

April 2024

# Teme TRIANGLE

Clifton-upon-Teme • The Shelsleys • Lower Sapey



*Local MP Joins Clifton Litter Spring Clean-up*

## **In this edition**

- Clifton Spring Litter Clean-up with MP
- Shelsley Walsh Memorial to Peter Collins
- Michelle Alexander moves On
- New Children's Play Area opens In Clifton

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*Teme Valley artist Mel Williams returns to London to show her recent paintings at 54 The Gallery, Shepherd Market, London W1J 7QX from Tuesday 30 April to Saturday 4 May, 10.30am to 5.30pm.*

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**Front cover picture:** *Candy Connolly (left) is joined by local MP Harriett Baldwin for another litter-picking drive from Clifton.*

## LOCAL MP JOINS THE LITTER PICKERS



Clifton villagers were joined by local MP Harriett Baldwin picking litter dumped along a stretch of busy road to promote the annual Keep Britain Tidy campaign last month.

The group, led by Candy Connolly, picked up empty bottles of spirits, fast food wrappers, disposable coffee cups and even a car exhaust in their hour-long clearing of the road between Clifton and Upper Sapey. “We covered at least ten miles, thanks to all those who volunteered to take part,” said Candy.

Harriett said: “It was great to see so many big-hearted villagers from the beautiful village of Clifton-upon-Teme come out on a rainy Friday to help pick litter. The Great British Spring Clean is a national initiative to encourage more people to clean up their own local environment and there are many local groups who brave the elements to keep their location clean.

“Litter is something which can be a scourge on our rural and urban areas and I am heartened that there are so many volunteers already out there helping to keep our streets clean.

“It’s quite satisfying to collect a bag of litter and anyone can get involved from quite a young age.”

Candy Connolly said she would like all litter picking groups in Worcestershire to join up to cover all roads in the county. “Ideally there would be a litter pick group from each village which could link up with the district council.”

## WEEKEND OF CHARITY FUN

Christian Aid week this year, 12-18 May, is focusing on working towards a world where families can escape the trap of poverty and fulfil their ambitions. With your support, more families



can build reliable and diverse incomes that bring them food security, better health, safer homes, increased resilience and hope, both here and abroad.

We have a great weekend planned with various activities to suit all tastes and hope that the communities here in Clifton, Shelsley and Harpley, along with those further afield, can once again come together for some fun and companionship and at the same time continue to show the world that they care.

More details to follow but please get these dates in your diary:

### **Friday 17 May – 6.30pm-9pm ‘Refresh, Restyle, Recycle’ – Preloved Clothes to buy! At Clifton Village Hall.**

Tickets, £8 will include a glass of prosecco (non-alcoholic alternative provided) nibbles plus a raffle ticket. The evening will start with refreshments and a browse around the pre-loved clothes on sale, followed by talks from local residents:

- \* Isa Stewart (Catherine Walker and Co Design Atelier) will help us to restyle our clothes, bringing them up to date, and how to wear clothes to suit your shape.
- \* Lottie Sparey (Lotties’ Eco) will tell us all about how and why she started her company at Stanford Bridge, using sustainable bamboo and what she has to offer us in this world where recycling and sustainability is becoming more and more vital.
- \* James Hyslop (Tailor) will tell us about his experiences as a tailor and how men can alter their clothes and wear them with panache and style!

After that, the clothes will be on sale for you all to try and buy. With the designers there, helping you with your questions.

**This is where we need your help:** If you have pre-loved, good quality ladies clothing that you are willing to donate then please ring Rachel Austin on 07742 977027 or Marion Dipple on 07597 950595. Alternatively, you can drop off any clothes at the Old Vicarage, Clifton, and leave them in the front porch if Rachel is not there. Any clothes that we do not sell on the night will be donated to St Richard’s Hospice.

**Saturday 18 May 10am-12noon – Coffee Morning** at the Austins, the Old Vicarage, Church Road, Clifton. Coffee, cakes, Bring & Buy. All welcome.

**Saturday 18 May 4pm-8pm ‘Croquet and Bouquets’** at Shelsley VH and

local croquet lawn. Join us for an afternoon of croquet tuition by Stuart Smith and a round-robin competition. Kate Hurst, our local florist will demonstrate sustainable flower posies with an auction at the end.

**Saturday 8 June 9am-1pm – Big Breakfast** at the Dipples, the Old House, The Village, Clifton. All welcome. Please book at least 24 hours in advance and confirm whether vegetarian or meat (eggs will be locally sourced and meat outdoor bred): [mjdipple@btinternet.com](mailto:mjdipple@btinternet.com) / tel: 07597 950595

Everyone is welcome to all the events. We will be holding the annual house-to-house envelope collection in Clifton for those wishing to donate during Christian Aid Week. More details on all of the events will be available closer to the date. Any queries please do phone either Rachel or Marion.

