

# THE REDLAKE

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AUTUMN 2021

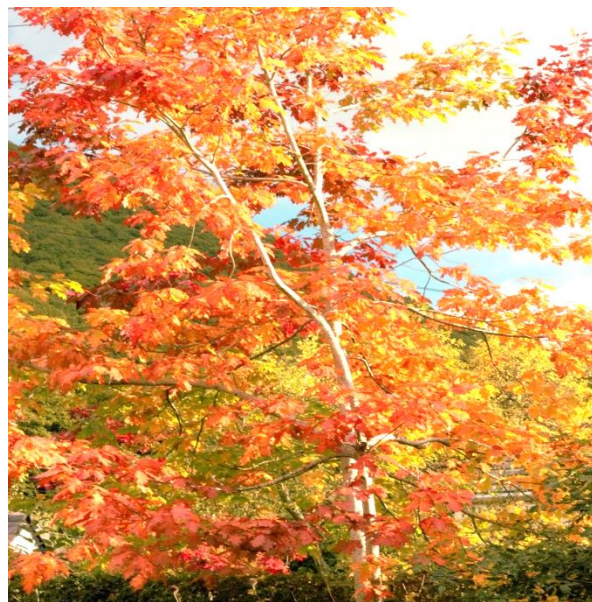
## From the Editors

This is the last Redlake I will be as its editor, and I would like to thank all those who have contributed over the years towards the diversity of local issues and interests. You will be pleased to know that it will have a new editor, and as such will carry on. Sarah Jameson is stepping up and would be pleased to have your feed back on what you would like to be featured. This is very much led by you, as we only put in what we receive, and I hope you continue to send in articles that you think are of interest to the Redlake Valley. All the best, and I look forward to reading it as a reader. Have a good Christmas, and Happy New Year.

*Jeremy Jameson*

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



The turning of the season. Picture by Ken Bowen

## HARVEST FESTIVAL

The church was beautifully decorated by Jenny Dale and Clare Davies for the Harvest service on the 1st of October, using colourful dahlias and sunflowers from Christine Oakley's garden.



Afterwards the village hall was full of folk enjoying supper together, washed down with cider provided by James.

## OUR NEW VICAR

Rev Martin Quayle, was licensed at St Cuthbert's Church, Clungunford on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September. We were pleased to welcome Rev Martin to a community event in Chapel Lawn when he spent an hour at our Macmillan fundraiser. On Sunday 3rd October, we welcomed him to St Mary's for the first time to lead a service.

## RIDE AND STRIDE

Every year, since about 2011, we have welcomed all who take part in the Shropshire Historic Churches Trust's 'Ride and Stride' (second Saturday in Sept) into the church. Coffee and cakes are always ready for the weary travellers to enjoy on their journey around local churches. We like to support this national event, as we received a substantial grant from the SHCT towards much needed renovation work in 2013.



Gifts for the Harvest festival.

## TEDDY BEAR'S PICNIC

We held a Teddy Bear's Picnic on 27<sup>th</sup> August. Several families spent the afternoon by the river dipping in the water and spotting crayfish and all kinds of underwater creatures. Later we shared a picnic together and listened to a bible story.



Fishing in the Redlake River







I am sure everyone was very sad to hear that Beryl Palmer passed away on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October. Beryl was at the very heart of the community, actively involved in so many things and always caring about and looking after everyone. She will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with Barry.

The funeral will take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November, at 12 noon in St. Mary's Church, Chapel Lawn.

### CHAPEL LAWN 3 IN 1

Although the Redlake 'Then and Now mini-festival' did not happen because of rising Covid numbers, three of the outdoor events were salvaged under the banner of 'Chapel Lawn 3 in 1'. On an overcast morning on 7<sup>th</sup> October, eleven people arrived at New Invention to be given a guided walk around the new wetland there with AONB project officer Alison Jones, who explained how the rushy area at the bottom of the field had been deculverted in July 2020. The aim of the project was to help reduce sediment in the Redlake River and to assist in the slowing of the water flow, as well as the creation of new wet woodland with the planting of around 90 trees. On Friday 8<sup>th</sup>, 16 people accompanied local naturalist, Rob Rowe, on a foraging walk along the valley, with a pause for a hedge-laying demonstration by Michael Bright. Alongside many other fascinating facts, the foragers learned that sliced burdock root makes delicious chips, comfrey leaves can be used as a poultice for arthritis, and coltsfoot leaves rolled into

a 'cigarette' are a good way to clear a wheezy chest. Between Pentre and Wheelbarrow Bridge there was an unresolved discussion to try and determine whether the 'Pentre Pippin' leaning across the road was a wild crab apple tree or an old garden variety. Finally, on the Saturday, the Kemp Valley Apple Group visited the village hall to press and pasteurise apples. Altogether, about 200 litres of delicious juice was produced and taken away by those who had brought fruit. The general consensus was that all three events should be repeated.



