

# The Redlake

No 62

Spring 2023

Welcome to the Spring edition of The Redlake newsletter for 2023. Spring is slowly unfurling around us although temperatures are still on the chilly side as lambs start to fill the fields. We have had some sad losses in the valley this winter, but look forward now to the longer, softer days of summer. Thank you to all who contribute to this newsletter and help distribute it.

## The Sturchley Trust

The **Sturchley Trust** is a small charity whose income is derived from land rents from a parcel of land in Chapel Lawn placed in trust by William Sturchley on 2nd November 1730. The Trust was instigated for the relief of poverty in Chapel Lawn, Clun and the surrounding area.

Today the purpose of the charity is the relief of the inhabitants of the counties of Shropshire and Herefordshire, and particularly those living within the settlements of **Clun, New-castle-on-Clun, Chapel Lawn, Bucknell and surrounding areas**, through providing, or providing financial assistance towards the purchase of, basic subsistence items. Such subsistence items can include: food, water, clothing, heating, power, rent, household white goods (cooker, fridge, washing machine), sanitary products, baby care products, transportation.

The Trustees are always on the look-out for anyone who might need financial assistance from the Sturchley Trust. In these difficult times for many we are more than happy to receive any requests for funding for anyone in the area for the trustees to consider, which of course would be treated in the strictest confidence.

Please contact: The Trustees via email: [SturchleyTrust@proton.me](mailto:SturchleyTrust@proton.me)



**CHAPEL LAWN**

**VILLAGE PICNIC LUNCH**

For our community to come together and celebrate to mark the Coronation of King Charles III

**SUNDAY 7TH MAY**  
**from 12.30pm onwards**

Please bring buffet food to share

**BAR WITH REAL ALE**

Coronation Crown Competition for Children  
Fancy dress optional

Contact Christine Rogers 07780 728812 [christine@techsyst.co.uk](mailto:christine@techsyst.co.uk)

## Fond memories of Mrs Jocelyn Williams, our primary school teacher

Mrs Williams, as she was to us, died 20 February 2023, aged 92. She was Joce to many, my Mum, Annie Middleton for one, with whom she was friends for many years.

Mrs Williams was born at Underhill, Lloyney in 1930. She attended Llanfair Waterdine Primary School, Presteigne Grammar School and Hereford Teacher Training College, and then taught at Knighton Primary School, alongside her older sister Brenda.

Sheila Davies said - I first met Mrs Williams (which I always called her), I guess because she was my infant teacher (2nd class), at Knighton Primary School. She was then Miss Jones and very well liked. In 1956 Joce married local lad Jim Williams. They had 3 children, Sally, Simon and Katy. In 1965 she started teaching at Chapel Lawn Primary School and stayed until the school closed in 1985, when she was Head.

Kathy Groom, (nee Adams) said - She was such a lovely lady. I used to take mum (Connie) up for a cuppa. She always tried to get me to call her Joce but it didn't sound right so she was always Mrs Williams to me. Daughter Claire remembers her using Bobby Bunny as a teaching tool for maths, English or anything else.

"The Lawners" were put through their paces for Bucknell Sports by Joce with her skirt tucked up in her tights. Cathy Stead said - I always remember Mrs Williams would show us how to do the long jump, she used to train us in the back field behind the hall, Mr Adams (Anne's dad) used to make the long jump pit and running lanes.

Colleen Henderson has a memory that may need some verification! - Mrs Williams organised for us to see The New Seekers at Bucknell Memorial Hall. It was the first 'gig' I ever went to. Whenever one of their songs comes on the radio, I always think of her. Colleen would love to know if this is correct or not?!

John Richards (Jack) says - I remember a big collage we had a hand in putting together, it was on the wall in the Dr Surgery in Knighton for years. Can't remember what the picture was though. I remember not wanting to go to school one day because I wasn't getting any stickers, think that was soon remedied and I began getting them if I earned them or not.

Ella Edwards (nee Wilding) remembers the hand bell that Mrs W would ring on the step to mark the end of break. - I always think of her in stylish 70s sweaters skirts and heels. Plus all the coaching and effort of putting on the Christmas show, handmade costumes and recorder playing, definitely Mrs W's thing. Auntie Connie on the piano — what a team!

The comment from all that contacted me was that she was a lovely, lovely lady. Joce has figured in my life throughout, from school and beyond. Always there, and it was always so lovely to see her. The last time I saw her was at her grandson Tom's wedding in July 2022, when she looked so glamorous and so happy. A very special lady indeed.

