

# WHEATLAND NEWS

February 2023



*In Stottesdon Churchyard*

**News from the Diocese of Hereford and the  
17 Parishes around Stottesdon, Ditton Priors  
and Highley**

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# Editorial

A belated Happy New Year to all our readers.

The seasonal festivities of Christmas and New Year seem distant memories now we are at the beginning of February. Thoughts are already turning to Easter and the lead up to Good Friday throughout Lent. The Coronation of King Charles III has resulted in an extra Bank Holiday on 8th May and groups are forming to plan the celebrations for this occasion.

At this time of economic stringency the community spirit is even more important to find ways in which we can help each other to maintain our health and find ways to promote a positive outlook for the year to come. Spring is not far away and the days are gradually drawing out, the magnolias are beginning to show the first buds of their magnificent flowers and the birds can be heard singing in the gardens. Snow drops will soon be peaking above the ground and heralding the first signs that warmer weather is on its way!

Mark Daborn draws our attention to the required Safeguarding training.

All members of PCCs, PCC officers, authorised lay workers, are asked to do safeguarding training at Foundation Level. This can be done online through the Church of England website. For those who prefer face-to-face training, there will be a Deanery training session on Saturday 25th February from 10 am to 12:30, we hope at Chelmarsh Village Hall, on the way between Bridgnorth and Highley. Please – this is important! As many as possible of PCC members need to do the training one way or the other, so that there is a proper awareness of what keeping people safe in our churches really involves.

There is a spate of thefts of defibrillators in the Wheatland area. Please will everyone be alert, keep an eye on these, and if you see any strange or unusual activity, then REPORT this to the police on 101 unless the theft is actually happening as you observe it, in which case it would be 999. It is heartbreaking to find an empty box.



And to show that life isn't really all work and no play, our WN typist has been on a little excursion... see page 16.

We look forward to hearing about the arrangements for your parishes and reports of events as and when they occur – please send your reports to the contacts listed on this page for inclusion in WN. The parish coffee mornings are getting off to a lively start this month, and for Peaky Blinders fans there is an evening at Cleobury North Village Hall on 25 February that promises to be great fun.

## Ed

The **deadline** for contributions for the March 2023 edition of WN will be **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Brown Clee and Ditton Priors  | Jutta Langham, 01746-712551 - <a href="mailto:rll.langham@btinternet.com">rll.langham@btinternet.com</a>   |
| Aston Botterell, Cleobury North & Burwarton, Wheathill & Loughton   | Alison Greenan, 01746-787032 - <a href="mailto:greenan6qx@btinternet.com">greenan6qx@btinternet.com</a>  |
| Chetton   | Pam Downing - <a href="mailto:pamdowning61@gmail.com">pamdowning61@gmail.com</a>   |
| Highley   | Revd Val Smith – <a href="mailto:revval14@gmail.com">revval14@gmail.com</a>  |
| Glazeley & Deuxhill   | Marion Corfield - <a href="mailto:marion.corfield@talktalk.net">marion.corfield@talktalk.net</a><br>Revd David Poyner - <a href="mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk">D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk</a> |
| Billingsley   | Revd David Poyner - <a href="mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk">D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk</a>   |
| Farlow, Sidbury, Middleton Scriven, Cleeton St Mary, and Silvington | Chris Tibbits - <a href="mailto:Chris@stottystores.co.uk">Chris@stottystores.co.uk</a>   |



## Diocese of Hereford

### February Parish Newsletter from the Archdeacon of Ludlow



#### **Hello Everyone**

One of the most moving services I have ever attended took place on Ash Wednesday 2009, in Westminster Abbey. I was an ordinand, in training for ministry, and was on placement at the Abbey. As the choir sang the achingly beautiful setting of Psalm 51 “Miserere mei, Deus” (Have mercy on me, God) by Allegri, complete with perfectly piercing top C from the chorister given the solo that year, we all went forward.

The Dean said the solemn words, “Remember you are dust, and to dust you will return,” as he marked my forehead with the sign of the cross, using ashes from the previous year’s palm crosses.

It was a new experience to me, as the imposition of ashes hadn’t been part of the tradition I’d known up to then. I confess I was overwhelmed - by the depth of my human sinfulness, the depth of God’s mercy, and the depth of the love of Christ in going to the cross for the sin of the world, including mine.

Far from being frightening, or leading me to despair, those words, “Remember you are dust, and to dust, you will return,” seemed in that moment to be strangely comforting. They reminded me of words from Psalm 39, where the Psalmist says to God, “Show me, Lord, my life’s end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting my life is.” We, humans, are frail and fragile creatures of the creator – a truth we don’t always recognise or accept. To dwell on that truth during Lent, holding it together with the equal and opposite truth that we are, as the title of a book says, “Beloved Dust” seems to me a good spiritual discipline for these 40 days.

For by the grace of God in Christ, we are both fragile and strong, mortal and immortal. We are dust, and to dust, we will return, yes. But that’s not the end of the story, for from dust we shall rise, clothed with life and immortality, to live with God eternally.

As we move through Lent together, I invite you to take time to meditate on these paradoxical truths: that we are creatures, limited, finite, and weak, and that we are held in the hands of an unlimited, infinite, and strong God; that our time in this life is brief, and that our time with God in the world to come is eternal; that we are as humans deeply flawed, and we are deeply loved – and that in the cross with which we are marked in baptism, and may be marked on Ash Wednesday, all of that comes together.

Fiona

#### The Bishop’s weekly video message

Bishop Richard continues his series of short talks exploring the meaning of the Lord’s Prayer.

This message, and all his earlier messages can be seen on [YouTube](#) and on the [Diocese website](#).



## Messages from the Rural Dean



As the new year comes in with many churches without vicars, I continue to be impressed by the way that volunteers around the deanery have stepped up and worked really hard to keep things going. Not just going, but actually flourishing in some places. By now, Alveley will have a new Rector, Highley is due in April and Brown Clee is being readvertised. Bridgnorth is still in preparation stages. These things don't go quickly!

When we reconvene Deanery Synod, there will be some really interesting things to talk about for the future development of all the parishes and benefices around here, and I do urge parishes to make sure they have a Deanery Synod Representative and those reps to come to the meetings and keep up with what is being planned!

Meanwhile, we are very aware of Safeguarding, which is the practical outworking of Jesus' command to love one another. All members of PCCs, PCC officers, authorised lay workers, are asked to do safeguarding training at Foundation Level. This can be done online through the Church of England website. For those who prefer face-to-face training, there will be a Deanery training session on Saturday 25th February from 10 am to 12:30, we hope at Chelmarsh Village Hall, on the way between Bridgnorth and Highley. Please – this is important! As many as possible of PCC members need to do the training one way or the other, so that there is a proper awareness of what keeping people safe in our churches really involves.

Preb Mark Daborn

### Readings for February 2023

#### **February 5<sup>th</sup> – Third before Lent (Green)**

Isaiah 58:1-9a; Psalm 112; I Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

#### **February 12<sup>th</sup>: Second before Lent (Green)**

Genesis 1:1-2:3; Psalm 136; Romans 8:18-25; Matthew 6:25-end

#### **February 19<sup>th</sup> - Sunday next before Lent (Green)**

Exodus 24:12-end; Psalm 2; 2 Peter 1:16-end; Matthew 17:1-9

#### **February 26<sup>th</sup> - Lent 1 (Purple)**

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7; Psalm 32; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

#### **March 5<sup>th</sup> - Lent 2 (Purple)**

Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

# Saint of the Month - St Aethelberht

By Preb Mark Daborn

I am glad to say there is an opportunity in February to return to Anglo-Saxon England – **on 25th February we celebrate the feast of St. Æthelberht, the first Christian English king:**

In the year 597 AD, the Christian mission from Rome, sent by Pope Gregory the Great, and led by Augustine, landed at Thanet, in Kent. Æthelberht, the Anglo-Saxon king of Kent, came out to meet them – in the open, he insisted, to avoid being ensnared by magic – and was sufficiently impressed to allow the mission to settle in Canterbury, his capital, where the church of St. Martin was left in a ruinous state from Roman times. Sometime over the next year, Æthelberht was baptised as the first Christian king of the Anglo-Saxon people.