*Patrick Cosgrove*

### RAMBLE & LUNCH

A huge THANK YOU to everyone who supported our annual Ramble & Lunch on 12 Sept. Those who set up and took down and volunteered for many hours on the day, those who rambled and those who ate the lunches! Thank you to all of you who donated salads and puddings, as this cut our costs and made even more profit for the church funds.

We took a year off in 2020 for obvious reasons and were hoping folk would come together for the church this year as funds had been affected by all the Government restrictions. We had good walking weather for the event and were able to seat many outside the hall under two gazebos and seats lent for the day.

We reckon we provided a hearty lunch for about 120 and currently we have made a profit of over £1100 (our best year ever!!). Well worth all the hard work put in by so many friends of the church. Thank you so much and look forward to seeing you again next year!

### MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

A BIG thank you to everybody who came along on 25 Sept and made our fundraiser such a resounding success! Lots of cups of tea and coffee drunk and

lots of catching up with neighbours was had! We raised over £610 (about £70 more than our previous record!)

A big group of us from the village and beyond, worked hard to put it all together. We had loads of donations of homemade cakes, raffle prizes, plants, books and three tables full of bric a brac! We even had a table selling Mexican street food! Thank you for all your contributions!!

It was lovely to be able to raise such a grand sum for Macmillan. By playing your part you've helped people with cancer live life as fully as they can"

*Karen Limbrick and Di Cosgrove*

### REDLAKE VALLEY

#### COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY

The Society held a successful apple pressing day on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October with a steady stream of apple juice being produced and then pasteurised in glass bottles to be taken away for the princely sum of 80 pence a bottle.



There is a programme of work parties planned for the Autumn & Winter. You are welcome to come and help us construct another flight of steps on Henry's quillet, clear bramble growth and coppice small trees. Contact Mark Limbrick if interested to know more on 01547530002/[Redlakevalley@gmail.com](mailto:Redlakevalley@gmail.com)

### FOOD AND FLICKS SATURDAY 20 NOVEMBER

Chapel Lawn Village Hall

**THE ITALIAN JOB**

Preceded by a delicious

2-course Italian themed meal

Meal Adult £7.50 Child £3.50

Film Adult £4.50 Child £3.50

Door & Bar 6:15pm

Food 6:30pm, Film 8pm

Please contact Christine to reserve

01547 530258 [christine@techsyst.co.uk](mailto:christine@techsyst.co.uk)

FLICKS  
IN THE  
STICKS



## SMILING TREE RINGS

Since moving to the Redlake valley 15 years ago, trees have been central to our organic, holistic, regenerative approach to managing the land and producing food in harmony with nature. On each side of the valley, the grazing at Smiling Tree Farm is divided into approximately 32 paddocks in order to practice holistic planned grazing (HPG). HPG is a form of mob-grazing, where the unique context of the farm drives the process and decision-making, rather than adhering to a strictly defined system.

Over the years, more and more areas of the pastures have been fenced off to naturally re-wild, or plant trees or hedgerows and shelter-belts. These are integrated between the grazing paddocks creating a network of criss-cross wildlife corridors.

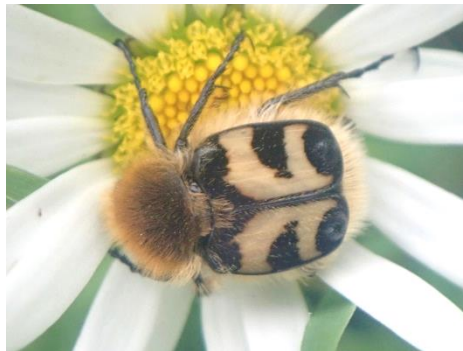
It has long been known in permaculture circles, that the 'edge', where two different habitats meet, is where the highest number and diversity of species of flora and fauna are found. Thus, as one of our contextual goals is to create as much habitat as possible, particularly for invertebrates, being the bottom of the food chain, then the aim is to create as much 'edge' as possible.

Whilst the straight-edged paddocks were a good start, with 3m shelterbelts dividing each future glade, creating an 'edge' down each side, planning for the next phase clearly showed that curves would do a better job. Whilst something Fibonacci related would have been perfect, it proved tricky to plan, and likely trickier to execute. Curves running across the field on contour, whilst having promise, did not work well for water infrastructure, or allow grazing routes to be easily changed, which is a key part of some important disruptive HPG practices and necessary in order to skip paddocks with ground-nesting birds (this year we had several skylark pairs nesting).