Rosemary Thomas (Middleton)

## Jim Robinson

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Jim Robinson, of Quarry Farm, Pentre. We hope in the next edition to have an article about Jim and his life in the Redlake Valley.

## May Stead

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Stead family at the loss of May who sadly died on the 27th March. Her memories to most of us in the Redlake Valley is living at Upper Lye farm and her love of horses. (Christine Oakley)

## Notes from Clun Town Council with Chapel Lawn

### Visit of the High Sheriff to the Parish

March saw the Sheriff of Shropshire, Selina Graham, spend a morning visiting St George's School, the Memorial Hall and Trinity Hospital alongside our Deputy Lieutenant Katherine Garnier, Ryan Davies and myself. A reception then followed at the Fire Station where Selina met members of the local community who volunteer their time across the parish to the benefit of the whole community. Sadly, due to lack of time, Selina was unable to visit Chapel Lawn personally, but she met with Chapel Lawn and Redlake Valley community members.

### EV Charging Points

During March two electric vehicle charging points were installed at The Bridge car park at Clun which caused a mixed reaction, in particular, from the council itself. The potential loss of four parking spaces from an already overstretched car park raises questions as to the best site for these. However, we must be grateful that funding for this facility has come to the parish rather than on larger towns in the shire.

### New Website

Good progress has been made adding content and functionality to the website which should enable it to go live to coincide with the Parish Council AGM in May (date to be announced).

### Coronation Events

There will be an unveiling of a commemorative plaque at the Town Hall on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May. This is being kindly supplied by the Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire to all towns in the county. More details to follow.

To support the Chapel Lawn Village Hall event over the weekend, I have raided the Town Hall bunting supplies and will be involved in putting it up in and around the hall.

Mark Duffee, Councillor, Chapel Lawn Ward  
Councillor Chapel Lawn Ward  
mark.duffee@cluntowncouncil.gov.uk

## Farming column: Wayne Davies

Most farmers around the valley are heaving a huge sigh of relief at this time of year as lambing comes to an end and hopefully there are now far more lambs skipping around in the fields than there are causing problems in the shed (although we still have a few!). The lambs outside still cause their fair share of work though and keeping them healthy for the first few weeks of their lives can be a challenge, especially if the weather isn't great. The ewes are still being fed cake every morning to keep them milking and in good condition until the grass starts growing properly. This is also the opportunity to check the lambs all have full bellies, are OK and are in the field they are supposed to be in, with crook at the ready if anything needs catching and treating.

Despite the wet and cold spring our bit of lambing hasn't gone too badly overall. We have had a lot more singles than usual, and fewer triplets which I think has been pretty common due to the lack of grass last year putting pressure on the ewes and affecting scanning results. However it has made lambing much easier in many ways as singles are usually stronger lambs which cause less problems and their mothers don't need as much to eat so we've used less feed, but we will surely miss those extra lambs when it comes to selling them in the Autumn.

### Hedges

The hedges we pleached last year are coming back into life and new shoots are appearing which is nice to see and makes you feel like it must be spring even though the temperatures feel more like winter! There is an old saying that the weather always comes cold when the blackthorn is in flower known as the "Blackthorn Winter". This definitely seems to be the case at the moment and normally happens every year too, reminding us that although it might look like spring, winter still isn't far behind us! This spring has definitely shown the value of thick hedges, saving many lambs from the worst of the weather on those wet and windy days we've had.

### BPS Payments

They have released a few more details about the farm payments that will replace the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) after it finishes in 2027, although there are still a lot more questions than answers! The BPS payment makes up a big part of farming incomes, especially for upland beef and sheep farms, so whatever replaces it will be make or break for many farmers as well as all the other businesses that rely on them. Although there's still a long way to go, I think there are some glimmers of hope with the new system which will be called the Sustainable Farming Incentive, (trying to be optimistic it's perhaps a good start that it at least has "farming" in the title?!).

This makes payments for things such as good soil management and growing clovers in grass swards to help save

fertiliser costs, which are positive things for food production and the environment and are things that many farmers do anyway. Farmers will be able to apply for this from this year to help top up money lost from the BPS as it is phased out.