## TEME VALLEY WILDLIFE REPORT

In partnership with other organisations such as the Church of England, Natural England, Historic England, the Bat Conservation Trust and The Churches Conservation Trust, National Lottery money was sought to fund a Bats in Churches project to make bespoke plans for individual churches so that their bats could be housed in roofs, false ceilings or belfries and prevented from entering working spaces.

The project brought the unexpected benefit of bringing more people into contact with their local churches as they involved themselves in bat recording. Around 700 other churches were surveyed to see if they had bat residents too. One village church even organised a 'Beer and Bats' evening in partnership with their village pub. By helping bats, the churches were able to engage with the wider community, particularly children, so perhaps it is a shame that the project has now come to an end.

Locally, special help has been given to a bat colony living in St Bartholomew's Old Church at Lower Sapey. This Norman building is in an idyllic location and is now under the guardianship of The Churches Conservation Trust. When it was restored some years ago, a letterbox opening was put into the east window to allow the flittermouse residents of this rarely used church to get in and out. The church welcomes visitors and is open daily.



The next meeting of the Teme Valley Wildlife Group will be at 7:30pm on Thursday 11 April at Stoke Bliss and Kyre Village Hall, WR15 8RR. We welcome Bob Watson who will be talking about types of fungi which live in harmony with trees. Everyone is most welcome and it is just £3 on the door or £25 for the year.

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## **Clifton Parish Council minutes of meeting held 7 March 2024**

**Present:** J. Bowden (Chair); B. Gilbert (Vice-Chair); R. Neave; P. Brooks; L. Merrick; S. Haywood. Also present: 8 Members of the Public. Apologies: District Councillors Paul & Pam Cumming

Minutes of the Meeting held 1 February 2024: Proposed by Cllr Neave; seconded by Cllr Gilbert. All agreed. No matters arising.

**Democratic Public Time:** Dog fouling has increased significantly, and it was agreed that MHDC should be contacted by the Clerk to target hotspots. Nursery School – the new Board of Trustees are in place and there have been some positive steps forward recently but funding is still an issue. The PC confirmed the previous offer made of £1000.00 funding subject to sight of invoices / proof of where the money will be spent. No further funding can be promised until after the end of the financial year, and until our financial position is confirmed re vat payable on the Play Area Project. It would be helpful to know the stats on where pupils live who attend the Nursery. Hope Meadow Drive residents – all workmen have left site now, but outstanding matters seem to be being deferred by the Site Manager and nothing is being finished. Cllr Gilbert offered to liaise with the Developer to see what can be done.

**County & District Councillor Reports:** The County and District Councillors reports were read out by the Chairman and will be uploaded to the website.

**Finance & Governance Matters:** Payments and receipts schedule – proposed Cllr Haywood, seconded Cllr Gilbert. All agreed. Clerk to process. Section 106 matters – Cllr Bowden gave a verbal update on works which is positive and going well overall. RoSPA Inspection to be done next week to sign off site safety prior to re-opening. New picnic benches are deferred to the next financial year. S106 & External Funding – Cllr Gilbert reported that the wildlife garden funding application has been submitted. Pavilion Refurbishment – Cllr Bowden has found the archived plans for the building at The Hive. A draft of the application has been sent to MHDC for comment. Social Housing Hope Lane – Cllr Gilbert explained the issues with this matter and has contacted MHDC for clarification. District Cllr Paul Cumming is also assisting in this. The s106 agreement needs to be applied correctly and is to be re-examined. Precept 2024/25 – Cllr Brooks queried why the PC raised the precept by 10% but it seems MHDC have increased it by 17%. District Cllr Paul Cumming looked into the matter and it is because MHDC need to correct a previous year error made by them in the tax base allocation to our parish. Recruitment of a new PC Clerk – it was agreed that a Staffing Committee be formed of Cllrs Gilbert, Brooks, Neave. Clerk to progress a possible replacement.

**Parish Matters/Updates:** Land maintenance in Saxon Close – Jack Whittenbury currently looks after the site and R. Wilks also asked to look at what is needed. Cllr Gilbert explained about the Forestry Commission survey received recently. Hanging baskets ready at the beginning of June. Cllr Bowden met R. Wilks regarding 'Derek's Garden' which needs regular maintenance. Also, re gully replacement / Kenelm Close clearance / footpath in front of the

Church needs sweeping. Manor Rd Tree Works – WCC map received which shows land ownership – Cllr Bowden to progress. Village road sweeping has been completed by MHDC as requested.

**Planning Matters:** No new applications received. Local surveying of traffic remains a concern due to possible speculative development outside of what has been agreed in the NDP and SWDP. Cllr Gilbert has already raised concern with MHDC regarding NDPs being ignored when determining planning applications. Cllr Gilbert agreed to draft a letter to the Winnington family and MHDC re local survey concerns.

**Planning notifications/correspondence:** M/23/00938/HP - The Firs, Clifton Upon Teme, WR6 6EW – approval for two storey rear extension incorporating first floor balcony.

Correspondence re planning Decision M/22/01682/FUL – Blue Shot Meadow Pound Lane Clifton Upon Teme WR6 6DE – Cllr Gilbert briefed the meeting.

