

PARISH NEWS
OF
ST WEONARDS, GARWAY, ORCOP,
PENCOYD, TRETIRE, MICHAELCHURCH,
HENTLAND AND HOARWITHY

APRIL 2024



'CUT TREES IN SPRING' BY PAT MACRAE

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VILLAGE INFORMATION, PHOTOS AND NEWS www.stw.org.uk

Samaritans	National Helpline	08457 909090
	Hereford	116 123 free calls
		0330 094 5717 local call rates apply
		jo@samaritans.org

HOPEline UK (Prevention of Young Suicide).....0870 1704000.....01978 367333

West Mercia Police

Safer Neighbourhood Officers: PC 21260 Martin Gillett 07970 544262, PC 21349 Chris Yarwood 07773 042896, PC 21847 Jenny Rees 07929 783693, PC 21946 Jack Davies 07971 051386.

Police Community Support Officers: PCSO 6324 Carol Marsh 07890 524667, PCSO 40259 Hayley Warne 07773 052560, PCSO 40272 Lewis Thomas 07773 051508, PCSO 40559 Tally Hunt 07773 054156.

How to get in touch: 101 to talk to your local SNT or report a crime.
herefordsouthside.snt@westmercia.police.uk www.westmercia.police.uk

Only call 999 in an emergency, when a crime is in progress or life is in danger.

PARISH NEWS

THE ARCHENFIELD GROUP

For enquiries on baptisms, funerals and wedding please contact the Rural Dean:
Rev. Sheila Anthony, sheila@saintintraining.co.uk, 07775588716 and your churchwarden.

Letter from Archdeacon Fiona



April marks the 100th anniversary of the first broadcast by a monarch of the United Kingdom, when King George V opened the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in north London in April 1924. The speech lasts about six and a half minutes, and you can hear it in all its scratchily-recorded glory on YouTube.

I wonder if anyone then had any idea how much broadcasting would change in the coming century? We now take for granted the fact that we can see and hear almost anyone in public life at any time thanks to a 24-hour media. TikTok and Instagram have brought broadcasting within reach of any of us with a smartphone.

Communication seems to be hard-wired into us as human beings. That shouldn't surprise us, because our God is a God who communicates. Back in the earliest chapters of Genesis, it's the voice of God that brings creation into being. When Jesus is awoken by his terrified disciples in the middle of a storm, it's his words shouted into the tumult that calm the winds and the waves. When the Holy Spirit comes upon the apostles at Pentecost, they speak the message of Christ crucified and risen in words their hearers can understand.

The story is told of a rabbi who could never get further in his reading of the Scriptures than Genesis 1:2, "And God said." The wonder of a God who speaks was too much for him to take in.

I wonder if that's why we love podcasts, audiobooks, and the radio so much – because it's as if someone were sitting next to us and chatting? As if we're listening in on a conversation that we're invited to be part of? I wonder, too, if that's why words can wound us as well as heal us – because they go deep into the heart of our being?

The apostle James talked about the power of speech, how hard it is to tame the tongue, and how inconsistent we are when we say, "Praise God," in one breath and in the next run down another human being. Those are challenging words in an era where talk is easy, but we do well to take them to heart.

There are other times when we are slow to speak, perhaps out of anxiety or fear. Once such time can be when we try to talk about our faith. In this, our Diocesan Year of Faith, we are all encouraged to have confidence that the story we have to share in our Christian faith is one people want to hear, and to become more comfortable talking about our faith.

We may never become those who broadcast to the world, as King George V did 100 years ago, but I wonder how we could learn to "broadcast" our faith in simple ways, and speak words of life to those who are longing to hear them?

Archdeacon Fiona

SERVICE ROTA

For enquiries about baptisms, weddings or funeral services, please contact the Rural Dean: Rev. Sheila Anthony, Sheila Anthony randaruraldean@gmail.com 07775588716 and the relevant churchwarden.

For any changes please check the benefice website www.stw.org.uk

Sunday 14 th April	11.00 am	Orcop, Holy Communion
Sunday 21 st April	10.00 am	St Weonards, All Age, Communion
	10.00 am	Hoarwithy Holy Communion
	6.30 pm	Evening Prayer with choir from St Mary's Ross
Sunday 28 th April	9.15 am	Hentland, Holy Communion
Sunday 5 th May	10.00 am	Hentland Benefice Communion

Sunday 14th April

Rev Paul Arnold

Sunday 28th April

Rev Roy Crew (Holy Communion)

PRESCRIPTION COLLECTION



23rd April Chris Strange 07970614933

!!! Magazine News !!!

Please send WORD documents as our software cannot copy PDFs. Please keep fonts and presentation as simple as possible! Flyers in wonderful colour really do not work! Articles of general interest are always welcome. Let the inner writer in you flourish! Do you have an unusual activity or hobby? Tell us about it, please!

