

PARISH NEWS

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

FEBRUARY 2025



GARWAY HILL ON BOXING DAY

To walk off Christmas Day's excesses
The family up Garway Hill processes
Down below 'tis cold and foggy
All is muddy, wet and soggy
But once on top the sun shines through
And reveals a quite amazing view
A wooded island comes into sight
Surrounded by a sea of white
A misty ocean all around
A splendid view yet not a sound
Not much more have I to say
Of Garway Hill on Boxing Day
Except we are blessed to live so near
This panorama of winter cheer

BY PETER GARRATT

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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. Otherwise call 101.

PARISH NEWS

THE ARCHENFIELD GROUP

For enquiries on baptisms, funerals and wedding please contact the Vicar:
Rev. Angie Kateley revangiekateley@gmail.com 01981 345044 **Rest day: Tuesday.**

Vicar's Letter

*If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,
Winter will have another flight;
But if it be dark with clouds and rain,
Winter is gone, and will not come again.*

Candlemas falls on 2nd February, an ancient festival that marks the midpoint of winter, halfway between the shortest day and the spring equinox. In pre-Christian times, this day was known as 'Feast of Lights' and celebrated the increase in strength of the life-giving sun as winter turned to spring.

There are many Candlemas traditions around the world. In some churches, candles are blessed. In Mexico, they have a national holiday with processions and dancing and delicious treats called tamales. In France, they eat flip and eat crepes while holding coins. And of course, as our rhyme above demonstrates, international folklore has it that future weather patterns can be predicted by what happens on Candlemas, in some places with different meteorologically-adept animals involved, including badgers in Germany, hedgehogs in Ireland, bears in Hungary, and the world's most famous groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil, in the USA.

In church culture, Candlemas is the feast day of The Presentation of Jesus at the Temple. According to the Gospel of Luke, Joseph and Mary took baby Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem forty days after his birth, a typical custom of the time. There they met a chap called Simeon who predicted that Jesus would become the light of the whole world.

It seems that, whichever way you view it, there is an invitation to look for warmth and light, to look for hope. For me, Candlemas warms my heart with the reminder that God's love is for everyone, not just a select few. It challenges me to find hope in what can feel like a miserable time of year. And it encourages me to find ways to live as a source of warmth and light within and for my community.

I wonder what reminders, challenges and encouragements you will encounter this month. Whatever may be, my prayer for you is that you find yourself blessed with hope, warmth and light.

Rev Angie x

SERVICE ROTA

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

Sunday 2 nd February	10.00am	Hoarwithy Benefice Communion
Sunday 9 th February	9.30am 11.15am	St Weonards All Age Communion Garway
Sunday 16 th February	10.00am 6.00pm	Hoarwithy Communion Tretire Evening Service
Sunday 23 rd February	9.15am 9.30 11.00am	Hentland Communion All Age Service Orcop Communion
Sunday 2 nd March	10.00am	Garway Benefice Communion

For enquiries about baptisms, weddings or funeral services, please contact the Vicar:
Rev. Angie Kateley revangiekateley@gmail.com 01981 345044 **Rest Day Tuesday**

Garway Hill Methodist Church:

Sunday 9th February 3pm - Rev Denise Hargreaves

Sunday 23rd February 3pm - Rev Paul Arnold (Communion)

Sunday 2nd February

Benefice Communion at Hoarwithy Church

10.00am

This is the only service in our parishes. Do join us.

PRESCRIPTION COLLECTION



5th February Christine Davies 01981 580129



VILLAGE PAGES

ST WEONARDS

The magazine goes to press quite early in December, so that although it seems rather a long time ago, we reflect back now on the many busy times that we enjoyed in church over Christmas! So many people came to the carol service to pack the church, that we ran out of service and carol sheets! The varied readings, including some unusual poems, were matched with the carols, joyfully sung by all. As always, I am most grateful to all those in the large choir, from across the benefice, who give up time to rehearse the special carols and lead the singing. Mulled wine and mince pies afterwards gave everyone the chance to catch up with friends and the many people who came to share in the service.