Actually, this is a bit of a simplification. In the first place, Æthelberht was a Jute, descended from Hengist – that Hengist who came over with his brother Horsa at the invitation of Vortigern. The Jutish people settled in Kent, the Isle of Wight and some of the mainland opposite, as part of the migration of Germanic races to post-Roman Britain. Æthelberht was also no stranger to Christianity when he heard about it from Augustine. His wife, Queen Bertha, was a Frank, daughter of the Frankish king Charibert. The Franks had been Christians for around a century, since the time of Clovis, and it was a condition of the marriage that Bertha should be accompanied by her own household bishop, Liudhard.

It was perhaps no accident that Pope Gregory had, therefore, chosen Kent as the target for the mission to England. The famous story of his seeing the fair angelic boys in the slave market in Rome who turned out to be Angles specifies that they came from Deira, part of the northern kingdom of Northumbria; but Gregory, although perhaps an idealist, was also a pragmatist. A Kentish king married to a Christian Frankish princess and in contact with the Christian countries of mainland Europe was much more likely to be amenable to the message than the Angles perched on the edge of the North Sea.

In the same way, it might have suited Æthelberht to convert to Christianity for all sorts of practical political reasons connected with Continental alliances. This is not to diminish his faith or his influence – God does, indeed, move in mysterious ways. Æthelberht was the most powerful English king of his time, described by Bede as having overlordship over the southern kingdoms, translated in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as holding the honour of being Bretwalda, or Britain-ruler. He was responsible for the conversion to the faith of his son-in-law Saeberht king of Essex and of Rædwald king of the East Angles – whose memorial is thought to be the Sutton Hoo ship burial, and who succeeded Æthelberht as Bretwalda.

Dates in the Dark Ages are confusing things and rather muddled – an art rather than a science. Æthelberht either lived for 56 years, or was king for that period; and died in 616 or 618 AD. After this time there was a period of apostasy, but the roots of faith had driven deep enough in fertile soil for Christianity to fight back, regain lost ground, and move steadily forwards. And the spiritual head of the Anglican Communion still, of course, has his headquarters in Æthelberht's capital!

MD

# The United Benefice of Brown Clee

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Rector: vacant</b><br><br><p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please contact your Churchwarden, as below.<br/>         In emergency, contact Preb. Mark Daborn, Rural Dean, on 01746-718127</i></p> |   |   |
| <b>St John the Baptist, Ditton Priors, and Holy Trinity, Wheathill &amp; Loughton</b><br>CHURCHWARDENS<br>Carole Smith: 01746-712474<br>Mark Smith: 01746-712394                                     | <b>St Michael &amp; All Angels, Aston Botterell</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Anne Preece: 01746-787237                        |   |
| <b>St Giles, Chetton</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Sheila Millington: 01746-789443  | <b>SS Peter &amp; Paul, Cleobury North</b><br>CHURCHWARDENS<br>Mike Bradbury: 01746-787676<br>Jane Bufton: 01746-787298 | <b>All Saints, Neenton</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Bobbie Jarvis: 01746-787093 |

## Brown Clee Group News

### Services in Brown Clee Churches during February

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February – third before Lent</b></p> <p>09:45            HC            Ditton Priors</p> <p><b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February – second before Lent</b></p> <p>09:45            HC            Ditton Priors</p> <p>11:30            HC            Chetton</p> <p><b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February – Sunday before Lent</b></p> <p>09:45            HC            Ditton Priors</p> <p>11:30            HC            Neenton</p> | <p><b>Sunday February 26<sup>th</sup> – Lent 1</b></p> <p>08:30            HC            Ditton Priors</p> <p>09:45            HC            Chetton</p> <p>11:30            HC            Cleobury North</p> <p><b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March – Lent 2</b></p> <p>09:45            HC            Ditton Priors</p> <p>11:30            HC            Aston Botterell</p> |
| <p>HC</p> <p><i>Holy Communion</i></p>   |  |

## Group Choir

The choir meets for practice on Thursday evenings at 7pm in Ditton Priors church. For more information please contact Mike Teague on 01746-789592.

## A new Vicar for Brown Clee – Update as at 7<sup>th</sup> January 2023

The latest news is that we are advertising in the Church Times for 4 weeks commencing Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January with a closing date of Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023.

Mike Teague is more optimistic that this advertising round will produce a positive result because:

- Two people have already expressed an interest and are expected to apply.
- The diocese has found another half time role which can be done alongside ours, meaning that the field of applicants is no longer restricted to people looking for a half time job.

Interviews are booked for March 9<sup>th</sup> 2023.

**Please will you support us by praying for the right person to be called by God to be our new vicar?**

Mike will be glad to answer any questions you may have – his number is 01746-789592.

**Mike Teague**

**1st Brown Clee Brownies, Guides and the leaders** would like to thank all who gave so generously when they went carol singing in early December. We wish everyone a peaceful and healthy 2023.

### **Leprosy Mission–Used Stamps.**

Over the years the collection of used stamps has raised thousands of pounds to assist in transforming lives of people across Africa and Asia suffering from Leprosy. However, despite good stewardship of funds it has become evident that the value of used stamps has greatly reduced. Now that bar-coded stamps have been introduced stamp value has been further decreased. Sadly, this has reduced the value of used stamps even more to the extent The Leprosy Mission has made the tough decision to wind down their used stamps operation.

**In view of this disappointing news I ask that no more used stamps be left in churches for my collection.**

On behalf of The Leprosy Mission, I would like to **thank** everyone for their support over the past years.

**Babs Brown. Leprosy Mission local coordinator.**

### **Benefits of the blissful, brilliant Buzzard!**

*Sally Russell writes:*

Just after 9am on Friday mornings, at the end of a grassy track near Cleobury North, a cheerful minibus, driven by licensed and experienced volunteers, collects and carries me all the way, through our beautiful, rural lanes, to Ludlow. There, I am free to spend more than two hours, visiting the library, meeting friends for breakfast, and acquiring a fair amount of family shopping, before being returned to my home by lunchtime.

On the way there and back, we pick up and deliver safely home, three or four regulars who, like so many others now, no longer wish to drive and park in Ludlow.





This is a very local community service and we, who have been privileged to use it for many years, feel that others (especially newcomers to Ditton Priors) may not be aware of its presence.

Phone Shrewsbury Dial a Ride on **01743-450270** Mon – Fri 09:30 – 15:00, for details of the amazing Buzzard’s weekly, morning trips ... to Bridgnorth (Mondays) Craven Arms (Thursdays) and Ludlow (Fridays) to join our happy group of passengers! ... There is also a monthly voyage to the centre of Shrewsbury, returning home after lunch, for less than one third of the taxi fare from Ditton Priors.

## Ditton Priors News

**Marjorie Jones writes:**

### **From Ditton Priors Register**

- 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022 - Isobel Williams funeral and burial
- 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023 - Desney Wooldridge funeral service followed by burial at Neenton

**May they rest in peace.**

### **Church Flower Rota**

The rota is now up in the church porch. If you have anything to celebrate or wish to remember a loved one or just like to see flowers in church – please put your name on the rota. Vases and water are provided. Enquiries 01746 787457.

### **Friends of St John (Building Trust)**

Subscriptions to the Friends for 2023 were due on 1<sup>st</sup> January. We hope everyone will be kind enough to join again. Anything you feel able to donate may be given to Margaret Griffiths or left in church or at Parker Motors.