VILLAGE PAGES

ST WEONARDS

It seems to have been quite busy during Lent and Easter time. Despite the unexpected flurry of snow, it was good to join people from across the benefice at Pencoyd for the communion service on March 3rd which was led by Rev Mark Melluish, the Diocesan Mission Enabler. The benefice choir sang an anthem and led the singing. I am most grateful to them for rehearsing and singing regularly at this service at the beginning of each month. It definitely enhances our worship.

Canon Julian Reindorp, a retired priest from Richmond London led us through the Last Hour on Good Friday reflecting on the crucifixion story with sensitivity and insight. He also celebrated our Easter Communion which is always a joyful occasion. As always, the church was beautifully decorated by the flower team and our thanks go to them for their support.

The Lent Lunch was a friendly occasion. We enjoyed meeting some people from Ewyas Harold as well as local friends. Thanks to everyone's generosity we raised £140 for the Hereford Food Bank. Many thanks to all who came and to soup makers!

Does anyone have an unusual vehicle tucked away in a barn or shed? We hope to have a variety of them at the fete and open garden at Treago on Sunday 2nd June. Do get in touch and let us share your special vehicle.

The magical opera *The Magic Flute* will be performed on June 7th by the *Wild Arts* company who were such a success last year. Last year we borrowed chairs from the sixth form college, but they are doing exams that time so no chairs from them this year! If anyone has some folding or outdoor type chairs that we could borrow, we would be glad if you could make contact. Tickets are limited to 180 so book soon if you want to come through the *Wild Arts* website. *Nearly half the tickets have sold already so do not delay if you are planning to come.*

Happy Easter!

Richard Mynors, churchwarden.

Village Hall Breakfast 9.30 to 12.30

Sunday 14th April



All are welcome. Please come along for breakfast and a chat.
Selection of cereal, porridge and full English breakfast, toast, marmalade, jam,
tea, coffee, and fruit juice.

Enjoy your breakfast at the village hall this morning, with someone else to do all the cooking.
Enquiries**Gwyneth Williams**... 01981 580442 or Pam **Craig**...01981 580433.

Annual fund raiser for the village hall.

GARWAY

Garway Church

The Friends of Garway Church have been busy making the church yard look nice and tidy ready for spring. And the church interior is also looking well cared for.

Thank you to our team of mowers, gardeners, cleaners, and flower arrangers.

The PCC and Friends are also planning an exhibition which will have a permanent home in the South Chapel. More on this when I next write!

We are not planning to have any services in the church over Easter, but if you would like to go to an Easter service, St. Weonards - our friends and neighbours - will have a last hour reflective service on Good Friday at 2.00pm, and an Easter Day a family communion at 10.00am. So do come along and join us.

Tracy Somerville, churchwarden

Garway Stitchers



Our dates are 3rd and 17th for April from 10.30 – 12.30. Our next two panels are progressing well. The Garway Common is our second panel, and we are busy bringing all the stitched.

As always you are welcome to join us, why not add your own stitched leaf to the panel? There is plenty of help on hand to guide you.

For more details, contact **Tracy** 01981 580263.

Garway Village Hall

This month has seen a wide variety of events and activities in the hall. Check out the table tennis group which is going from strength to strength – contact cecibelegan@gmail.com. And locals were treated to a fantastic evening of beautiful, stirring voices from Monmouth Male Voice Choir and as ever, fabulous food served up by Christine and the team with the SPICE girls and Garway Live The hall was also packed for local band Nuadha – standing room only! – check out the Garway Live facebook page for more wonderful events to come in the hall. You might like to think about using the hall as a “home office” space - info@garwayhall.org.

So much going on sign up for the newsletter at <https://www.garwayhall.org/>



**The Spice Girls invite you to the
April Coffee Morning
Tuesday April 2nd 10.15am
In Garway Village Hall
Homemade cake, teas and coffee,
Post Office, library and good company**





Well, what a start to the year we've had. First of all there was the "Nuadha" jazz quartet. We had so many people turn up that we used all the chairs and still had several people standing. It was a wonderful night of lovely laid-back music made extra special as the band was led by our own Chris Egan on various forms of saxophone and his son Mayu on keyboards. As usual, Christine's snacks were delightful.

This was followed by the Monmouth Male Voice Choir at the end of February. They provided us with a rousing night of music in both Welsh and English, that can only be produced by a large choir. This evening was done in conjunction with the Spice Girls who provided the superb meal. Definitely a night to remember.

Keeping up with our aim of bringing you as wide a range of music as we possibly can, look out for a band called "Stringfellows" with amazing vocals from Dawn Savage. It's led by one of the top unsung guitarists in the country, Ray "Taff" Williams. Ray fronted the Bonnie Tyler Band for a number of years as well as being in great demand as a session musician. They will be playing Garway on Saturday 13th of April with all the usual additions and all for an admission price of £12 and £6 if you are lucky enough to be under 18. Advance tickets are available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/garwaylive

Graham Bevan

GARWAY HERITAGE GROUP

Tuesday 16 April, 7.30pm
Garway Hall

The Restoration of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal

After a very brief GHG AGM, we will welcome Ralph Barber, Chairman of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust. He will be talking about the history of our local canal and its restoration. The canal route is 34 miles long between Hereford and Gloucester and there are many obstacles in its path to reopening - but work is underway, and you may have noticed some of the progress at Malswick as you pass along the B4215. Come along and find out about these exciting recent developments and enjoy some refreshments and a chat. Entry £6 (free to members).