Various scale drawings later, and tree rings ticked all the boxes: circular 3m wide shelterbelts, densely planted with 20+ species of over 1,000 trees in each tree ring, with strategic entrance and exit points so the cattle would flow easily between paddocks. And they have worked better than imagined. No

calves running back the wrong side of a straight-line fence, as the curves naturally draw them to the gaps.

The efforts are paying dividends, with a recent survey by the Shropshire Botanical Society finding, in just 3 hours and with only part of the farm covered, 133 pasture plant species and 48 species of invertebrates, including the rather lovely bee beetle (pictured).



Christine Page

[www.smilingtreefarm.com](http://www.smilingtreefarm.com)

## ARTS ALIVE IN CHAPEL LAWN Twisted Tales vol.2

Our first Arts Alive performance since early 2020 was an unusual performance, three Twisted Tales with themes of robots, space travel, technology – and all with a twist. The three actors showed enormous versatility in their accents, their characters, and their ability to act, manage the technology and shift the staging! Watching them transform our new stage area during the two intervals was entertaining in itself. The sound and lighting effects wouldn't have been out of place in a major theatre. We are so lucky to be able to attract high quality performers to our small rural community – and only pay £12 each for the privilege.

The Village Hall is in top form, newly decorated during the lockdowns, warm and cosy. We were delighted to welcome some new faces to the audience and the feedback forms showed that the majority of people attending rated the event as Very Good and would recommend Arts Alive to others.

So, given that recommendation, the next Arts Alive performance is:

## BOX OF FROGS

Comedy improvisation show from Birmingham

**SATURDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

We are limiting seating to 50, cabaret style, and I'm happy to take bookings and advance payments already.

Here are a couple of their reviews:-

*"There is nothing that can prepare you for the evening ahead, even the members of the group have no idea what is going to happen after the audience is settled in. But the one thing that can be guaranteed is you'll be laughing throughout."*

*"What the group does best are the musical games. There is something extra magical about pulling tunes and lyrics out of the ether."*

Marion 07964 710983 [marioncox89@gmail.com](mailto:marioncox89@gmail.com)

## MEXICAN EVENING

The 30th September saw the village hall decked out in Mexican colours, Mambo and Cumbia filling the air. With the help of members of the village hall committee, who ran the bar, we held a small but vibrant evening filled with Mexican inspired delights. Mole was served - no, not everyone's favourite garden critter - but mo-lay, a Mexican stew made with over 15 ingredients including nuts, seeds, chillies and dried fruit. There were burritos and quesadillas (traditional corn tortilla with melted cheese and beans) served alongside salsas and avocado crema. Everyone had a great time, enjoying the long awaited chance to sit, eat and convene with others in the village hall, as well as enjoying the delicious food. We hope for the chance for doing it again soon, with requests already lodged! We'll be working on another menu and hope to see you at the next one!

Faith & Aaron

## "CHAPEL LAWN BAKE OFF" AND CHRISTMAS FOODIE EVENING

A party for all ages  
Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December 7pm  
in the Village Hall

We challenge all men folk to bring along a supper dish to be judged, which must include SAUSAGE e.g. sausage roll, scotch egg, meat loaf etc.

Even vegetarian sausage will do.

On the night we are looking for some guys to step up into teams for the bake off.

Children's decorating tables available  
And bar

£4 entry, children free  
All proceeds to St Mary's Church



## LETTON MILL DIG

Local farmers, David & Trixie Morgan, of Lower Letton farm near Walton mentioned to Leintwardine Historical Society that they had photocopies of 17<sup>th</sup> Century documents referring to a water powered corn mill and a good suspicion of where on the farm it was. Further research in the Harley Archives confirmed the existence of this mill in 1655 when it was leased by copyhold for the yearly rent of 10 shillings and two Capons. Also the Tithe Map of 1847 mentioned adjacent fields, Mill Meadow and Cott Meadow close by the site indicated by David. This site contained a mound and an adjacent deep depression that could have been a mill pool.

After further research the position of a sluice on the nearby stream and the line of a potential leet was found. With this information a Geophysics Survey was carried out in June this year. Two systems were used, Twin Probe Resistivity and Fluxgate Magnetometry. This would enable results to be compared with each other. It was a fun day with members of the Society imitating the infamous Time Team. Our Leader, Dave Thornley, actually worked on that program but was upstaged by a certain Soap Star who hogged the limelight whilst never lifting a trowel.