**Thank you.**

### **Cleaning rota**

- |                                    |                                      |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ● Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> February  | Mr & Mrs Graham Russell              |
| ● Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> February | Mrs Shirley Wall & Mrs Maureen Lloyd |
| ● Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup> February | Mrs Jennifer Lowe & Mrs Debbie Jones |
| ● Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> February | Mr & Mrs Dennis Griffiths            |
| ● Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup> March     | Mr & Mrs John Ballard                |

### **St John the Baptist 100 Club results**

#### **December**

- £100 - Richard Jones
- £20 - Kate Casswell
- £10 - Pam Gennard
- £5 each to Emily Mitchel, Maureen Lloyd, Dr & Mrs M Kirk

#### **January**

- £20 - Pam Joynson
- £10 - Caroline Howson
- £5 each to David Lowe, Doreen Massey, Sally Manton.

**NEW YEAR’S BLESSING TO YOU ALL**

## Christmas Services

It was good to see so many people in church over the Christmas period.

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December we welcomed BROWN CLEE SCHOOL and the LITTLE EXPLORERS' NURSERY together with parents and grandparents for their Christmas service, led by Mark Daborn and supported by the 'Open the Book' team who presented a nativity play – a packed church bursting with the joys of Christmas.

The crib service on the 24<sup>th</sup> December was well received followed by the Christmas Eucharist at 11pm.

## Service cover

We have been most fortunate over these last 18 months to be able to keep all our services going as usual. Mark Daborn has played a huge part in all this, providing cover from numerous clergy, and taking services, funerals, meetings, etc. himself. His help and advice are invaluable and worth of several A\*\*\* **THANK YOU MARK.**

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who has supported us over the previous 12 months. It has been good to welcome newcomers into our church and our friendly community. You will remember that this time last year I reported a deficit of £7,000 in our church funds, due mostly to covid restrictions and fears, and to little or no fundraising events.

I am pleased to report that this year we have just about broken even, due to the hard work of fundraising. Huge thanks to all who have contributed – too many to name, but they know who they are.

It is so wonderful to be able to socialise once more and to be able to support and encourage one another in whatever needs doing. The fellowship and companionship we feel urges us forward in hope and faith. THANK YOU!

## The Wheatland News Magazine

The printed copies of Wheatland news are still popular and this quality magazine is well appreciated. Bobbie and Caroline do an excellent job of editing and we give thanks for their dedication, together with those from each parish who forward the News to them. We must also remember the distributors who collect subscriptions and deliver copies each month. In Ditton Priors we delivered about 130 copies in 2022, reduced now to about 100 as many are picking it up online. Well done to everyone and thanks from all who read it.

## Future events

Nothing has been firmly planned yet, but we hope to have a COFFEE MORNING in FEBRUARY and a LENT LUNCH in March.

### First Saturday of the month coffee mornings:

- Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February
- Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March
- Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April

## Wheathill & Loughton News

Marjorie Jones writes

### **Church services during February**

- ✝ There are no services at Wheathill or Loughton during February. Weather permitting, services will resume in March.

### **Christmas services**

- **Carol Service** – unfortunately this was cancelled, due mainly to bad weather.
- **Christmas Eve** – The 7pm communion service was well attended with 18 adults and 2 children, led by Revd. John Daniels and supported by a small choir and Mike's music.

### **A plea from Ruby**

Is anyone willing and able to help clean Wheathill Church? We are desperate for people to clean. We also need a caretaker. If anyone is interested please ring Ruby on 01584-823234.

### **Congratulations**

To Gill and Martin Rollings on the safe arrival of their grandson Oscar, born to their daughter Lindsey and son-in-law Andy.

## Burwarton and Cleobury North News

Thank you very much to all those who supported our Christmas social afternoon on 11<sup>th</sup> December. It was wonderful to see so many of you. The music and singing were lovely: thank you to Carol Radnor for playing the piano so beautifully.

We raised just over **£700** which will go towards the repairs of the church roof.

### **Lottery winners:**

- 1st: Glesni Thomas (granddaughter of Linda Green)
- 2nd: David Austin
- 3rd: Emily Wild

## Cleobury North & District Village Hall

CNVH remains open and available for hire. For enquiries about booking and using the hall, please call 01746-787093 and leave a message or send a TEXT MESSAGE to 07483-879763 (or both!).

### **Peaky Blinders, Molls and Mobsters come to CNVH on Saturday 25th February.**

This social event to raise funds for the village hall is being organised by the CNVH committee. Dress – optional, but period costume would be great! Music from Bluze Box. Tickets and further information will be available from Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February – watch out for more details on the posters, especially in Cleobury North Village Shop and other community notice boards.



## Burwarton & District WI 2023 Programme

Meets on the second Tuesday of the month at Cleobury North Village Hall, WV16 6RW, at 2.30pm unless otherwise stated on the programme.

This year's programme of meetings and events is shown below.

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>January 10th</b><br/>Social afternoon at Beech House,<br/>Ditton Priors with card games</p> <p><b>February 14th</b><br/>A double act cooking demonstration<br/>by Sue and Pippa</p> <p><b>March 14th</b><br/>A talk on Forensic Psychology<br/>given by Bev Harris<br/><i>Tea hostesses: Nerissa<br/>Hilary</i></p> <p><b>April 11th</b><br/>A musical afternoon with Gabrielle<br/>An open invitation for family<br/>and friends</p> | <p><b>May 9th</b><br/>Scarf tying demonstration<br/>with Julie Bailey.<br/>Bring your favourite scarf<br/><i>Tea hostesses: Rosemary<br/>Hilly</i></p> <p><b>June 13th</b><br/>Outing to the Ironworks, Oswestry</p> <p><b>July 11th</b><br/>Garden Party at Thorneycroft,<br/>Ditton Priors hosted by Nerissa</p> <p><b>August 8th</b><br/>Take a picnic to Marilyn's garden,<br/>North Eudon WV16 6AJ</p> | <p><b>Wednesday September 13th</b><br/>Paint a watercolour in an afternoon<br/>with Christine<br/><i>Tea hostesses: Pippa<br/>Helen</i></p> <p><b>October 10th</b><br/>Craft afternoon of weaving with<br/>Rosemary Jones<br/><i>Tea hostesses: Pam<br/>Sandra</i></p> <p><b>November 14th</b><br/>AGM</p> <p><b>December 12th</b><br/>Christmas lunch.</p> |
|---|---|---|

## Aston Botterell News

Anne Preece writes:

### February service 5<sup>th</sup> February - coffee morning

Our February services are not held in the church because of the cold weather. Instead, Anne and Dave Preece kindly invite you to a coffee morning at Middle House Farm. We would love to see you on **5th February at 11am.**

### Lottery winners

#### Christmas draw

- £50 - Gill Wilding No 172
- £20 - Richard Jones (Farlow) No 159
- £10 each to Walter Steele - No 76, to Richard & Gaynor Preece No 145, and to Philip Preece No 151

#### January

- £20: Rosemary Ashfield - No 135
- £10 each to Lynn Morgan - No 24 and Iris Meredith - No 73
- £5 each to Mike Vernon - No 229 and John & Linda Hughes - No 64

## A personal appreciation

We'd like to offer particular thanks this month, to Anne Preece, not only for her personal dedication to Aston Botterell Church, where she (the Church Warden) and her loyal team have welcomed local (and not so local) families for many years, but also for her extensive capacity for entertaining us! There are her memorable Cheyenne coach tours, which include magical escape opportunities for the elderly within our local community care homes, where Anne has also worked professionally.

Right now, her mother Dorothy is very poorly in hospital and Anne has been with her daily, as well as continuing to hold the threads of her busy, family farm life together. Dorothy (Williams) was a Land Girl of WW2, and came originally from Lytham St Anne's before becoming a farmer's wife at Loughton Hall.

Anne still found time to organise an amazing, informal coffee morning, with her loyal team, at Middle House Farm (the Church was too cold!) on New Year's Day in the beautifully Aga-warmed kitchen and lounge, with lively chatter and Janet's delicious shortbread and coffee. Several parishes were represented, and the gentlemen present made new friends and re-established old farming acquaintances whilst the ladies chatted animatedly, spread out on comfy sofas and waited upon in Anne's inimitable style!