This is the final talk for this season - please check our website for details of our summer visits and our new programme of talks starting on Tuesday 17th September.

www.garwayheritagegroup.co.uk. **Clare Adamson**



TUESDAY APRIL 9TH 7.30pm GARWAY HALL £5.00

A LIFE ON THE FARM

It's unlikely that you've ever seen anything quite like *A LIFE ON THE FARM*. This documentary is a cross between Monty Python, Countryfile and Psycho. In 2006, the director's family found a VHS tape containing a full-length home movie that their eccentric farming neighbour, Charles Carson, had made. Sitting down together to watch it with his parents, the then 10-year-old Oliver Harding, was disappointed when his shocked mother and father turned the film off after only minutes.

Many years later Oliver dug the film out again and realised it was something of a bizarre masterpiece. He made the footage he found into this documentary which has gained fans around the world. It repeatedly introduces viewers to himself and his farm in the wonderfully named Somerset village of Huish Champflower. Lone farmer Charles Carson revels in explicit footage of cows giving birth, horses stealing his hat, mummified cats by the fireside and cardboard skeletons jousting on tractors, all helped along by cardboard captions. But what starts out seeming to be a comic romp turns out to be much more – a picture of the sometimes harsh and isolated existence of a farmer and the farmer's way of coping with the cycle of life and death by employing home-spun creativity and a camera lens. The result is a mix of the weirdly odd-ball and the surprisingly tender and poignant.

As a bonus, we'll also be showing a couple of home-grown short videos starring the countryside around Garway and some misshaped veg. Yes – an evening of bizarre fun, laced with buttercream cakes and Pinot Grigio – Flicks at its best. More information if you visit www.facebook.com/GarwayFlicks

Corinne Westacott

Green Garway Book Group

We are back to reading fiction this month and are talking about *Little Wing* by Freya North. It is a story of family secrets, artistic yearnings, the beautiful island of Harris in the Outer Hebrides, Jimi Hendrix and cups of tea! The story is told from the points of view of the three main characters.

In 1969 Florence is a 16-year-old schoolgirl who finds herself pregnant after a one-night dalliance at a party and is banished by her family to an uncle in the Outer Hebrides. She soon settles in grows to love her new life.

Dougie grew up on Harris but leaves for art college and a career in London as a photographer.

And finally Nell, working at a community cafe in Colchester, visiting her mother with dementia in a care home and looking after old friend Fred.

Nell soon finds out a family secret that sends her off to Harris and we gradually discover how these three lives are connected. The descriptions of Harris are stunning and really evoke the harsh and bleak scenery and the characters are believable and endearing. Rating: 4/5

If you're interested in coming along to the next book group please join our Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/489872936450081> or send an email to greengarwaybg@gmail.com. We read books about the outdoor world, nature, social issues, travel, fiction and non-fiction. Everyone is welcome.

Next meetings are as follows:

8 April - *The Arbornaut* by Meg Lowman

13 May - *A Room Made of Leaves* by Kate Grenville

Dates for the diary: Friday 24th May 7.30 pm The Garway Piano Trio. The Bishop's Palace, Hereford

Archenfield Arts 11th May, Garway Church from 10.30am

Back again for your delight – a wonderful day of performances from locals – choirs, singers, instrumentalists, actors, poems – once again this is your chance to join in, or just come along to enjoy a day of listening to and supporting the performers – and there will of course be food and cake, courtesy of the Spice Girls, who always keep audience and performers well fed and watered!

All ages and skill levels welcomed! Accompanist available. All receive a warm welcome and hearty applause. If you would like to take part, please contact: archenfieldarts@gmail.com

ORCOP

ORCOP NEWS: April 2024

Over the next two months, the service arrangements that have kept the church going in the absence of an incumbent priest for over three years will come to an end. We are greatly indebted to Bishop Anthony Priddis and the Revd. Crispin Pemberton for taking the monthly 11am communion services, usually alternating from month to month. Both have delivered inspiration and optimism in a period of uncertainty.

Crispen's final Orcop service will be on April 14th and Anthony's on May 12th. Please come along if you can to join in expressing our thanks for all they have done.

There will be no Easter services at Orcop this year.

There will be no service at Orcop Church in June and we are encouraged to join St. Weonards for this final month before the installation of the Revd. Angie as our new incumbent vicar.

The APCM (essentially the AGM of the St. Weonards Benefice) will be held on April 25th in Orcop Parish Hall, starting at 7pm. All are welcome. Given that we are about to embark on a new chapter in the long history of our Benefice churches, this will be an important event and you are encouraged to attend and express your views as to the way forward.

Don't forget the "Churchyard Bingo", advertised separately.

Margaret Fletcher, Churchwarden

Flower and Cleaning Rota: Cleaning rota (no Flowers): Mrs. W Dudfield



Your Magazine Needs You!