Strategic Planning Matters: The SWDP remains with the Independent Examiner.

**Highways Matters:** No matters for discussion. Cllr Brooks gave an update re required works to the front of Salford Close and is chasing Worcs CC.

**Councillor Reports & Items for Future Agendas:** Cllr Gilbert is progressing a local RSPB nest box scheme for Swifts. It was proposed by Cllr Gilbert, seconded Cllr Bowden that £500.00 be allocated to the scheme in principle. All agreed. Cllr Bowden gave an update on the possible s106 funded bus stop. Kenelm Rd may be a potential location as the bus waits there anyway, but more consultation will be required. He will progress this with Worcs C.C.

**Date of next Meeting: Thursday 4 April 2024 at 7.40pm in the Village Hall.**

## **FOUR ACRE MEADOW WILDLIFE AREA**

Clifton Parish Council is planning to encourage the diversity of wildlife within the Four Acre Meadow by creating a Wildlife Area near the Pavilion and Pound Lane. It will consist of good quality wildflower turf, natural grassland and some areas of garden plants and grasses to provide year-round colour and structure. Accessible paths will be created and benches with backs provided so that residents can enjoy the area in comfort.

Conservation does not work in isolation, therefore the plan is to leave a couple of meters of grassland uncut around the Four Acre Meadow boundary. This will enable more wild flowers to thrive, providing larval food plants for butterflies and creating habitats and food for invertebrates, birds and animals, including the declining hedgehog.

The major aim is to improve both the recreational and educational use of the whole site for the benefit of the village. Work is ongoing in restoring the existing sports facilities and installing new play equipment for the children. Construction of the Wildlife Area will start in the Autumn, completing a very active 2024.

*Lyn Merrick*

Page 11

## LOWER SAPEY NEWS

'Behind the clouds is the sun still shining - must the days be dark and dreary'. (Longfellow). Hopefully, it will reveal itself very soon and dry out the flooded fields, gardens and roads. Worcester city has been flooded five times this winter and our lanes and roads have huge potholes disguised by the water. There seems to be a dispute between Herefordshire and Worcestershire as to who is responsible for dealing with this, but as the council tax has gone up by 4.8%, maybe they will find the money? Answers on a postcard please. Farmers and growers are struggling, but the mild temperatures have brought on shrubs and bushes early. One wonders what is in store for the next few months. Is climate change wholly responsible?

Easter is now almost over and the weeks have passed quickly. There have been some very interesting Lent courses in the village and these have been well attended. Thanks go to Pat Savage and Jen Denniston for hosting them. Soon we can decorate the church again with spring flowers and make it more welcoming during these dark days. Sadly, adding to the gloom, two well-known local residents have had funerals in St Bartholomew's in the last month. Steve (Shifter) Smith of Pritchard Close was taken far too early, leaving his mum Ann, wife Deborah and three daughters. He was a popular football and darts player and a talented mechanic and engineer. Suzanne Richards was my dear friend and neighbour for 26 years and died in her care home at the end of February. Her children David, Mark and Tory were with her. Suzanne played the organ in our church for many years and was a wonderful pianist and took part in many local activities. Our sympathy goes to both their families and all their many friends. They will be greatly missed, but always remembered with love and affection.

Future planning of the church has been agreed in most respects, by the Chancellor of the Diocese. This worthy lady resides in Bristol and perhaps it is a pity she can't come to visit the rural churches. However, the story doesn't end here as we still need to get quotations sorted, for example for a new ceiling, to have acoustics tests and bat surveys. Time passes, but we still have the determination and enthusiasm to carry on and hope the money-tree bears some fruit soon! We all thank Candy, Liz Younge and David Richards (church wardens) for all their hard work. If you need to find out more, the church wardens now have their own e-mail, which is [lowersapeychurchwarden@gmail.com](mailto:lowersapeychurchwarden@gmail.com). We also have a website: [lowersapey.net](http://lowersapey.net). The latter lists any future events. When the weather improves, we hope to make more use of the garden area and the fire-pit for outdoor events. If you are interested in holding such an event, please contact the church wardens.

## NOTICES

Services in St Bartholomew's for April (Please check times nearer the dates):

Sunday 7 April Morning service 10.30am

Sunday 21 April Methodist Holy Communion 10.30am

Sunday 28 April Circle service 10.30am

You may like to make a note that on Sunday 5 May, there will be a Rogation Service, starting at New House Farm at 10.30. Refreshments will be provided.

Housekeeping for April is in the hands of Margaret Griffiths. Easter flowers will be arranged by Dot and her helpers.

The Ladies Bible group will start again now Easter is over, the first meeting being on Tuesday 9 April at 2pm. Jane Dallow has kindly offered to host this at her home in Bromyard.

The Mobile Library will call on Friday 19 April at 10.20am and 10.40am. We hope we can retain this service, despite the cuts.

May you all enjoy the return of spring. Perhaps as well as sunshine we can hope for a better international situation in Gaza, Israel and the Ukraine. These people have all endured such miserable times and we pray it will all end soon.