Results of the survey were finally correlated and volunteers assembled on site early in October. The first trench was cut, turf being hacked back and, hooray! immediate archaeology. This included the rim of a Lingenware pot plus the base of a clay pipe identified as coming from the Pipe Aston manufactory. Next day Trench 2 was cut and even more treasures emerged. These even included parts of a Rhenish 'bellarmaine' bottle. Obviously our area was quite cosmopolitan in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century! Also emerging was evidence of a cobbled floor under the turf on top of the mound, foundation walls to the east side and a more vertical wall against the pool. An isolated section of well built drystone wall was also discovered within a hedge. Intriguing and mysterious. Part of the revetments for a bridge over the leet? On the last day of digging what could be three teeth emerged, each over 30mm long. The remains of a 17<sup>th</sup> hog-roast maybe?

This years dig has now just ended and

the trenches are being covered up. It is time for the discoveries to be mulled over and analysed before we return for more exploration next year. For those interested more information on the history of Letton Mill can be found on the Leintwardine Historical Society's website or on their Facebook page. Doubtless volunteers will be welcome come Spring!

*Steve Sherring*

## FARMING COLUMN

The settled autumn weather we've enjoyed seems to have been replaced with something stormier and more unsettled recently. Most farmers have had some reasonable weather for the corn harvest and planting winter crops, which by now will hopefully be making use of the moisture and mild temperatures to shoot through and get going before the colder winter months. There also looks to be some good fodder crops which will soon be grazed by growing lambs or overwintering ewes as a traditional home-grown winter feed.

You might have noticed ewe's backs turning colour in the fields around the valley in recent weeks as the tupping season is well underway. Some farmers apply a paint called raddle, or crayons held in harnesses to the tups so that as they serve the ewe it leaves a tell tale mark on her back. This can be very useful to give farmers an idea of when the ewes will lamb in 147 days time (or 5 months less 5 days as I usually remember it). The colours will usually be changed at various points during the tupping season so it is possible to tell the later lambers from earlier ones, and also confirm whether the tups have been working properly. This year I seem to have gone for a very autumnal colour scheme, with yellow and orange for the earlier ewes and red for the later ones, so hopefully the sheep will brighten up even the dullest of November days!

Sheep and cattle prices have stayed amazingly good all year. The lamb trade usually dips around now as more lambs fatten and come onto the market but this year it's held pretty firm, nobody I've spoken to really knows why, but are happy to take it while it lasts! Unfortunately the good livestock prices are becoming overshadowed by the rising cost of inputs such as feed and fertiliser. If this continues might make for some tricky choices next Spring.

Ewe and tup sales have mostly finished for the season now and it's been great they have gone ahead this year pretty much as normal (save for a few token bottles of hand sanitiser littered about!) These autumn sales are not just vital for setting prices and giving farmers good choice of stock, but also a social event and a chance to catch up with people. Ewes have been very expensive to buy making up to and over the £200 mark for the best yearling ewes (ewes born in Spring 2020), driven mainly by the good lamb and cull ewe prices, although some of the later sales have apparently been a bit more reasonable as people get stocked up.

Just when I thought the world couldn't get any more mad I read in a Tesco magazine that 1<sup>st</sup> Nov is "World Vegan Day", along with its obligatory recipes including imported nuts, avocados and Gogi Berries (whatever they are!) all in the name of "saving the planet". How anyone can think they are being environmentally responsible by eating imported proteins, often from drought-stricken areas of the world rather than consuming locally sourced meat and milk raised mainly on grass I'll never know! I will be celebrating world vegan day by eating a nice leg of grass-fed lamb with vegetables out of the garden and would argue that is a far more sustainable and nutritious meal than any of the highly processed vegan products on Tesco's shelves. As they say, the sheep and cows are happy to be vegan, so you don't have to be!

*Wayne Davies*

## DIARY

**Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov:** 10am-12 noon, Crafts and Kits Open Morning - Contact [constance@craftsandkits.co.uk](mailto:constance@craftsandkits.co.uk).

**Tues 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 7pm:** WI AGM

**Wed 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 7pm:** V Hall Committee

**Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 10.50am:** Remembrance Service

**Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Nov 6:15pm:** Food and Flicks 'The Italian Job'

**Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Dec:** 'Bake off'

**Tues 14<sup>th</sup> Dec:** 7pm WI

**Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Dec:** Arts Alive, 'Box of Frogs'

**Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Dec 11am:** Carol Service

**Sat 25<sup>th</sup> 9.30am:** Christmas Service

**arts  
alive**