This week she was supporting the Young (and not so young!) Farmers at their AGM. Daily, Anne seems to cover many rural miles (experience gained in continental coach driving, I guess), generally encouraging every individual she meets to wear a smile on their face and appreciate our beautiful countryside. *SAR.*

## Neenton News

### Bobbie Jarvis writes:

A belated Happy New Year to everyone!

A **big thankyou** to all those people who helped keep our church open during 2022 and to Preb Mark Daborn and the visiting ministers who have kept our services going throughout the interregnum. Special thanks to Dot Cartwright who led the Carol Service in December, to those who provided music for our services throughout the year, and to The Pheasant staff who supplied delicious seasonal refreshments following harvest and carol services.

## In Remembrance



**Desney Wooldridge** – a previous resident of Neenton. Desney and her late husband Terry were active and generous members of the community here, supporting the social and church events during their time in Neenton. Desney moved to Ditton Priors following the death of Terry in 1994, but has now returned to join him in the churchyard of All Saints Church.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Desney's family at this time.



*Portrait of Desney at a Neenton Village Christmas Dinner in the Pheasant Inn, and of Desney with Terry during a village day out at Wolverhampton races – both from the early 1990s.*

**Eileen Preece** – a resident of Faintree and was related to several local families. Eileen was an active member of Burwarton WI, of the original Ditton Priors Local History Group when it was formed just over 20 years ago, and a strong supporter of Neenton Church. She lived at Faintree with her husband, where they created a beautiful garden. Her collection of orchids was legendary, thriving in their conservatory from year to year.

Eileen’s funeral is at Tasley Church on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at 12noon. Our thoughts and prayers are with Frank and Eileen’s family.

**‘May they rest in peace and rise in glory’**

## Fun and Fundraising

The FaF group is planning lots of events for 2023, including around the Coronation. More information will be published in the March edition of WN.

### Neenton defibrillator



Our defibrillator was a very generous gift to the village from a member of our community.

We were devastated to find that this was one of those that has been targeted for vandalism and theft.

The loss of this potentially life-saving equipment has been reported to the police and to the Defibrillator coordinators.

## All Saints Tote – December and January

Congratulations to our winners

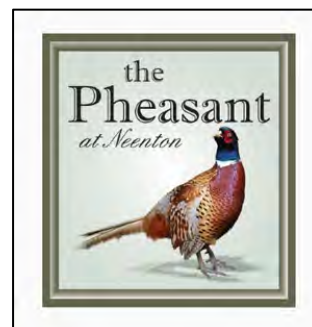
- |              |   |                                       |
|--------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| ▪ December - | 1 <sup>st</sup> prize – Ann Evans         | 2 <sup>nd</sup> prize – Sue Hale      |
| ▪ January –  | 1 <sup>st</sup> prize – Sarah Mottershead | 2 <sup>nd</sup> prize – Rachel Munday |

## The Pheasant at Neenton

### Opening times –

- 🌀 Wednesday / Thursday – 12 noon – 3pm, 6pm – 11pm
- 🌀 Friday / Saturday – 12 noon – 11pm
- 🌀 Sunday lunch 12 noon – 4.30pm

Please call 01746-787955 or email [info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk](mailto:info@pheasantatneenton.co.uk) to discuss times and your requirements or book direct on the website.



## Chetton News

From Pam Downing

### St Giles's Church and Parish

#### Services for December and January

- ✝ Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February, 11.30am – Holy Communion
- ✝ Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February, 9.45am – Holy Communion.

#### Flowers and cleaning

- Sheila and June.

#### 100 club

- £15.00 to Charles Gill
- £10.00 to Helen Dunn.

Just a reminder, the Hundred Club subs are now due, wonderful prizes of £15.00 and £10.00 each month!

### Looking forward in 2023

We are into February and well into the New Year. Looking back to our Christmas services - our Carol service was beautiful and it was so good to see so many in Church. Thank you, Mike and the Choir and Andy for playing the organ. Christmas day also saw one of our largest congregations for some time.

We are already planning several events for Chetton:

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 9am**, we are holding another breakfast at the Down, thank you Steve for your hospitality over last year. Let Sheila know if you wish to join us.

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April 10am - 12pm** Coffee morning in Church.

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June** - we are very pleased to announce that the Wyre Forest Big Band will be playing for us. Weather permitting, this will be held in the garden of Church House & guests can bring a picnic. This should be a really fun event, time as yet to be arranged.

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November** - Chetton Winter Fair. This will be a coffee morning along with many stalls with gifts, decorations etc. Although it's many months away, let Sheila know if you wish to book a table to sell your wares.

### Chetton Village Hall

For details of hall or equipment hire please telephone Sue on 789239.

### Flicks in the Sticks

"Operation Mincemeat" will be showing on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February, doors open for refreshments at 6.45pm, film commences at 7.30 pm Stars Colin Firth and Matthew Macfadyen. As refreshments are served beforehand, we will be running the film without an interval.

The March film choice is "Fishermen's Friends 2", on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March.

Please note that the films will now be shown without a break. Coffee, tea and cake will be available from 7pm, before the film starts. Tickets £4, refreshments £2.

### Exercise classes

- Pam's Pilates – 9.30 am on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.
- Chetton Active Friends – Seated exercise suitable for all, from 2.00pm on Mondays
- Zumba – with stretching, suitable for all, 2.30pm on Tuesdays.

**Chetton Folk Dance club**, meet at 7pm on the last Wednesday of the month.

**Chetton and Glazeley Women's Institute** meet at 7pm on the second Wednesday of the month.

# Wheatland Diary

|      |    |     |   |
|------|----|-----|---|
| Sat  | 4  | Feb | Coffee morning, Ditton Priors church  |
| Wed  | 8  | Feb | Chetton & Glazeley WI – see page 15   |
| Sat  | 11 | Feb | Coffee morning, Cleeton St Mary Church  |
| Sat  | 11 | Feb | Coffee morning, Middleton Scriven Church, 10:00 – 12:00                                   |
| Sat  | 11 | Feb | Middleton Scriven Christmas coffee morning in church – 10:00 – 12:00                      |
| Wed  | 15 | Feb | Flicks in the Sticks – Chetton VH, 7.00pm – Operation Mince meat - see page 15            |
| Sat  | 18 | Feb | Glazeley Church Breakfast at The Down – see page 17.                                      |
| Wed  | 22 | Feb | Chetton Folk Dance Club, 7pm Chetton VH. See page 15                                      |
| Sat  | 25 | Feb | Peaky Blinders, Molls and Mobsters social evening – CNVH – see page 11, and local posters |
| Sat  | 4  | Mar | Coffee morning, Ditton Priors church  |
| Sat  | 11 | Mar | Coffee morning, Middleton Scriven Church, 10:00 – 12:00                                   |
| Wed  | 15 | Mar | Flicks in the Sticks – Chetton VH, 7.00pm – Fishermen’s Friends 2 - see page 15           |
| Sat  | 18 | Mar | Chetton Church Breakfast at the Down – see page 15  |
| Sat  | 1  | Apr | Coffee morning, Ditton Priors church  |
| Sat  | 8  | Apr | Coffee morning, Middleton Scriven Church, 10:00 – 12:00                                   |
| Sat  | 29 | Apr | Coffee morning, Chetton Church – 10:00 – 12:00  |
| Sat  | 17 | Jun | Wyre Forest Big Band playing at Church House, Chetton. More details later. See page 15.   |
| Thur | 2  | Nov | Chetton Winter Fair – do you want to book a table? Contact Sheila – see page 15.          |

## The WN typist on tour

Mid-January probably wasn't the best time to head off from Shrewsbury for a long weekend in Lyme Regis – but it proved to have its compensations. I broke my journey at Bishop's Hull, a charming little village outside Taunton, where my room overlooked a little lane called Shutewater Hill – very apt given the floods that the whole country was experiencing.