*Margaret Griffiths*

## FLIX IN THE STICKS - CLIFTON

On Saturday, 13 April, there will be a screening of *Oppenheimer*, the story of American scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer's journey from an ambitious scientist to a man tormented by the central role he played in the development of the atomic bomb, at Clifton Village Hall at 7pm.

Admission £5; under 16 £2.50



## LITTLE WITLEY FILMS

On Saturday, 20 April, Little Witley Films will be screening *On The Basis Of Sex*, a film about the extraordinary life Of Ruth Bader Ginsberg, one of the most memorable people in US legal history. A fast moving legal drama about an amazing life. Little Witley Village Hall doors open at 7.15pm, film at 8pm as usual.





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## SHELSLEY WALSH MEMORIAL TO PETER COLLINS

A life-size bronze bust of British Formula 1 driver Peter Collins will be unveiled at Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb at 11am on Monday, 6 May, following a fund-raising campaign.

The Kidderminster-born racer, who drove for Ferrari, was just 25 when he was killed at the German Grand Prix in 1958. Shelsley Walsh was chosen as the site for the memorial as it was Collins' home venue, where he honed his racing skills after the Second World War.



Appeal organiser Mark Andrews said Collins could have been Britain's first Formula 1 world champion in 1956 but, "in the days when drivers could change cars during a race, Peter stopped in the last race of the season and gave his car to Fangio, when the Argentinian's car suffered mechanical problems. This gesture prevented Peter from winning the world title and allowed Fangio to claim his fourth title. Peter later explained the reason for his action saying, 'I am only 25 years old and have plenty of time to win the championship on my own'."

Mark Andrews visited the scene of the crash that killed Peter Collins last summer at the Nürburgring in Germany. "I've been delighted to see the fantastic response that we have had to the campaign," he said. "When we began, we had no idea whether we'd reach the target of £15,000 but people from far and wide have become really engaged with what we were trying to achieve. As well as succeeding in creating the memorial, I think we can safely say that it has been a great year in terms of raising Peter's profile and making sure his name is not forgotten when people talk about the great motor racing drivers of the 1950s and 60s."

At the unveiling in May, the bust will be revealed by Deborah Jones (Peter's niece), David Piper who raced in Formula 1 in the 1950s and was driving at the Nurburgring in 1958 when Peter suffered his fatal accident, and Howden Ganley, who participated in 41 World Championship Formula One Grands Prix between 1971 and 1974.

"The net result of everybody's efforts is that Peter is already more widely known, many amazing memories have been shared and his legacy to British motorsport and the people of Kidderminster and beyond can be celebrated by us all," said Mr Andrews.

An identical cold cast, life-size bust, created by sculptor Stephen Charnock, has been sited at the Wolfgang von Trips exhibition at the Nürburgring in Germany, where Collins sadly lost his life.

## SHELSLEY LITTER PICKERS

A big shout out for the Shelsleys team of litter pickers, who have agreed to continue with their endeavours to keep our lanes free of rubbish in 2024. Welcome to Andy Wright (thanks Rachel!) and to Ezekiel Jones (pictured, right), our youngest expert with the litter grabber at four years old! I know that other parishioners collect in their patch when needed, so our thanks to you too. It all helps to keep our valley beautiful.

*Val Jones*



## NEW LIGHTING POSTS AT ST ANDREW'S

Two new lighting posts have been installed on either side of the main entrance gateway at St. Andrew's Church at Shelsley Walsh.



"The original lights outside the gate were forever being knocked over by the dustbin men or other cars, so new posts were installed and moved nearer to the gate," said Claire Sutherland.

"The oak posts have been kindly donated by the Spilsbury family, with the oak originating from the farm at Hanley Childe. This is in memory of my mother Mary Spilsbury, and many others of her era, including Jean Nuttall, Hilary Gwynet (née Wickens), Marjorie Radkye, Kay Parkinson and Hilda Webb, who sang in the choir at the Shelsleys for many years, along with Peggy Mumford the organist."

## DOG FOULING DISCUSSION

Concern about the increase in dog fouling in and around Clifton was expressed by Clifton Parish Council at their meeting last month after parishioner Wendy Haywood suggested that notices should be displayed as “some people just don't pick it up”.

Parish Clerk Michelle Alexander said that Malvern Hills District Council had a system for reporting dog fouling via their website.

“It's a problem we can't ignore,” said Chairman John Bowden who agreed to contact Worcestershire Countryside & Leisure department to ask if they could put signs up on public footpaths.



## SWIFT NEST BOXES

One of the delights of living in Clifton is seeing the swifts swooping around the village rooftops in the summer with their inimitable calls one to another.

Last summer however the number of swifts seemed to have diminished which causes concern. There may be a number of factors behind the falling numbers - lack of insects in Africa or indeed here in Clifton.

One of the factors however maybe the declining nest sites available in Clifton, and the Parish Council seeks to remedy that situation with the help of volunteer villagers.