The crib service is always something of a glorious chaotic occasion! Before the service, appropriate Christmassy refreshments were served which included amazing cakes made in the shape of mince pies! Many thanks to the team who helped with that. Children and their families packed the church. As Angie told the story of Jesus's birth, some children who had dressed up, and others carrying the crib figures, gathered at the front of the church. The crib figures are beautiful carved wooden figures made by local people and generously loaned by Clare Gray. They are displayed within the altar.

Christmas Eve was rather different, but equally special, as Angie celebrated our midnight communion. She preached from the pulpit in reduced lighting reminding us of the special light that Christ brings to our lives.

Many thanks to Angie for leading all these services with such joy and laughter, coping with whatever unexpected happened!

For Epiphany, the snow and ice made it challenging to travel so we managed to share time with an online service. This was a first for Angie, but with the help of Peter Pember, it all went well. Angie helped us to remember the three wise men from the Bible by sharing her encounters with three local 'wise men' she had met on her daily walk with Bengie the dog. As always, Angie helps us to reflect on the life of Christ in a way to renew us in our faith journeys.

In February we shall be in Hoarwathy for our benefice service. It is such an unusual church to find in Herefordshire in its Italianate style. Do come and join us.

Richard Mynors, churchwarden

Coffee Morning

Coffee Morning Thursday 13th February.

St Weonards Village Hall 10am-12 noon.

Enjoy coffee and some homemade cake. Meet old friends and make new ones.

Just turn up, all welcome.

Gwyneth Williams

GARWAY

Garway Church

Blue Christmas

Christmas feels quite a while ago now and we are steadily heading into spring, but I would like to recall how our Blue Christmas at Garway went.

On the afternoon of the 22nd of December, we set out the church pews with comfortable blankets and cushions, which made our church feel quite homely. We served mulled wine and hot chocolate with mince pies before the little service, to help warm us all up.

Angie led with thoughtful words and readings, and the atmosphere amongst those of us there felt very companionable.

We were then invited to spend a little time thinking about those dear to us and any concerns that we might have. Angie then encouraged us to write a few words – perhaps a prayer - and offer them to God by lighting a candle and placing them both inside an evergreen wreath that had been arranged below the chancel arch.

David Phillips kindly played for us during the service, and we ended by standing in a circle around the wreath whilst David played, as we all shared together in singing the carol *Silent Night*.

Everyone stayed around afterwards, and it felt like we had discovered new friends and reaffirmed old ones.

Thank you, Angie, for enabling such a thoughtful and nourishing service. I hope we can do it again this Christmas, to which you are all invited.

Regular Service in Garway

From March and on the second Sunday of each month at 11.15am, we will be having a regular service in the church. It will be our first regular service for a number of years and Rev Angie will be serving us. Please do come.

For February we will meet again in Garway Moon, for a friendly and informal meeting with Angie, where you can find out a little more about Angie's vision for our church and community.

Date and time – 9th Feb @ 11.15am

Tracy Somerville, churchwarden

Garway Community Stitching Project



This month's stitching dates are, February 5th and 19th February. We are no longer meeting in Garway village hall, but we are still meeting, and to free up the space in the hall for other users we have decided to meet in each other's houses.

We are well into our fourth panel and as always you are welcome to join the group. We have stitchers who are complete beginners and some who are more skilled that can help anyone who would like it.

If you would like to know more, or would like to join us the next time we meet and to find out where we are meeting, please do get in touch.

Tracy Somerville. 01981 580263

The Spice Girls cordially invite you to the

February Coffee Morning

Tuesday 4th February from 10am

In Garway Village Hall

Join us for good company and tea and coffee and cake.



Thank you so much.....

to the kind people of

Garway and around for your wonderfully generous thank you gift

We will make sure we have a wild time, courtesy of your kind donations!

With love from The Spice Girls!



Friday 31 January 8pm

Saturday 1 February 10am

Tuesday 11 February 7.30pm

Tuesday 18 February 7.30pm

Friday 21 February 7.30pm

- Friday Night Disco
- Wise Woman Retreat
- Flicks in the Sticks
- Garway Heritage Group Talk
- Jive by the Wye Swing Social Dance

Visit our website at www.garwayhall.org to find out more and you can subscribe to our mailing list there too.