The village church of [St Peter and St Paul](#) was a treat even though, wisely, it was locked. The website shows their wonderful stained glass. Parts of the building date back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and many alterations have happened over the years. Much renovation has been done recently with a big new porch including a splendid kitchen, and what look like cat doors into the main body of the church!



What particularly caught my eye, though, was one particular memorial stone, whose inscription reads: *“To the memory of Dr William Crotch, born 5<sup>th</sup> July 1775, died 29<sup>th</sup> December 1847. First Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, London, 1823 – 1832.*

*This stone erected January 1902 by the professors of that institution.”* Was he, I wondered, the inventor of the crotchet? Wikipedia hasn't confirmed this.....





# Severn Valley Group of Parishes

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Rector: Vacant</b><br><b>Revd Val Smith, Associate Minister</b><br><a href="mailto:revval14@gmail.com">revval14@gmail.com</a> |  | <b>Revd David Poyner, Associate Minister</b><br>Tel 01562 68638 (home) or 0121 204 3997 (work); email<br><a href="mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk">D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk</a> |
| <b>St Mary, Billingsley</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Vacant  | <b>St Peter, Chelmarsh</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Derek Arnold: 07956-844854 | <b>St Bartholomew, Glazeley</b><br>CHURCHWARDENS<br>Vacant  |

## Benefice news and services

### Church services for December and January

During the interregnum please check service times in the parish sections below, or with your churchwardens.

## Glazeley

### **Marion Corfield and David Poyner write:**

Our Christmas Service was a great success. The church was beautifully decorated by an enthusiastic team of volunteers, we had the best attendance I have seen in ages at the service itself (35) and afterwards we enjoyed refreshments at Laura and Andrew's house next to the church. Many thanks to all who helped and made this possible!

The saga of the church ceiling unfortunately continues. We hoped that this would be done in January. The architect has specified a particular brand of plaster board; this took a lot of hunting down by our contractor, who has now been told that it needs a special primer to paint it; there is a waiting list for this. But once he has got that, we should finally be able to replace the damaged panels. The next job will then be the heating....

The monthly breakfasts at the Down, in aid of Chetton and Glazeley churches have resumed after Christmas. The next breakfast for Glazeley has been penciled in for Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February. We also have a 100 Club, run jointly with Billingsley Church. Members pay £4 a month; there is a monthly draw and half the money raised through subscriptions is used for prizes (one first and two second) and the rest goes to support either Glazeley or Billingsley; you can nominate the church you wish to support for your contribution. Application forms are available at [100 Club - St Mary's Church Billingsley \(stmarys-billingsley.org.uk\)](#) or speak to me.

**David Poyner Tel 01562 68638; email**  
[D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk)

**Marion Corfield - 01746-764585**  
[marion.corfield@talktalk.net](mailto:marion.corfield@talktalk.net)

## Billingsley News

### **The Revd David Poyner writes:**

As with Glazeley, we had good attendances at our Christmas services. We battled with the weather for the outdoor carol singing at Lincoln Fields this year, but still had 11 people (as well as plenty of mince pies and mulled wine!). On Christmas Day, we had 20 people in church; you have to go back 20 years to find a comparable Christmas Day congregation. Many thanks to everyone who helped decorate the church or with refreshments at the carol singing. It is really encouraging to see good numbers supporting us!

The observant may note some repairs have been made to the gate of the churchyard. When the hedge was cut back in the autumn, this revealed that the gate post had rotted and was only being held in place by the hedge. With this being cut back, it was now in a precarious position. Plan A was to source a new gate post, whilst temporarily supporting the existing post with stakes driven in either side of it. However, whilst attempting to drive in the said stakes, it became apparent that the post had been set in concrete and so removing this is a serious undertaking. In the absence of a pneumatic drill to break up the concrete, the post has now been supported by stakes and tied back to the hedge. It is literally a lash-up, but it is the best your intrepid assistant curate can manage....

We are always looking for people who can help with the running of the church, either with paperwork or practical jobs or indeed by supporting the 100 Club (see Glazeley news for more details). You do not need to attend the church to help; we are grateful for any assistance offered! Please contact me if you are interested. We are small but very sociable...

**David Poyner – Associate Minister**

Tel 01562-68638 or 0780-100-9693

email [D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk](mailto:D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk)

Follow Billingsley on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/BillingsleyChurch/> or our websites, [www.st-marys-billingsley.org.uk](http://www.st-marys-billingsley.org.uk) , <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/10415/>



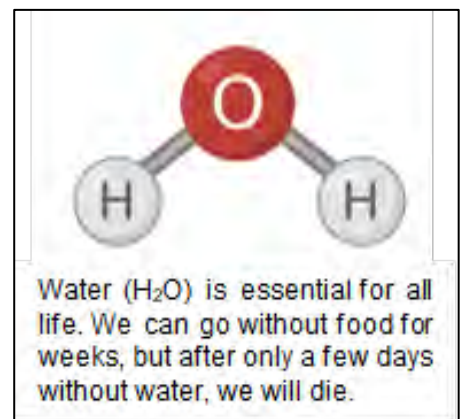
## Molecule of the Month – Aquaporin Water Channels

*By Professor Roslyn Bill*

**David Poyner explains:** Molecule of the Month this time is written by a colleague of mine, Professor Roslyn Bill. Ros is researching new methods of treating brain injury; now read on and perhaps remember her research in your prayers. *DP*

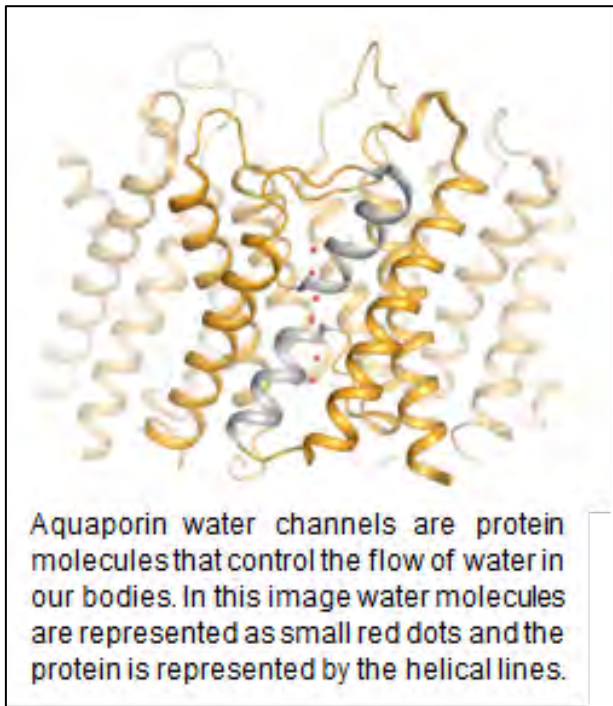
**W**ater is essential for all life on our planet and all organisms, including humans, are almost entirely composed of this precious molecule. The human brain varies from up to 90% water when we are infants, declining to approximately 80% as we reach adulthood, then continuing to decrease as we age.

The tight control of the water content within our brain tissue is essential in the maintenance of normal brain function. When that control is lost, rapid and potentially life-threatening increases in pressure can occur within the skull, or toxic waste products can accumulate within brain tissue. Pressure build-up follows the brain swelling that is caused by accidents, stroke, infection or tumour development and which collectively affect 75 million



people worldwide every year. The build-up of toxic waste products occurs when the efficiency of the brain's waste clearance system (which depends upon effective water transport and fluid flow) is reduced, leading to conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases; worldwide over 55 million people currently live with dementia. Understanding how to effectively control brain water content across the lifespan is therefore central to understanding human health and key to the development of medicines to treat brain swelling and neurodegeneration, for which there are no cures.

I am interested in how brain water content is controlled by protein molecules known as aquaporins, which act as the body's plumbing system. Their discovery by the American scientist, Professor Peter Agre, changed how we think about the way in which water content is regulated across a range of volume scales, from the litres of blood circulating within our brain throughout the day down to the tiny (picolitre) volumes of single cells that are constantly responding to changes in their local environment. Professor Agre won the 2003 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his important work.