If any villagers are willing to buy swift boxes from the local RSPB group at £25 each, the Parish Council will arrange their free erection onto their houses. An RSPB expert will survey the prospective sites to confirm they are suitable.

It may take two or three years after the nests are attached before they are occupied, but the Parish Council want to support a key natural asset for the village and its people.



If anyone is interested in finding out more about the proposal please email the clerk via [clerk@clifton-upon-teme-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@clifton-upon-teme-pc.org.uk)

# CLIFTON CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA NOW OPEN



## **Abbreviated Draft Minutes of The Shelsleys Parish Council Meeting held on March 12 2024**

**Present:** Val Jones (Chair), Louise Hutton (Vice-Chair), Karen Metcalfe, John Stinton, Dave Bates, Carole Warren, David Belfield and Jean Hammond.

**In attendance:** Two District Councillors, two members of the public and the clerk.

**Apologies:** Laura Taylor (accepted).

**Minutes:** The Minutes of January 9th 2024 were accepted and agreed as a true record.

**Public Question Time:** None.

**District and County Councillor Reports:** Circulated & available on the parish website (address below).

**Highways:** Lengthsman's Report, there was no report, the worksheets for December and January were accepted for payment.

There has been no progress with the broken and silted culvert at Shelsley Walsh despite numerous reports to WCC. The clerk has been provided with photographic evidence and will ask the County Councillor David Chambers to assist in prioritising the problem.

Camp Lane. The damaged lane resulting from Severn Trent works has been promptly but poorly filled.

There was a suggestion that information regarding the depth of water when flooding occurs between New Mill Bridge and All Saints' be placed by the roadside to prevent cars driving through and becoming stuck.

The Parish Council has been informed of the dates the Midland Automobile Club has applied for temporary footpath closures in 2024. The amount numbers 48, the clerk is to enquire why so many are needed.

The drain by the airfield is also blocked – clerk to report.

Councillors are still urged to report any drainage and highways matters on the WCC website.

**Midland Automobile Club (MAC):** No report or information.

**Insurance:** Pre-renewal form. The clerk to complete before the final year of the fixed term contract.

**Planning:** No outstanding applications or MHDC Decisions:

Urgent Decisions: None.

**Reports:** Parish Footpaths Warden. The poor state of the footbridge on the Wilderness Farm path will be reported to Worcester County Council.

There has been a report of vandalism to shrubbery along a footpath. It is believed that this has now been resolved.

Village Hall Management Committee representative.

The committee has delivered a questionnaire to 180 households to see how the village wishes to proceed. The deadline for responses is March 22nd and the findings will be reported in the May edition of the *Teme Triangle*.

There is very little local support for events organised by either the Village Hall Management Committee or the Social Club.

**Biodiversity:** The draft plan produced by Councillors was circulated prior to the meeting. As some members were still unfamiliar with the details, it will be adopted at the meeting in May.

**Village Fete:** It was agreed there was insufficient time for the Parish Council to organize an event this year.

**Finance:** Payments approved were: Village Hall hire £165.00 and Lengthsman £252.00

**Councillors' Reports and items for future agenda:** Village Drains. Roadside speed signage.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be on 14th May 2024 7pm at the Village Hall followed by The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

The meeting concluded at 20.10

To view the full and draft minutes and agenda online go to the WCC website. and look at The Shelsleys: <http://e-services.worcestershire.gov.uk/myparish/>

Jan Speyer Clerk 01886 812444 shelsleyspc@gmail.com

### **SHELSLEY VILLAGE HALL QUESTIONNAIRE**

David Belfield writes: "I would like to thank the Shelsley residents who completed the recently distributed village hall questionnaire. From the 177 distributed, there were 14 responses. There were some really good ideas on how to take your village hall forward and it is my intention to relay the findings at the village hall AGM (date to be confirmed and advertised in advance)."

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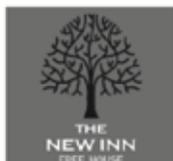
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## **WOODBURY HILL REFORMATORY - MUTINY ON CAMP LANE** *Shelsley resident Bridget Francis shares another piece of local history, involving Woodbury Old Farm in Camp Lane.*

In 1856 Lord Ward (later the Earl of Dudley) of Witley Court provided buildings and 15 acres of land to his friend David Melville (rector of the Shelsleys) to set up a Reformatory for young offenders in premises at a farmhouse in Camp Lane, Shelsley Beauchamp. The Reformatory was formally certified under the 'Youthful Offenders Act' to receive up to 32 boys committed by magistrates for detention. This Act allowed courts to sentence children under 16 to a reformatory for between two and five years as an alternative to prison. The boys were educated and given skills to help them avoid a life of crime.

The institution was initially managed by David Melville (later by the Rev Theodore Flintoff who ran the Reformatory for over 30 years) with its staff comprising a chaplain, matron, assistant schoolmaster, labour master and a basket maker. The boys mostly came from local counties but some as far away as London - the 1861 census lists the ages of the 'inmates' as between 10 and 17 with a wide variety of previous occupations such as weavers, gardener's boys and chair makers.