Julie Hudson



TUESDAY FEBRUARY 11TH
7.30pm GARWAY HALL £5.00
THELMA

You're never too old to get the starring role in a Hollywood action movie – that's what 94-year-old actress June Squibb proves in *Thelma*, a laugh-aloud comedy which is like *Mission Impossible* done on a mobility scooter. *Thelma* lives alone in her flat, and is negotiating recent widowhood, computer technology and getting upstairs with typical stubborn panache. When she is scammed out of \$10,000 she decides that victimhood is not her forte and, with the help of her grandson (perhaps the only one of her relatives who sees her as a person, not as a geriatric), decides to get her own back on the perpetrators. She recruits her friend Ben, who lives in a nursing home and has a highly covetable two-seater mobility scooter, to come along for the crime-busting ride.

It's a well-judged film which never descends into patronising mawkishness and doesn't underplay the obstacles everyday life throws up for those whose bodies are getting on a bit. The character of *Thelma* was inspired by director Josh Margolin's own 103 year-old grandmother who appears at the end of the film voicing a series of authentic *Thelmarisms*. As usual, we'll have a gorgeous array of Flicks bakes for you to enjoy along with wines, juices, teas and coffee served before the film and during the interval. More Information always on www.facebook.com/GarwayFlicks



The annual Borderlines Film Festival will be coming to Garway Hall again this year. One of the very best rural film festivals in the U.K., Borderlines gives audiences a chance to see films which don't all do the normal round of our multiplexes. Garway's two films for 2025 are:

FRIDAY 28th February – MY FAVOURITE CAKE. This is a quietly magnificent film from Iran where its depiction of women who don't wear the hijab and who show their hair led to the film directors' offices being raided and their hard drives containing the film being confiscated. Fortunately, they had a hard copy which has made it out to the world. MY FAVOURITE CAKE tells the story of Mahin, an elderly woman who decides that she wants to find romance again and so changes her routine in order to seek out a companionable man. She finds Faramarz who himself has got into trouble with the regime by playing a musical instrument in a wedding band. Mahin offers to bake him her favourite cake and this intimate moment provokes a profound outpouring of everything they feel and have in common. A wonderful, brave film that it's a privilege to show.

FOR YOUR DIARIES, TUESDAY March 4th – HOW TO MAKE MILLIONS BEFORE GRANDMA DIES. This film from Thailand broke box-office records in several countries across Asia in 2024. A man, driven by his desire for a multi-million dollar inheritance, begins to care for his terminally ill grandmother. However, winning her favour will not be an easy task and he is not the only one with an eye on the money. More details to come in next month's magazine.

DOORS OPEN FOR BOTH FILMS at 7pm – performance starts at 7.30pm. ADMISSION £5.50.



What fun we had in December with that almighty storm knocking out our electricity supply making it difficult to light the hall, plus the band's instruments needing power as well. To make matters worse, the band was coming from Bristol, and both Severn bridges were closed. Undaunted, we hastily went home and between us put together a Quiz for the Sunday Night.

We would like to thank everybody who came and participated in this at such very short notice. As a result, together with Chris's Turkey Curry, we were able to donate £550 to Close House, a local charity in Hereford. Because of the date to submit articles for the magazine we have nothing to tell you about. We are currently negotiating for some great evenings for this year plus something extra. All will be revealed next month.

Graham Bevan

Green Garway Book Club

Because of the copy deadline of the magazine I often have to write the review of the book we're reading in advance and assume everyone will have the same opinion as me! So this issue I'm going to summarise our reads of last year and take a quick look ahead at what we're going to read this year. That way I can get back to writing the review AFTER we've read the book!

At our last meeting we discussed our favourite fiction and non-fiction reads of 2024 and although Donna Tartt's *The Goldfinch* came a close second, the winner of best fiction was **Little Wing by Freya North**. It is a novel about resilience, forgiveness and the true meaning of family, about finding one's place in the world

and discovering how we all belong somewhere and to someone, with the most beautiful descriptions of the Isle of Harris in the Outer Hebrides. We rated it 4.5/5.

Our number one non-fiction read last year was our February read - ***Ravenous* by Henry Dimbleby**. In 2019 Henry Dimbleby was commissioned by the government to write a national food strategy for the UK and this book is based on that report and is really informative and accessible. It deals with the whole of our food system from field to fork and makes valid and sensible recommendations about what changes are essential to ensure our food security for the future. We rated it 4/5.