Of the 13 different aquaporin family members found in the human body in various locations and in varying quantities, three are found in the brain. Together they control the flow of water within brain tissue at rates of up to 3 billion molecules per second. In my work at Aston University, where I share a laboratory with Reverend Poyner, I study how to alter the quantity of aquaporin proteins on the surface of our brain cells. For example, I have shown that certain medicines can reduce aquaporin levels and that this means it is possible to stop brain swelling after injury. In my most recent work, I am now investigating whether increasing aquaporin levels under certain circumstances could help reduce the build-up of toxic waste products in the brain and prevent Alzheimer's or Parkinson's diseases. This is exciting as it may one day be possible to develop life-saving treatments for millions of patients worldwide.

# The Stottesdon Group of Parishes

## Rector: Prebendary Mark Daborn

The Rectory, Stottesdon, Shropshire, DY14 8UE

Telephone 01746-718127. Email [mark.daborn@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mark.daborn@hotmail.co.uk)

Days off – MONDAY and THURSDAY

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>St Mary, Stottesdon</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Clare Tibbits: 01746-718007      | <b>St Giles, Farlow</b><br>CHURCHWARDENS<br>Nigel Savage-Bailey - 07989-308599                                      | <b>Holy Trinity, Sidbury</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Andrew Sierakowski - 07934-714149 |
| <b>St Mary, Cleeton St Mary</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Sue Dolphin: - 01584 890583 | <b>St John, Middleton Scriven</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>vacant – so your contact is<br>Preb Mark Daborn - 01746-718127 | <b>St Michael, Silvington</b><br>CHURCHWARDEN<br>Annette Metcalfe: - 01584-890161 |

## February Message

On the following pages, you'll find that I have penned a report on each of the six churches in the Benefice. This is partly about what has been going on in them, partly about what is planned, and partly on the state of the buildings themselves.

There is a school of thought in 'The Church' that small village churches are a luxury we can't afford, and people can perfectly easily go to the nearest town church for services – after all, they will go to town to do their shopping at the supermarket, so where's the problem?

I find this an appalling argument. Churches are often the only community space left in our little villages, and they are important as part of the history of the community and its families. I have done weddings, baptisms and funerals in all our churches, and I know how important they are to the people of the parishes, who will sometimes have an association with them stretching back over generations. And they are the visible sign of God's presence in the community, for people who use them and for people who don't. They are places hallowed by generations of use, as I am always especially aware when I do a baptism at the Norman font in St Mary's in Stottesdon!

At the same time, it has to be acknowledged that keeping an ancient monument in good repair when it is supported by a small parish is hard going. There are grants available to help but working through the systems to get hold of them is not always easy! When I arrived here, four out of six of the churches were on the 'Heritage at risk' register kept by English Heritage. They are very good at putting churches on lists, not always so good at suggesting how we can do the work needed to get them off! We hope and trust that the work being done at Stottesdon and due to be done at Farlow will enable those two churches to come off the register in due course, but it's been a long road with both of them.

My point of view on this is simple: as long as parishes want their churches, I will do everything I can to make sure they keep them. I love the little parish churches and their story and their significance in our countryside. I love the devoted work that is put in by PCCs and church officers to look after them, to cherish them and make them beautiful, so that visitors who come into them can see that they are loved.

So a big thank you to all those who look after our church buildings – you are following a vocation to serve God's Church in the wider sense, in helping to keep His presence known in this lovely part of His creation.

Mark Daborn

# Stottesdon Benefice Group News

## Services in Stottesdon Benefice Churches during February

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February – third before Lent</b></p> <p>09:00 HC Farlow</p> <p>10:30 MP Stottesdon</p>                       |  |  | <p>HC</p> <p>Holy Communion</p> <hr/> <p>EHC</p> <p>HC by extension</p> <hr/> <p>IW</p> <p>Informal Worship</p> <hr/> <p>MP</p> <p>Morning Prayer</p> <hr/> <p>EP</p> <p>Evening Prayer</p> |
| <p><b>Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February – second before Lent</b></p> <p>10:30 HC Stottesdon</p> <p>18:30 EP Silvington</p>                 |  |  |   |
| <p><b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February – Sunday before Lent</b></p> <p>10:30 IW Stottesdon</p> <p>11:30 Café Church Middleton Scriven</p> |  |  |   |
| <p><b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February – First in Lent</b></p> <p>09:00 EHC Silvington</p> <p>10:30 HC Stottesdon</p>                     |  |  |   |
| <p><b>Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March – Second in Lent</b></p> <p>09:00 HC Farlow</p> <p>10:30 MP Stottesdon</p>                             |  |  |   |

*These times and services are correct at the time of going to print but - with building works etc underway - it's always worth checking the website ("A church near you: Stottesdon benefice") or with the churchwardens for any late notice changes.*

## From the Stottesdon Benefice Registers:

### December

- **Stottesdon** – Funeral Office for Pamela Shropshire RIP.
- **Middleton Scriven** - Crematorium service for Stella Giles RIP

### January

- **Farlow** – Funeral Office for Margaret Turner RIP.
- **Stottesdon** – Funeral Office for Joyce Yardley RIP.

**If you are, or someone you know is, in need of prayer or a visit, or Communion at home or elsewhere, then please contact Mark direct, or ask your churchwarden to help you to arrange this.**

**The deadline for the March edition (Stottesdon Benefice Parishes) is to get copy to Chris by first thing on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February. Thanks!**

# Report on our Stottesdon Benefice Churches

In addition to our usual 'snippets' from each parishes, this month features the special Report on our Churches referred to by Mark in his monthly message above. 'Parish Notices' as submitted for publication follow on after this Report.....

## St Mary's, Cleeton St Mary

We had a really good turnout for the Carol Service and for the Christingle Service on Christmas Eve. It is a characteristic of the congregation at Cleeton that it all turns up at once: one minute there is nobody there, you turn your back to do something and then look back a minute later and there is a full church! As usual at the Christingle we had the handing out of the Christingles (mostly, but not entirely, to children!) to be held as a light during the prayers, reminding us of the light of Christ coming into the world at Christmas.

There is work to be done on the church, especially on the roof, and little money available to do it. But we have been given a development grant by the Shropshire Historic Churches Trust to obtain plans and specification for the first stage of necessary works, and we hope to be able to instruct the architect shortly. We have, at the time of writing, had to close the church on a temporary basis due to the need to investigate cracking in the wall at the west end of the nave, and I hope by the time this goes to press we will have at least got a structural engineer to report on this. Once we know the extent of work needed to sort everything out, and have plans and specification prepared, there will be the process of obtaining quotes and seeking further grant funding to get the work done. If there is anyone in the parish who feels they have the skills to lend a hand with getting this project under way and managed, please contact the Rector!

## St Michael's, Silvington

We almost missed the Silvington Carol service. It was at the start of that cold snap before Christmas, and we were held up by icy roads. The good people of Silvington were not to be deterred, though, and carried on regardless, singing the carols a capella until we arrived with the iPad and Boombox, just in time for the Rector's wife's reading!

The Christmas service was at its normal time of 10:30 on Christmas morning, the last Christmas celebration in the six churches. I remember taking the Christmas Service at Silvington for the first time in 2014, when I was doing vacancy cover; I expected, from a parish of some thirty souls, a Christmas turnout of ten or fifteen. Imagine my surprise and delight to find a church full of people for the Feast of the Nativity! Whole families – grandparents, parents, children, not to mention parties from the other churches – all there in high good spirits, a congregation of about 150% of the population of the parish! Well, the tradition continues, and the church was almost full again, and provided a fitting close to our benefice Christmas services.

The repairs noted in the last quinquennial architect's report are gradually being carried out on a carefully-planned programme to keep this ancient little church in good order. The Archdeacon made her Visitation in 2022 and was delighted with it: and especially asked to be invited to take a service here!