A report in 1857 hints at some of the challenges in running the Reformatory - it stated that of the 37 boys admitted in the first year (half of whom had had more than one conviction) 27 still remained (of whom four had run away and were found), four had moved to other reformatories, two were discharged, three had run away and had not been found and one was in Parkhurst prison. David Melville described that running away was "not remarkable to anyone who knows anything of boy-nature. Whilst of course it marks the dislike of the Reformatory, at the time the boy does run away, it does not even mark such thorough dislike of it as might be supposed. It is often repented of even whilst being committed. This we learn subsequently. Any whim, any little discomfort, will set boys off, or trying to be off. Town alley-bred boys used to close atmosphere, will run away from the mere bracing air and exposure of field-working." He went on to say that the general tone and atmosphere of the establishment was the best antidote to absconding.

The boys had a regular timetable of education, work and prayers and a weekly diet. They were able to earn 'marks' which could be exchanged for money. Their conduct was measured in four areas - labour, house duties (order in dormitory and at table, and personal cleanliness) school duties and general conduct. There was also a system of fines. They attended church and formed a 'tolerably strong' choir.

Over the years, although the farmland available to the Reformatory increased to 35 acres which provided more work for the boys, the state of the buildings were often noted as requiring improvement. John Noake records in his guide to Worcestershire that the house was overcrowded. A report in 1879 mentions that the external improvements were still required, although it was noted in the previous year that some parts had been improved, that there had been no absconding and the educational state of the boys was 'fairly satisfactory'. In 1889 it was reported that the 'premises were clean and comfortable and very homelike. The accommodation is only moderate in quality but turned to good account. The situation is healthy, but remote'. It was, however, also noted that 'owing to some bad influence and example' incidents of crime and absconding had increased.

Nearly 40 years after it was opened, and while the Rev Flintoff was away with a serious illness, a mutiny occurred at the Reformatory on 1 February, 1895. Around 15 boys refused to leave their dormitory. Police were summoned and tried to gain access via ladders but were attacked with bricks. The police made a hole in the dormitory wall and found that all the furniture had been broken. The boys, who claimed to have a grievance against the labour master, were arrested and taken to a prison in Worcester. During a further visit by police the following morning, another group of boys barricaded themselves in their dormitory. While another small hole was being made in the wall, the boys were smashing bedsteads, tearing up bedclothes, pulling bricks from the wall, and piling any wood they could find onto the fire, apparently with the intention of setting the building alight. A gun was fired into the dormitory with the intention of scaring the boys. The first man to get through the hole was the labour master, who was showered with brickbats and seriously hurt. Eventually, a dozen men, including police officers, gained entry. After a fierce battle, during which more than 20 boys were injured, the rebels were subdued. The boys were then marched to the Hundred House in Great Witley and taken before a magistrate, who remanded them to Worcester. Only five boys remained at the institution, including one of the older youths whose sentence was almost up and had refrained from joining the rioters. The cost of the damage was reported to be around £200. At a subsequent court hearing, the boys' defence was conducted by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. It was said that during recent bad weather, the boys had been kept in a schoolroom from morning to night without a fire. It was also stated that some boys were punished by being confined in a cell that was six feet square, and sometimes placed there without shoes or stockings. The poor construction of the whole building, which made it very cold in severe weather, was also raised. Nonetheless, five of the ringleaders were sentenced to six weeks, and seven to a month's hard labour, with the rest being discharged.

*Continued on next page*

After the court hearing Rev Flintoff wrote a letter to *Berrow's Worcester Journal* criticising the response of the NSPCC and upset at the 'cowardly and murderous outbreak at the Reformatory for which there was not a shadow of an excuse as the boys have always been treated kindly and justly'. He went on to say that the 'observations of the advocate employed were not warranted by the evidence' and that the outbreak had been caused by three boys who had recently absconded and who knew they would be punished when Rev Flintoff returned. He felt that the action of the NSPCC had been a 'mistake' and said that he didn't intend to alter the systems at the Reformatory. He concluded by stating that the repairs actually cost £10 14s 5d. Others wrote public letters of support including the schoolmaster in Shelsley Beauchamp, Louis Ellmer, who stated that the rumours of cruelty were false and that the NSPCC should not have been involved in a case that was already being handled by the Home Office and police. He said that the boys were always well looked after. However, after the mutiny and subsequent trial were discussed in the House of Commons, and following further inquiries about the buildings, the Home Office decided that the Reformatory should be closed. The establishment's contents, including 23 pigs, a cow, two donkeys, farm implements, beds and bedding, a harmonium and a sewing machine, were all sold by auction in March 1896.



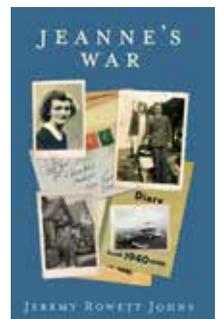
*Woodbury Old Farm today*

Details of the mutiny by kind permission of Peter Higginbotham, author of *Children's Homes*.