We need one or two more distributors to deliver magazines each month in the Orcop Hill area. It is a pleasant job, depending on the weather of course, providing a couple of hours of exercise (if done on foot or bicycle!) with numerous opportunities on the way to chat with subscribers.

If you are interested, please email me: garratt_peter@hotmail.com or ring on **01981 580418**.

Peter Garratt

Orcop Hall

Warm Space Coffee Mornings

We plan to continue our popular coffee mornings on the third Thursday of each month from April through to December.

All are welcome from 10.30 – 12.30

This month will be 18th April

Quiz night on Friday 5th April at 7:00pm

Teams of up to 6 people.

Entry £7.50 per person, this includes the quiz and buffet supper.

Bring your own drinks, but tea and coffee will be available.

Hope to see you there.

Peta



Do you walk any of the public footpaths around Orcop and Garway? Do you walk a regular circuit from your own front door? If either of your answers is 'yes' then you may be interested to hear the new Orcop and Garway Footpaths Officer is launching an "Adopt a Stroll" initiative.

"Adopt a Stroll" is to encourage regular walkers of the 18 public footpaths in the area to get involved by adopting a smaller section of the footpath network to monitor and maintain throughout the year. Walkers in the scheme can help keep local footpaths accessible and vegetation trimmed back more regularly by reporting their concerns and helping with minor clearance of their chosen footpath.

If you're interested in adopting a section of footpath near you or you'd like more information on how you might help to keep our local footpaths open, walkable and in a good state of repair, please call **Tracy** on 01981 540 631 or email orcopfootpaths@gmail.com

Orcop Hall Craft Workshops

Felting with Mandy Nash ♦ Saturday 13th April ♦ 10 - 4.30 ♦ cost £55

Learn how to convert fluffy wool fleece into a hardwearing and functional bag. All materials and equipment will be provided but students need to bring at least two old towels and a plastic bag to carry their work home.

Weaving – 2 days with Carey Godwin ♦ Saturday & Sunday 18th&19th May 10 – 4 each day ♦ course fee £100 ♦ (£95 if booked before 20th April)

Each participant will learn how to set up a Rigid Heddle Loom and weave a scarf length piece of fabric to take home. All materials and equipment will be provided and are included in the course fee.

To book, or for more info - contact Gill Bannerman – gill.bannerman@outlook.com

**Orcop PCC Churchyard Bingo
Orcop Parish Hall**

Friday 19th April 2024
Doors open 7.00pm. Eyes Down 7.30pm
Everyone Welcome

Donations of prizes and cakes - please contact **Julia Garlick** 01981 580 515
or **Margaret Fletcher** 01981 580790

ANOTHER SKIRRID?

ANOTHER SKIRRID?

THE PLOT THICKENS.....

In response to my article in the March issue, I was delighted to receive the following from a friend of Corinne Westacott, who lives close to Marcley Hill:

“Our event is known as The Wonder, and the resulting scooped and crumpled stretch of hillside is distinctive, just a mile or so south of us. This landslide has come up often in local stories, but I haven't seen such a detailed and precise account as this. Very interesting! I didn't know the Skirrid had seen a similar event, though the myth of it being linked to the crucifixion does make it seem unlikely to be simultaneous with the one in Kynaston? What makes The Wonder fascinating to me is that it occurred so recently, in geological times. Mind you, about 40 years ago I sensed a tremor in my Gran's place on the Malvern Hills which apparently originated near Birmingham.”

The legend that links the Skirrid event to the Crucifixion is, of course, fictitious, though powerful in its symbolism. The Skirrid event is probably much more recent and could indeed be contemporaneous with “The Wonder”.

Corinne has suggested that the movement of the hillside at Cwmyoy, which left the church with a pronounced displacement, may have been the result of the same seismic event.

Anyone out there with more plot thickeners?

Peter Garratt

TRETIRE WITH MICHAELCHURCH AND PENCOYD

Borderlines

March has been the month of the *Borderlines Film Festival*, apparently, the largest rural film festival in England. As some of the privileged retired folk, we find ourselves faced with a bewildering choice of films from many different countries, but always with sub titles. There is also huge range of subject matter, but we now find we are too slow to read the subtitles and watch the film, so we tend to choose English Films. There are many different venues, ranging from town and city theatres, to small village halls, in Herefordshire, Shropshire, Malvern and The Border Marches. Some are shown in the afternoon, but mostly they are evening viewings. You can book your tickets from The Courtyard in Hereford, and either have them sent to you, or pick them up.

As I write this, we have only been to one film so far, at the Courtyard in Hereford, and it was "One Life". This starred Johnny Flynn as the young "Nicky" Winton, and Anthony Hopkins as the older Nicky, with Helena Bonham Carter as his feisty mother. It was a very moving film, telling the story of Nicholas, "Nicky" Winton, a London Stock Broker, born of Jewish parents, who is deeply concerned at the plight of many Jewish families. Having fled the rise of Nazis in Germany and Austria, they are now living in desperate conditions in Prague, and under the threat of Nazi invasion. He travels to Prague and works there with other volunteers to prepare as many children as possible to escape by train to England, and back home, to find families in London, willing to give these children a home. A total of 669 children make the journey to England and are taken in by families across London, but the Prague borders are shut before many other needy children can be transported. Winton lives haunted by the knowledge of the hundreds of children he failed to rescue for 50 years. However in 1988 he is invited as a guest on the TV programme, "That's Life". During this programme, he discovers the extent of his, and the other volunteers success in creating homes for all these 669 children, who the adult audience surrounding him on this show. As a result of this experience, he is able to begin to make peace with his past.