## St Giles', Farlow

With Christmas on a Sunday this year, we were able to have the Carol Service on the previous Thursday evening, and managed a really good turnout despite the main road in to the village being closed with totally misleading diversion signs! We got started about ten minutes after the due time to allow everyone a chance to find that the only way in to the church was up Farlow bank, going past the sign that said 'Road Closed' and the diversion sign! That may have contributed to the good spirit of the occasion, but the refreshments afterwards – suitably seasonal – certainly did so! Many thanks to those who organised them.

On Christmas morning we have a 9 o'clock communion service, and even with the carol service a few days before, we had another good congregation – and, for both services, a wide age range including children up to the more senior!

We have building works planned for this church as well. The north slope of the nave roof, and the vestry roof, both need retiling, with associated work to rainwater goods and some sprucing up inside when these are done. Thanks to being able to release some funds held for the PCC and to generous grants from the Shropshire Historic Churches Trust and the Laslett's Trust we should be able to get stuck in to a really thorough restoration programme to get the church into good condition for the next generation or two. Our church architect is on the case!

## **St Mary's, Stottesdon**

The restoration works go on apace! Every time I go into the church more scaffolding has been put up or more of the new kitchen has been fitted or another whole stretch of roof has been retiled. An amazingly complex and complete project, and a tribute to the determination and skills of our PCC secretary who is driving this project (see page 25 for the latest progress report).

What is remarkable about this lovely and very large church is that even with three-fifths of it unusable, there is still more room than there is in most village churches, and we can continue to enjoy our Sunday worship in the south aisle. There may be a stage when we need a temporary closure when the heating is upgraded, bearing in mind the current temperatures, but we'll cross that bridge when we get to it.

All of which has meant that we were unable to offer seasonal refreshments to a very good congregation for the Carol Service, the school Christmas services had to be done in two stages – a nativity and a carol service, both absolutely lovely! – but we were able to accommodate a very good healthy congregation for the midnight communion service. We look forward to a suitable celebration when the work is all done.

## **Holy Trinity, Sidbury**

Although we didn't have a Christmas service, the Carol Service was well attended and lovely refreshments were provided and were enjoyed by all. Earlier, we had a group service here, which was a totally lovely occasion, with representatives of five of our six churches. I hope this is a good omen for future planned group services. Nothing to report on building works, as this is one of the few churches that isn't in need of extensive restoration. And, anyway, we have an architect for a churchwarden...

The monthly Communion service is now settled in its 11:30 slot, but we are going to have a few amendments to this to encourage wider use by the community – and no February service, as there will be a service at Middleton Scriven to join in with. See below!

## **St John the Baptist, Middleton Scriven**

The community use of this re-ordered church continues to be welcomed by the people of the parish, and being able to sit down round tables to enjoy coffee, biscuits and conversation is much valued. Not to mention use for the Harvest Supper and the like.

Christmas was celebrated with the Christmas Eve carol service, well and enthusiastically finished with the Twelve Days of Christmas as is traditional here. And we managed to persuade one participant – who shall remain nameless! – to come to the front and show us the proper moves to go with the song as it went along!

We are experimenting here with 'Festival Church': six services a year, with, we hope, more appeal for those who are not regular churchgoers. So there has been no service in January, but in February (see the schedule of services for the benefice) we are having 'Café Church'. If you are curious about what Café Church is, come along and find out!

# Other news from around the Stottesdon Benefice

*Preb Mark Daborn writes:*

## Group Services in 2023

We have been enjoying going round the churches on fifth Sundays – at least until Covid arrived – and having a group service in each in turn. I’m trying something a bit different this year. Each church has its own dedication, and we will celebrate those by holding group services. So two feasts of St Mary will be group services at Cleeton and Stottesdon; the Sundays nearest St Michael, St Giles and St John the Baptist will be group services at Silvington, Farlow and Middleton Scriven respectively; and we will celebrate Trinity Sunday at Sidbury. Please do come along to group services and support each other across the benefice!

## Cleeton St Mary News

*Gill Jordan writes:*

### **Cleeton 100 Club**

Congratulations to our recent winners -

#### **November**

- £20 - Megan Smith No 41;
- £10 each to Larry Wilks No 88 and Beryl Davis No 23
- £5 each to Erin & James Lewis No 77 and Sue Burgess No 103

#### **December**

- £20 Joyce Price No 107;
- £10 each to Rachel Martin No 117 and Hannah Morgan No 110;
- £5 each to Wendy Dolphin No 69 and Jack Condliffe No 84

## Stottesdon News

*Clare Tibbits writes:*

### **Christmas Wreaths in the Churchyard**

As is usual, please would everyone arrange to remove all their remaining seasonal wreaths and flowers from the Churchyard before Lent - ie before Ash Wednesday, which falls on 22 February. Thank you.

### **Stottesdon 100 club**

After the postal strikes disrupted renewals, the first draw had to be deferred until January – so congratulations to our winners Mick & Eunice Evans, Rachael Tibbits and Sarah O’Hara.

### **Stottesdon Parish Church: “Past, Present and Future” Heritage Project**

*Chris Tibbits writes:*

Fundraising, to supplement the National Lottery Heritage Fund (HF) grant, has just about kept ahead of Mike Gammon’s crew - who have quickened their stunning progress with the various elements of the project – December saw the completion of the huge north side roof (HF) and the retiling of the Chancel too. Then, despite the relatively



harsh weather, January witnessed the stripping and reroofing of the south slope of the Wrickton Aisle (funded locally); the raking-out and repointing of the east end gable; then similar stonework repairs (HF) to the Porch – with retiling there about to start.

In between waiting for scaffold deliveries, ‘the boys’ finished off timber repairs by the organ (dry rot eradication works), laid the new oak floors to the west end and made an excellent start on building the replacement, bespoke kitchen / servery furniture. Thereafter attention turned to repairing and repainting the Nave and other ceilings, works which had to be undertaken from temporary high-level interior scaffolding (you may imagine the scale of this steel structure - it took a team of three chaps almost 4 days to erect it!).

The cobweb, grime and dust brushed down from the rafters and plasterwork before the work proper could start was horrendous, but then nobody had been up there for at least 118 years .... we know that because an enterprising Edwardian roofer had left a tell- tale note, dated 1905, under one of the tiles of Nave ridge line!

Once the ceilings are finished, the scaffolding will become the working platform for the electrician undertaking the upgrade to the infra-red heating systems in the Nave and South (‘Wrickton’) Aisle, the re-lamping (with energy efficient LEDs) of lighting throughout the building. New ‘feature’ lighting will be added to sympathetically display – for the first time ever – our stunning heritage artefacts: the Saxon Tympanum, the Norman Font and the Jacobean Pulpit.

In parallel with further fundraising, for such as the much-needed toilet facility, the next tasks will be the completion of the re-roofing works and associated stone repairs; the new rainwater goods and exterior drainage system; completion of the kitchen build and installation; and then the herculean job of tidying everything up and cleaning it all down in readiness for a thoroughly well-earned celebration.

In case anyone might be wondering, it has occurred to us that it would be amazing if that ‘red letter day’ might just coincide with another 2023 ‘crowning glory’ of an event!

It’s far too early of course to plan for that potentially happy coincidence and, in any event, there is also a towering concern around the major repair now necessary to reinstate the now silent Treble Bell in time for the Bellringers to properly mark the third Carolean coronation [so, yes, if you have recently heard that the ringers were ‘short of a bell’, you heard absolutely right!].

Clare and Derek are absolutely on this case, with the last remaining UK Bell Foundry (Taylors of Loughborough, often mentioned on Radio 4’s ‘Bells on Sunday’ programme). Taylors are working up the repair specification (and price!) to enable us to seek necessary planning permissions (‘Faculty Approval’) from the Church Authorities.