## **CLIFTON ON TEME FRIENDSHIP CLUB**

Meetings in April start with the Stourport Choral Choir on Wednesday 3 April and an illustrated talk by Jerry Johns on his mother's wartime affairs (*Jeanne's War*) on Wednesday 17 April.

At our last meeting in February the speaker was local electrician Sean Hinton who entertained us with tales of his various careers. He has packed so much into his working life that the club requested he come back to finish off the story. March began with the club's 53rd Anniversary lunch which was very well attended; fish and chips and a glass of wine were enjoyed by all.



Meetings start at 2.30pm in Clifton Village Hall. Visitors and new members always welcome.

# Church Matters

by Rev Julia Curtis



This year, the festival of Easter fell very early. Easter Sunday was 31 March, just nine days after the earliest possible date it can be. The day started early for a number of us as we gathered for the 6am dawn service. At St Mary's Stanford that morning, as the dawn chorus filled the air around, we lit a large candle from an outdoor fire and carried the light back into the church building. It's always a wonderful moment when the candle is taken through the doors into the dark building and used to light other hand-held candles. Slowly the church filled with a wonderful glow and we sang a joyful song. Easter had arrived.

By these actions, we symbolically took the light of Christ back into the church building where it was extinguished on a solemn Maundy Thursday. Easter Sunday's Communion bread radiated out across our communities to services at a number of our other churches, including Clifton, Harpley and Shelsley Beauchamp.

Now we move into April, having shared an important time as 12 churches which are seeking to grow together. Through this month, and into the future, we will look for areas where we can share and support each other. I am delighted that Rev Jen Denniston is leading a communion service in Rochford Church at the end of this month and that Rev Robert Barlow has already taken a well-received service in St Kenelm's, Clifton. As ministers we will work across the area as the opportunity allows and get to know each other a bit more.

So how do you grow together when our communities are all very different? Some of the things that come to mind are getting to know each other by spending time together and by listening to each other. Also, by avoiding being judgemental about our differences. It will help to worship in different places across the area, and I encourage you to try the Iona-style services in Hanley Broadheath Village Hall advertised in this magazine. Finally we must laugh and weep together as we actively learn to share the blessings and indeed the frustrations and sadnesses we have.

In many ways it is the way the early church started to develop after the events of the first Easter, so it is no coincidence that throughout this month of April, Sunday by Sunday, we hear stories of how this took place in the Bible book of Acts. It was an exciting time for those early disciples and not without its hiccups and I am sure it will be the same with us. But of one thing I am certain which is, just as God's Spirit led the early church, it will lead us too if we are willing.

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## **EASTER DAY SERVICE AT ALL SAINTS, SHELSLEY BEAUCHAMP**

Do join us for an Easter Family Communion service on Sunday 31 March at 11am. The service will be led by Rev Jen Denniston. We will be sharing bread and wine that will have been blessed at the Easter Day Dawn Service at St Mary's, Stanford at 6am.

The service will be followed by a visit from the Easter Bunny, as well as an Easter egg hunt in the churchyard. It will be lots of fun for all the family!



## **ROGATION SERVICE**

Sunday, 5 May, is Rogation Sunday. Every year there is a wonderful Barn Service at 10.30am at Ann & Sheila Jones' lovely Newhouse Farm, situated approx one mile down the Whitbourne lane (opposite the Lion Inn in Clifton). Often lambs and their mums are very nearby, and everyone then has a short easy walk over the fields to bless the crops, followed by hot dogs, coffee etc. Donations go to the Air Ambulance.

All are warmly welcomed by Ann & Sheila.

## **MOTHERING SUNDAY SIMNEL CAKE**

Simnel cake has been eaten since medieval times as both a rich, sweet treat and also a symbolic ritual. The fruit cake is topped with 11 marzipan balls to represent the 11 apostles of Christ (minus Judas).

This beautiful Simnel cake was kindly baked by Beryl Robson for the Shelsley All Saints Mothering Sunday service. The cake



was then donated to the Clifton 'Warm Space' which meets every Thursday in the village hall.



**CHURCH SERVICES IN CLIFTON, THE SHELSLEYS  
AND LOWER SAPEY (HARPLEY)**

# April 2024

## Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April

**10.30am:** Morning Prayer, St Kenelm's, Clifton  
**10.30am:** Morning Praise, St Bartholomew, Harpley

## Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April

**10.30am:** Family Holy Communion, All Saints,  
Shelsley Beauchamp

## Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April

**10.30am:** Methodist Holy Communion, St Bartholomew, Harpley  
**6.30pm:** Evensong, St Kenelm's, Clifton

## Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April

**10.30am:** Circle Service, St Bartholomew, Harpley

## Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May Rogation Sunday

**10.30am:** A family service to ask for blessings for the community and its sustenance in  
a beautiful farm setting at New House Farm, WR6 6EF. Refreshments to follow.

