Outside the Box" A live show about death. Funny, wise and taboo busting show. 7.30pm £10. Contact Jacqueline 01547 530871/07721 739973 or Christine 01547 530258

**ODAS** Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 7.30pm

**Flicks.** Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February 7.30pm "Blade Runner 2049"

**Flicks.** Saturday March 17<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm "Breathe".

**ODAS.** 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March observation evening, to be confirmed!

**Town Council Meeting.** Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April.

**Food & Flicks.** Saturday April 7<sup>th</sup> "Paddington 2". Door & Bar open 5.45pm. Food 6.00pm, Film 7.30pm. Two course themed food, Adults £7.50 Child £3.50 Film Adults £4.50 Child £3.50. **Please reserve tickets for meal.**

For more information about Flicks or Live Events, please contact Christine Rogers 01547 530258 christine@techsyst.co.uk