**There is never a dull moment on this project - and many chances to get involved too - look out for heritage research and other opportunities in the next Wheatland News.**

**Latest pix of ongoing work at St Mary’s are this month’s  
back cover colour feature!**

## Middleton Scriven News

*Ann Constable writes:*

**We have no church service in February** – please see the benefice list for services at other churches.

### **Coffee mornings in church, 10:00 - 12:00**

- Saturday February 11<sup>th</sup>. This will be the 20th anniversary of the start of this community event!!
- Saturday March 11<sup>th</sup>
- Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup>

Everyone is most welcome. Do come and have a cup of coffee or tea, and catch up with friends and neighbours.

*Ann Williamson writes:*

A great big **thank you** to everyone who supported me in the sale of Christmas cards for **SEVERN HOSPICE** again this year.

I sent two cheques to the hospice, one for the card sales which were amazing in 2022 and totalled **£1731** and the other cheque for **£693.73** for money raised at my coffee morning and donations received. The final total being **£2424.73** going to the hospice for their dedicated and much needed services in Shropshire and Mid Wales.

**Many, many thanks to all** from Ann

## Silvington News

**Annette Metcalfe writes:**

### **Our next services will be:**

- ✝ Evening Prayer, 1830 on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February
- ✝ Holy Communion, 09:00 on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February

## Farlow News

### **Our next services will be**

- ✝ Holy Communion, 09:00 on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> February
- ✝ Holy Communion, 09:00 on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March

## Sidbury News

We have no news from Sidbury this month.

## **Our Community Noticeboard**

### **Cleobury Country Farmers Market - 18 February**

...is “under and around the crooked spire” at St Mary’s Church, Cleobury Mortimer, on the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month from 09.30-12.30. Features local producers of plants, meats, cheeses, vegetables, rapeseed oils, gins, cookies, crafts and more.

Free town centre car parking and very well worth a visit. Details: Clare 01299-272300.

### **Community and Mobile Library Services**

FREE membership, access to Books, DVDs, Computer workstations and more!

- **HIGHLEY** at The Severn Centre 01746 860000. Open 7 days a week from 9am.
- **CLEOBURY** at The Cleobury Country Centre 01299 272301. Open 6 days a week.

**Brooks Mobile Library** also serves many Wheatlands area villages direct – see Shropshire Council website and social media

### **Our Local Food Banks**

Both of these are **always** in need of donations of foodstuffs and other goods, of money to sustain their services, and of volunteers’ time. Find them on Facebook or call 07960 285520 for BRIDGNORTH or 07519 885943 for CLEOBURY MORTIMER.



**Stottesdon & District Women’s Institute**

Meets at 7.30pm on the **THIRD**

**WEDNESDAY** each month, generally at either Farlow or Chorley Village Hall, with a varied programme of entertaining talks, crafting and events. Contact Helena on 01746-718012 or Clare on 01746-718007 for more details.

## Useful Community Contacts - updated February 2023

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Brown Clee Walkers</b>                         | Meeting Place for walks - Ditton Priors Church. 01746-712662  |
| <b>Burwarton &amp; District Garden Club</b>       | Meets on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 8.00 pm. Contact 01584-823723 for details of topic and venue   |
| <b>Burwarton &amp; District Wives Group</b>       | Meeting 8pm 1st Wednesday of the month. Contact Debbie Jones 01746-712421 or Gill Severn 01746-712231   |
| <b>Buzzard community bus</b>                      | Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride – 01743-450270 Mon-Fri 09:30 – 15:00   |
| <b>Chelmarsh Crown Green Bowling Club</b>         | Welcomes old and new members. Contact Sue Jackman 01746-862850  |
| <b>Chelmarsh Friends</b>                          | Meet every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Jenny Green 01746-862191   |
| <b>Chelmarsh Indoor Short Mat Bowling</b>         | Welcomes old and new members. The sessions are every Tuesday evening from 7.30-10.00pm. Further details Sue Jackman 01746-862850  |
| <b>Chelmarsh Jubilee Club</b>                     | Parish Hall 01746-86525 Jean Davis  |
| <b>Chelmarsh Parent &amp; Toddler Group</b>       | Every Tuesday during term time 9.30 – 11.30 Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Contact Pam Baker 07846-692323   |
| <b>Chelmarsh Parish Hall</b>                      | Available for hire - booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk  |
| <b>Chelmarsh Walking for Health</b>               | Monday 10.00am except Bank Holidays. Parish Hall. Eleanor Haddon 01746-862884. 2 levels of walking available  |
| <b>Chetton &amp; Gazeley WI</b>                   | Meets in Chetton Village Hall on the 2nd Wednesday of the month 7.30pm Sam O'Sullivan 01746-868225  |
| <b>Chetton Folk Dance Club</b>                    | Meets Chetton Village Hall, last Wednesday of month except August Tel. Janice Burton 01584-823802   |
| <b>Chetton Village Hall</b>                       | Enquiries - Sue on 01746-789239   |
| <b>Chorley Village Hall</b>                       | Available for Hire (fully equipped kitchen, digital projection equipment and large screen) contact <b>07726-763883</b> – NEW DEDICATED NUMBER DECEMBER 2022   |
| <b>Cleeton &amp; Silvington V H</b>               | Zumba - Thursdays 6.30pm 7.30pm all year Ula 01584-890200   |
| <b>Cleobury North Village Hall</b>                | Enquiries to 01746-787093 please  |
| <b>Ditton Priors Art Group</b>                    | Village Hall Wednesday morning (except Christmas) 9.30 – 12.30pm all welcome Various visual art forms eg Water Colour, Oils & Acrylics. Mrs Denise Davies 01746-712521  |
| <b>Ditton Priors Book Club</b>                    | Jenny -01746-712665   |
| <b>Ditton Priors Local History Group</b>          | The Local History Centre, next to the Willows Café, opens 12.00-2.00 on Saturdays, and at other times by arrangement. Contact 01746-712850  |
| <b>Ditton Priors Village Hall</b>                 | Bookings - <b>07766 392 105</b> - <a href="mailto:dittonpriorsalls@gmail.com">dittonpriorsalls@gmail.com</a>  |
| <b>Domestic Abuse Hotline</b>                     | Telephone Number 08448-044999   |
| <b>Fun &amp; Fitness for 50+</b>                  | Cleobury North Village Hall - low impact fitness programme working the whole body every Tuesday 10.00 – 11.15am. Contact 01584-823640   |
| <b>Knowle Sports Club</b>                         | Second hand sales held every first Saturday of the month, 7.30am – 11am proceeds to Children's Football Field 01584-890644  |
| <b>Little Explorers Pre-School, Ditton Priors</b> | Open Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm. Contact Wendy Lloyd 01746-712506 / 787549  |
| <b>Short Mat Bowling</b>                          | Every Monday & Thursday 2.30 – 4.30pm at Cleeton & Silvington Village Hall, October to end of April. Pam 01584-89261  |
| <b>Short Mat Bowling</b>                          | Ditton Priors Village Hall Every Tuesday afternoon 2.00 - 4.00pm Wednesday 7.30-10.00pm except the second Wednesday in the month when it will be Thursday at 8.00 – 10.00pm. Everyone is welcome - try at no charge. Contact 01746-712157 |
| <b>Stoke St Milborough Dance</b>                  | Mike 01746-712774 - Betty 01746-77515   |
| <b>Stottesdon &amp; District W.I.</b>             | Meets in various venues on the 3rd Wednesday in each month details from Helena Hale 01746 718012 or Clare Tibbits 01746-718007  |
| <b>Stottesdon Gateway Nursery</b>                 | Pre-school, holiday club and wraparound sessions. An integral part of Stottesdon Primary School, Contact 01746-718769   |
| <b>Tae kwon-do</b>                                | Chelmarsh Parish Hall Tuesday evening. Suitable for children & Adults. Neil Morris Thursday 5.45pm. 07969-996055  |

# St Mary's Stottesdon - Past, Present and Future - the story in pictures