All services and timings are subject to review and amendment – please check the website  
for updates: [www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)

## CHURCH CONTACTS

Oversight Minister: Rev'd Julia Curtis 01886 853286 [revjuliacurtis@gmail.com](mailto:revjuliacurtis@gmail.com)

Christenings, Weddings, Funerals: Rev Jen Denniston 07783 432017  
[jendenniston@gmail.com](mailto:jendenniston@gmail.com)

Jill Smith 01886 853311 Pat Snelling (Clifton) 01886 812443

All Saints, Shelsley Beauchamp and St Andrew, Shelsley Walsh

Church Wardens:

Kate Hurst 01886 812184 [kathrynhurst@btopenworld.com](mailto:kathrynhurst@btopenworld.com)  
Holly Perks 01886 812369 [hollyperks@me.com](mailto:hollyperks@me.com)

St Kenelm's, Clifton contacts:

Ruth Wilson (PCC Vice Chair & Warm Space) [ruth.wilson38@btinternet.com](mailto:ruth.wilson38@btinternet.com)  
Anne Gayden (PCC minutes secretary) & Jackie Gilbert

St Bartholomew's, Harpley Church Wardens:

David Richards 07765 866489 Liz Younge [erckuk@hotmail.com](mailto:erckuk@hotmail.com)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### April

- 4 Clifton Parish Council meeting, VH 7.40pm
- 9 Clifton WI meeting, '*Thailand*' - Sue Barnes, Clifton VH 7.30pm
- 11 Teme Valley Wildlife Group meeting, Stoke Bliss & Kyre VH 7.30pm
- 12-14 Beer Festival, Talbot Hotel, Knightwick 11am-11pm
- 13 Coffee Morning, St Kenelm's Church, Clifton 10.30am-12noon
- 13 Film: *Oppenheimer* Clifton VH 7pm
- 14 Teme Valley Market, Talbot Hotel, Knightwick 10.30-11am
- 14 Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb Season Opener
- 16 Clifton WI Health and Wellbeing Evening, VH 7.30pm
- 17 Friendship Club talk: *Jeanne's War* Clifton VH 2.30pm
- 19 Worcestershire CC Mobile Library - Clifton VH 9.45am-10.15am
- 20 Friends of St Kenelm's & 1st Clifton Rainbows coffee morning 10am
- 20 Film: *On the Basis of Sex* Little Witley VH, 7.30pm for 8pm
- 26 Clifton WI Health and Wellbeing Evening Clifton VH 7.30pm

### May

- 4-5 Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb MHC Championship
- 5 Rogation Service, Newhouse Farm, Clifton 10.30am
- 6 Unveiling of Peter Collins memorial, Shelsley Walsh 11am
- 14 Shelsleys Parish Council Annual meeting, VH
- 15 Friendship Club AGM, Clifton VH 2.30pm
- 17 'Refresh, Restyle, Recycle' event, Clifton VH 6.30pm
- 18 Coffee morning, the Old Vicarage, Clifton 10am-12noon
- 18 'Croquet and Bouquets', Shelsley VH 4pm-8pm

### June

- 1-2 Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb MHC Championship
- 8 Big Breakfast at the Old House, Clifton 9am-1pm

### Shelsley Walsh Hill Climb events 2024

- 14 April Season Opener
- 4-5 May Midland Hill Climb Championship
- 1-2 June Midland Hill Climb Championship
- 30 June Vintage Meeting
- 20-21 July Classic Nostalgia
- 10-11 August Midland Hill Climb Championship
- 14-15 September Harvest Festival Meeting

## MICHELLE ALEXANDER MOVES ON

Clifton's Parish Clerk, Michelle Alexander, is moving on. After five years of administering the Parish Council's meetings and business, she has tendered her resignation in order to pursue a career as a full-time Independent Celebrant.

"Based in a small village, in the Malvern Hills area, I am centrally placed to cover Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire," said Michelle. "I offer services which can be religious or non-religious and will travel to surrounding crematoriums, chapels, cemeteries, green burial grounds or whichever location you choose to hold your service.

"I've really enjoyed being Clerk for Clifton and meeting so many people, who have now become friends. It is sad to leave but I'm excited to be able to increase my work as a Celebrant. I wish whoever is the new Clerk, the very best of luck for their future in the parish."



"We are desperately sorry to see Michelle go," said Parish Council Chairman John Bowden. Clifton Parish Council's meeting on 4 April will be Michelle's last as Parish Clerk.

In addition to Clifton, Michelle has also acted as Clerk to Lower Sapey, Martley, Wichenford & Kenswick, North Bromyard Group and Acton Beauchamp Group.

## AMBRIDGE SEQUEL

The article in last month's *Teme Triangle* (Was Clifton the inspiration for Ambridge?) prompted Clifton parish councillor Sid Haywood to recall listening the *The Archers* in 1951 at his family home opposite the Lion Inn.

"My father Frank Haywood knew Godfrey Baseley, who created the long-running Radio 4 serial," says Sid. "I was aged about five at the time and had just started school in the village".

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