Personally I am not too sorry to see the back of BPS, which seemed to be basically a payment for nothing more than owning land rather than farming it, benefiting the big boys, and rich landowners at the expense of the tenant and smaller family farmer. It hasn't done anything to benefit food security and very little for environmental protection, often not even getting to those farmers that need the support most, being generally swallowed up by their landlords on the way.

Hopefully the new system will get the balance right between the growing need for farmers to produce food and protect the environment, both of which rely upon the other. Too much focus on the environment and you end up having to import food from elsewhere, often places with far lower environmental standards than ourselves. Too much focus on food production and you end up encouraging damage to our own countryside, and you can't grow decent crops anyway if the water is polluted and the soil has washed down the river! Whether the new system will achieve this balance, whilst also being fair to farmers of all types and sizes remains to be seen, but it's pretty important for all of us, so let's be hopeful that eventually it will!



## Quillet progress this winter

Once a month this winter, hardy volunteers from the Redlake Valley Community Benefit Society have been spending a Sunday morning in the Society's two quillets. Aside from general maintenance, the main task has been to extend the network of paths and rustic steps that take you from the public footpath deeper and higher into the wood. If you're planning to walk across to see the bluebells this month, do make a point of trying out the new paths as well.

## Village Hall events diary

### Chapel Lawn Village Hall Annual Meeting Tuesday 16th May 8.00pm in the Village Hall

A warm invitation to all residents of Chapel Lawn and Obley to come and hear what has been achieved in the past year and to have your say about plans for the future.

And also enjoy a drink and nibbles on the house!  
Di Cosgrove 01547 530347 [deedee151@hotmail.com](mailto:deedee151@hotmail.com)

### The 309's Arts Alive, Live Music Event New date Saturday 30th September



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

Apologies that snowy weather meant cancelling the performance planned for 11th March.

## Regular Chapel Lawn groups

### Chapel Lawn WI

Every 2nd Tuesday in the month at 7pm. We are a small, very friendly group with a varied and interesting program of speakers and activities. You are most welcome to come along and get to know us. Your first 3 meetings are on the house to give you a chance to find whether you would like to join. Contact Christine – 07780 728812 / 01547 530258 / [chrisc@techsyst.co.uk](mailto:chrisc@techsyst.co.uk)

### Art Classes - Every Tuesday, 10 am - 12pm

£12 per session. All abilities welcome. For more information please email [gretchenind@gmail.com](mailto:gretchenind@gmail.com)

### Chapel Lawn Book Group

A friendly group that meets on the last Monday of the month, 7pm at Well House in Chapel Lawn. Contact Di on [deedee151@hotmail.com](mailto:deedee151@hotmail.com) / 01547 530347

## Notes from St Mary's Church

St Mary's held a successful outdoor **Good Friday children's afternoon** with lots of "eggs-cited" children and their carers. The sun shone throughout. The activities included a chocolate egg hunt, making Easter gardens for the church, an Easter story trail with quiz, a bible storytelling in church, all followed by Christine's homemade hot cross buns and drinks. We were pleased that Rev. Martin led our Easter Day Holy Communion service.

### Church services in May

No church service at Chapel Lawn on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May. Instead there will be a Benefice-wide service marking the King's coronation at Clungunford church at 10.00am.

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May – Morning Prayer service lead by members of the PCC.

Future services continue to be 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month.

**Butty Van on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May** at the Bevan's farm, Llanfair Waterdine. Farmers and land workers within the local area are welcome for a social get-together to enjoy sausage and bacon baps with mugs of coffee/tea and cake in a local farm barn.

Butty Van takes place from 10.30am to 12.00 noon. Come when you can and come dressed just as you are. It will be posted on Clun and Bucknell's Facebook page.

For more information contact Janet Tudor on [jetstream4000@gmail.com](mailto:jetstream4000@gmail.com)

## Have you got eagle eyes for Chapel Lawn history?

Patrick Cosgrove is working on a social history of Chapel Lawn and the Redlake Valley as told by extracts from the Clun Valley Parish Magazines of the 1890s. He is almost at the point of finding a publisher but before then would love to hear from someone who would be prepared to proof-read for him. The only qualifications are a sharp eye, and a good standard of written English. The document is about 70 pages in length. If sufficient copies are sold, any profit would go to St. Mary's Church. If you spotted the deliberate error in this notice, you might be just the person, so please get in touch with Patrick on 01547 530347 or [pccosgrove@icloud.com](mailto:pccosgrove@icloud.com).