He was knighted in 2003 by Queen Elizabeth for "services to humanity", and in 2014, was awarded the highest honour of the Czech Republic, "The order of the White Lion". He died in 2015 aged 106.

Margaret Oubridge

Editor's note: I am grateful for Margaret's contribution as there was little parish news so she generously agreed to write this review.

HOARWITHY AND HENTLAND

The Funeral for Marion Rathbone, a long-time resident of Hoarwithy, took place in St. Catherine's Church on 9th February and a full church paid their respects. The donations received by the Undertakers were shared between St Catherine's Church Hoarwithy and St. Issui's Church Patricio and we would like to thank Lois, Quentin and family for their generous donation and wish them every blessing at this sad time.

Our Lent Lunch was held at the New Harp, Hoarwithy, courtesy, Katie and Simeon. Our thanks to them and all those who provided refreshments. We raised £207.00 for The Midlands Air Ambulance.

Peter Pember

Date for the diary: Saturday June 15th Concert with the Musical and Amicable Society.

An unusual activity

Did you know that we have two senior Kendoka practices in Orcop Village Hall on the occasional Sunday morning?

Kendo is a traditional martial art whose fascinating history goes back to feudal Japan and the days of the samurai, eventually becoming the discipline that it is today. Sometimes described as Japanese sword fencing but it's not really. In fact the world ruling body never mention 'hitting people with sticks' but focus on the study of kendo as a Way (Ken – sword, Do – way) whose purpose is to develop the human character. The All Japan Kendo Federation has this to say, "Kendo is a way of life where successive generations can learn together. The prime objective of kendo is to encourage the practitioner to discover and define their way in life through training in the techniques of kendo. Thus, the practitioner will be able to develop a rich outlook on life and be able to put the culture of kendo into use, thereby benefitting from its value in their daily lives through increased social vigour."

I started kendo in the 80's, had a very long break from formal practice when family and work took over but I never lost the fundamental values kendo teaches. I returned to practice about eight years ago and hold the rank of Yondan (4th dan). Think of that a bit like the grading progression in karate or judo with 1st Dan being the first degree 'black belt'.

When you watch kendo on YouTube, you're watching a full contact martial art, with lots of shouting and strikes with the 'shinai' (a bamboo sword). It looks aggressive and sometimes sore! It's none of those

things, disciplining yourself to make the perfect strike is a lifelong objective and one you'll never achieve. And that's the point. Kendo is about defeating yourself, not your opponent.

So many benefits; self-improvement, better coordination, focus, fitness, concentration and self-control. Great for your physical and mental wellbeing.

Age isn't a barrier, anyone (male and female) with just a basic level of fitness can take part. You're welcome to pop down to the Parish Hall on either March 24th, April 7th or 28th from 9:00 to 10:00 to watch a seniors practice with myself and Adrian, Godan (5th dan). Having its roots in Japan, please take your shoes off before entering the hall. Unfortunately the nearest club is in Cheltenham (which I attend) but I'd be happy to take you with me if you'd like to take it up. The next beginners course starts on April 16th.

Any questions, more info, ping me an email; kendo@kdbc.co.uk

Gordon Downie

Wildlife in our Garden

The garden at this time of year seems to be going through a very quiet spell. We don't see a lot of activity, nor hear much birdsong. The same birds that we have seen through the winter keep coming to the feeders and the robin sings his wistful song. It is, after all, the tail end of winter, as though Nature is quietly gathering herself ready to spring forth as soon as conditions are right. We do have a few early awakenings though: already the bulbs that have been dormant underground for most of the year have yet again pushed through into the light, getting ahead of other plants with their vivid flowers and spiky leaves.

Winter presents challenges for all living things, and those which inhabit our temperate climate have all had to evolve some strategy or other for getting through it. These strategies are really surprisingly diverse.

First there is the cold. Freezing could be fatal, so those creatures which have no internal source of warmth, such as insects, spiders crustaceans and molluscs, whose temperatures vary with their surroundings, must either find a well-insulated place above zero degrees in which to wait, or in some cases produce chemicals in their body fluids to act as anti-freeze.



The other problem is shortage of food. This is especially challenging for birds; they need more food than usual to generate enough heat to keep their body temperatures stable. So, in winter we see them redouble their efforts to forage. Some birds avoid the problem by migrating to warmer places, though that could not be described as a soft option when you consider the effort involved. I wonder why hardly any birds hibernate when it is quite common amongst mammals?

Hibernation involves allowing the body to cool enough to reduce the temperature gradient between it and its surroundings. This slows heat loss and, by also slowing its metabolic rate, reduces the body's demands for food. Quite a clever trick, especially in countries where the winter is long and hard. But to change the way one's body works can't be done in an instant. Time is needed for all the biochemical mechanisms to be triggered and to come into play in the right order, so it may not be the best option for mammals in climates like ours where the temperature is constantly changing. It may be better to come out of one's burrow for a short while and grab some food when the weather is mild.

Although we don't see them often, we know there are foxes and rabbits about. What we do see are a rat who lives under a compost heap and those two squirrels I have described in earlier articles. They are not seen together so much now. Lately it is the one we think is the male that comes to feed on his own; perhaps the other is spending most of her time up on a nest, feeding her young who would be due about this time of year.

John Oubridge, 9th March 2024

Ross-on-Wye Choral Society Spring Concert
7.30 pm Saturday 13th April 2024
St Mary's Parish Church Ross-on-Wye

Haydn Nelson Mass, Boyce Symphony No.2, Haydn Inसानae et Vanae Curae
Bach Sinfonia to Cantata No.42. Haydn The Heavens are Telling (from The Creation)

Orchestra de Cymru, Conductor Adrian Taylor
Soprano Hannah Davey, Alto Julie Curnow
Tenor Tim Burton, Bass David McKee

Purchase from River Music, Broad Street Ross-on-Wye. Adults £15 Students/Under 18s £5
Ticket Secretary – 078379 22256, or on the door

Garden Notes

My garden appears to be under threat. I have noticed that my husband is wandering round with a large tape measure, and I suspect that he is trying to work out how he can squeeze in another hen run. We already have one run containing miscellaneous Warrens, bantams and a handsome bantam cockerel. We have a second run for our little call ducks and now we have a generous gift of another four bantams. They are keeping the ducks company at the moment, but with no effort at all, they are able to hop onto the roof of their house, then onto the fence or into the damson tree. The next second, we have two small dogs belting round the garden trying to catch bantams. I need to put my garden designer hat on and do some lateral thinking before one of my borders disappears within an enclosure of wooden posts, wire mesh and netting.



There is a shady border by the summerhouse that I am particularly pleased with right now (early March), which is a lovely combination of textures and greens. At the back is a small spotted laurel with two box balls in front. In between are several *Helleborus foetidus*, which are displaying their lovely clusters of maroon-edged, pale green nodding flowers. Although this Hellebore is described as perennial, it tends to die after flowering. I will collect some seed, but I am hoping that they might self-seed anyway. They really are very handsome; even without the flowers, the dark green palmate leaves are highly decorative and provide a lovely contrast to other

foliage. In front of the whole group are some sculptural leafy ferns. A red-stemmed Cornus would combine well with a group like this too.

This group is so effective, that I am planning to include interesting foliage elsewhere in the garden. I have just received my seed order and along with the tomatoes, peppers, and vegetables, I ordered *Eryngium giganteum* 'Silver Ghost' and *Cerinth* 'Purple Belle'. The *Eryngium* is biennial, and I am hoping that this might self-seed too. This is, after all, related to the variety that nineteenth century gardener Miss Willmott used to secretly scatter in other people's gardens. I love the spiky ruff of bracts around the cone of tiny flowers, and the bees love the flowers too. They are a ghostly silvery-grey, hence the nickname of Miss Willmott's Ghost. The variety I have bought will



be heavily frosted in silver. It may not like the soil here and I should have learned by now to choose flowers that are more suitable for it, but as I already have a few Eryngiums I am willing to try it.

The annual Cerinthe 'Purple Belle', will also give an interesting foliage effect, with its strange purple-blue flowers and fleshy blue-green bracts. Cerinthe was very fashionable about ten years ago and I remember growing it in pots. I have yet to try it in a border but if it is happy it may self-seed too. I'm all for effortless gardening!

Julie Davies

A Peek in the Bookshop



I'm very excited to be interviewing author and journalist Jenny Kleeman on 27 March to chat about her new book ***The Price of Life: In Search of What We're Worth and Who Decides***. The book raises some really interesting points ... why did people who died after being stabbed in the London Bridge terrorist attack get less compensation than those who were run over? And how much does it cost to hire a hitman and how the move towards a cashless economy is making life tricky for them. There should certainly be lots to discuss, and there are some tickets still available.

Last month I wrote about Chantal Lyon's book called *Groundbreakers* that is about the reintroduction of wild boar to the Forest of Dean. This month sees the publication of ***Cull of the Wild*** by Hugh Warwick which explores the complicated nature of culling invasive species to protect other species. It sounds like a book that will spark some debate and challenge some preconceptions and George Monbiot has hailed it as "fascinating, intelligent and indispensable".

Some of you may have read the Booker Prize shortlisted *The Trees* by Percival Everett and we're excited to read his new novel ***James*** which reimagines Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* telling it from the point of view of the enslaved Jim. We'll be getting special signed editions in the shop with sprayed edges, you won't know what way round to keep it on the bookshelf!

And for the children, ***Black Hole Cinema Club*** by Christopher Edge is sure to be a big hit. Lucas and his friends are swept up in an epic adventure when they go off to their local cinema. The author says he wanted to write a story that captured the immersiveness of watching ET at the cinema when he was young, and this is a real rollercoaster of a story.

Hope to see you in the shop soon. **Julie, Bookseller at Rossiter Books** www.rossiterbooks.co.uk

Rhubarb Pudding Recipe

Some years ago I shared this recipe but thought it might be useful to include it here again. Searching into the depths of the freezer I found a bag of rhubarb! We have also just eaten the last of our apples but the very last few were only good for cooking. So here is a really delicious pudding that even rhubarb deniers enjoy! **Fiona Mynors, Editor**

750g rhubarb or rhubarb and apple or what fruit you might have lurking in a corner!

75g soft brown sugar (or demerara or muscovado)

75g softened butter

250g granulated sugar (I use less for taste preference)

Grated rind of orange (if not available some orange juice will do)

Grated rind and juice of a lemon

5 eggs separated.

50g flour (I tried it with gluten free and it really did not quite work. Tasted good but sloppy!)

1/3 pt of milk

Wash and chop roughly the rhubarb and apples. Put in large ovenproof dish with a very little orange juice and brown sugar.

Cook 350F/180C/ Gas 4 until soft. About 20 mins. Set aside to cool.

Beat butter and sugar until soft. Mix in grated orange (if you have it or leave out), lemon rind and lemon juice. Beat in egg yolks. It looks a bit messy but it's fine! Flour mixed in and milk.

Whisk egg whites to stiffness and fold into mixture and put onto fruit. Put dish in oven in roasting tin with water about halfway up.

Bake for about 40 minutes at 350F/180C/Gas 4. Keep a watch towards the end. It should be firm to touch and golden brown. It freezes well. We like it warm with yogurt. *Enjoy!*

Book Review

***Unnatural Causes* by Dr Richard Shepherd**

Richard Shepherd is one of the UK's foremost forensic pathologists who has long been a leader in his field, having been involved in many high-profile investigations, including Stephen Lawrence, the Twin Towers, Princess Diana, the Hungerford massacre, the Marchioness disaster on the Thames, and the Clapham rail crash.

This book is both grimly detailed and beautiful – we are invited to marvel at the complexity of the human body whilst also confronting the worst that humans can inflict on one another, and the immensity of nature in its fury. We see the respect with which Dr Shepherd treats both the dead and the living: *“The meeting [with bereaved relatives] introduced me - or, perhaps no introduction was necessary - to the awful collision between the silent, unfeeling dead and immensity of feeling they generate in the living.”*

His subjects on the dissection table are often those at the margins of society – gang members, those under arrest, the homeless. His compassion for them and for the lives they have led shines through, leading him to initiate a campaign to revise the rules about restraint on arrest or in prison. He also observes that black prisoners with sickle cell disease are at greater risk of dying during restraining procedures and he researches the reasons behind this and ways in which restraint can be undertaken safely.

Chilling to read is his assertion that, whilst we might all be under the illusion that postmortems are based purely on science and objective evidence, there are “fashions” in diagnoses and in assertions about cause of death. *“I’m sorry to tell you that the purity of scientific truth rarely cuts through contemporary social attitudes.”* These trends are brought to the fore when he appears in family court proceedings to decide whether a family might keep a new baby, following a previous child's death. The accuracy of the autopsy finding on that first child will dictate the future of the second.

Shepherd's appearances in court are traumatic and long-winded with a plethora of barristers representing assorted interests, and with much hanging on his postmortem conclusions. Individual barristers have a stake in pulling to pieces Shepherd's conclusions and testimony to plead their client's case, and relentlessly calling his professional judgement into question is part of the process. *“In forensic medicine it is amazing how often you find just one exceptional exception. Followed always by a defence barrister trying to make it sound commonplace”.*

He does not shy away from spelling out the toll that his profession (and his singular devotion to it) has had on his marriage and on family life; nor on his mental health – later in life he suffers a breakdown and is diagnosed with PTSD; hardly surprising when you think back to the “production line” of bodies (each one a loved person) that have passed before him at major disasters.

Also chilling is the fact that his profession has steadily been eroded over the years by creeping privatisation, to the detriment of many promising careers and respect for the work that forensic pathologists do on our behalf and on behalf of the cause of upholding justice.

Oh – and by the way – Shepherd smokes 20 a day.

Hilary Smallwood

Saint of the Month

Editor's comment: Over the years various people send in articles of general interest. A Lay Reader from Sussex has sent me some information on well-known saints.



The saint of the month just has to be St George. His story is set in a Palestinian town called Lydda in about 300 AD. It was a beautiful town, but in the hills nearby there lived a large dragon, and every day it came down to the gates for food, and the people of Lydda used to give it two sheep to make it go away. Eventually they ran out of sheep, so the only thing they could do was to give it *people* to eat. They had a complicated system to decide who was going to be eaten next, and one day it was the turn of the king's beautiful daughter. Like all princesses in stories, she was just about to marry a handsome prince, but she was also very brave, and so she said, 'Oh well, I won't need my wedding dress for my wedding, so I will wear it for the dragon instead'.

So the next day at lunchtime there she was, tied up outside the gates wearing her wedding dress, waiting for the dragon to arrive. But just as she started to smell the approaching dragon, a soldier called George, whom she had never seen before, rode up on his horse. He stood in front of the dragon and stabbed it with his sword. Then he took the belt from the princess's wedding dress and tied it round the dragon's neck like a dog-lead. The battle made quite a noise, and all the people from the town came running to see what was going on. They found George standing there holding the lead, with the wounded dragon whimpering on the other end.

He told them not to be afraid, and he showed them his white flag with a red cross, just like the one in the Piero Della Francesca painting of the resurrection. He said it was Jesus who kept him safe, and he told them that, if they would believe in Jesus too, he would kill the dragon. The people had had enough of the dragon, so they said, 'We've never heard of Jesus; tell us about him'. So George told them the story of the life of Jesus, and that day 15000 people were baptised, and he killed the dragon. Sadly, St George was eventually beheaded on April 23rd 303 by order of the emperor Diocletian.

In 1921 one of the mediaeval guild chapels in Chichester cathedral was converted into a memorial for the 6800 local men who were killed in the First World War, and the chapel is dedicated to St George. And the town of Lydda has mostly been swallowed up by Ben Gurion international airport, just outside Tel Aviv, but there is a Byzantine church nearby which contains the body of the saint.

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Chuckle Corner

*For Christmas we received from our young granddaughters a notice:
Grandparents - so easy to operate even a child can do it.*

And from Peter Garratt

A LITTLE APRIL FOOLERY

Therapist: "Steve, you have a problem verbalising your emotions"

Steve: "I can't say I'm surprised!"

Never trust a man who, when left alone with a tea cosy, doesn't try it on.
A well-balanced person has a drink in each hand.

"Oh, you want your cake and eat it do you?"
"Dead right! What good is cake if you can't eat it?"

When you are waiting for a bus, someone often asks "Has the bus come yet?"
If the bus had come, would I be standing there?

A few reflections on the tribulations of waiters and shop assistants:

Customer in B&Q: "I'm looking to buy a 40w light bulb"

Assistant: "For what?"

Customer: "No, it needs to be 40".

Customer in Currys: "Which television is the best value?"

Assistant: "This one is only £20, but the volume is stuck on full."

Customer: "I can't turn that down!"

Customer in Boots: "What helps get rid of bacteria in the kitchen?"

Assistant: "Ammonia cleaner"

Customer: "Sorry, I thought you worked here."

Customer in the Garway Moon: "Is the menu gluten free?"

Waiter: "Yes, it's made of paper"

And in conclusion a poem:

Thirty days hath September
April, June and November
Unless a leap-year is its fate
February has twenty-eight
But all the rest have three days more
Excepting January
Which has six thousand one hundred and eighty-four
With acknowledgement to Brian Bilston

April Dates for the diary:

- 2 Garway Village Hall Coffee Morning
- 3 Garway Stitchers
- 5 Orcop Hall Quiz Night
- 7 & 28 Kendo seniors practice, Orcop Village Hall
- 8 Green Garway Book Group
- 9 Flicks in the Sticks
- 13 Orcop Hall Felting Workshop
- 13 Garway LIVE!
- 13 Ross-on-Wye Choral Society Spring Concert
- 14 Revd. Crispen Pemberton's final Orcop service
- 14 St Weonards Village Hall Breakfast
- 16 Garway Heritage Group
- 17 Garway Stitchers
- 18 Orcop Hall Warm Space Coffee Morning
- 19 Orcop PCC Churchyard Bingo
- 23 Prescription collection
- 24 Spring Plant Fair, Broxwood Court
- 25 The APCM (essentially the AGM of the St. Weonards Benefice) in Orcop Parish Hall

Future events for your diary:

May

- 11 Archenfield Arts, Garway Church
- 12 Bishop Anthony Priddis' final Orcop service
- 13 Green Garway Book Group
- 18 & 19 Orcop Weaving
- 24 The Garway Piano Trio at the Bishop's Palace.

June

- 2 St Weonards Church Fete
- 7 *Magic Flute* Treago, St Weonards
- 9 Broad Oak Open Gardens
- 15 Hentland Concert with the Musical and Amicable Society

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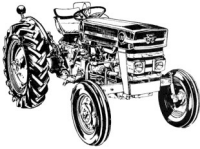
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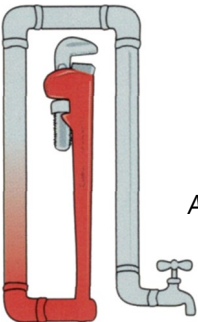
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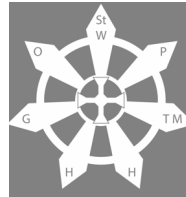


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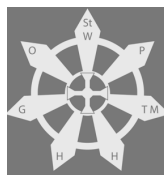
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