Looking forward to this year, we have our usual mix of green(ish) fiction and non-fiction coming up:

Jan – *Not the end of the World* by Hannah Ritchie

Feb – *Villager* by Tom Cox (f)

Mar – *The Wager* by David Grann

Apr – *Perfect Golden Circle* by Benjamin Myers (f)

May – *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Jun – *Flight Behaviour* by Barbara Kingsolver (f)

Jul – *Cull of the Wild* by Hugh Warwick

Aug – *Wavewalker: Breaking Free* by Suzanne Hayward

Sep – *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey (f)

Oct – *The Outrun* by Amy Liptrot

Nov – *On the Black Hill* by Bruce Chatwyn (f)

Dec – *Winterdance* by Gary Paulsen

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 and you can dip in and out as necessary. We meet on the second Monday of each month at 7.30pm in the Garway Moon snug.

Julie Hudson

**GARWAY HERITAGE GROUP
Tuesday 18th February
Garway Village Hall, 7.30pm**

This Stolen Land

This month we welcome back Hereford based writer, journalist and oral historian Marsha O'Mahony, who will be presenting the fascinating stories she has collected in her latest book 'This Stolen Land'.

The Gwent Levels line the north shore of the River Severn in South Wales: Chepstow at its head; its more famous cousin, the Somerset Levels, across the water; the Welsh capital, Cardiff, at its feet. You could waste an hour crossing the Levels by motorway. Or brush aside the journey by train. But Marsha has chosen the slow route of foreshore, footpath, and country lane. Over the course of two years, she meandered from village to village collecting conversations and anecdotes as she went. The result is a remarkable oral history of this unique landscape and the people who live there.

All are welcome - it's a great opportunity to learn about our local area and for a friendly chat; we will, of course, be serving delicious cakes, tea, coffee and wine. Free to Garway Heritage Group members or £8 for guests.

18th March 2025 - *The Huntley Film Archive* presented by Robert Dewar

15th April 2025 - *Family Diaries* presented by Tim Bannerman

www.garwayheritagegroup.co.uk

Clare Adamson

ORCOP

The informal Christmas Day service at Orcop Church was a great success. A congregation of about 50 enjoyed an order of service that was alive with inventive seasonal goodwill and cheer, whilst celebrating the wonderful Christmas story through traditional carols and readings. The church was beautifully decorated, and the proceedings were concluded with hot chocolate. A short non-communion service on Christmas morning seems to be a successful formula and thanks go to all who worked hard to make it work so well.

The St. Weonards bells were rung prior to the carol service there on 22nd December and those at Orcop to ring-in the New Year. It is very good to be able to hear the bells of the benefice in action. We thank Peter Hallewell for his expertise, patience and perseverance in recruiting and training a group of ringers sufficient in number and competence (more or less!) to ring when appropriate, so keeping this great tradition alive.

Margaret Fletcher Churchwarden

Flowers and cleaning rota: Mrs D Garman

Orcop Village Hall

Warm Winter Coffee Mornings

will continue every Thursday morning – 10.30-12.30

through January, February and March

do come and join us  you'd be welcome

(Tim and Gill Bannerman – 01981 580685)

Orcop Village Hall

Saturday 15th February Valentine Quiz 7:30pm

Tickets £10 per person, to include the quiz and a buffet supper.

You can BYOB or tea and coffee will be available.

Come along in your teams or just turn up and you can make up a team on the night.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Every Thursday until the end of March, Gill and Tim host a coffee morning in the hall. The doors open at 10 am, It's a social event welcome to anybody who would like to come along.

Hope to see you there!

Peta Long

NEW OWL SERVICE

01981 200652

While a number of other Good Neighbour schemes have not survived long term, the local scheme covering the same areas as this parish news has survived and is now adding a new service to its repertoire. The Owl scheme has delivered medications from Much Birch surgery every week, and at times as an emergency since March 2020. In addition they have provided a community lunch 11 months of the year since 2017. In the past, Owl Good Neighbours provided transport upon request, but since the pandemic this has fallen out of use. It has ceased due to a lack of both volunteer drivers and requests. In addition Owl has supported the warm space initiative on a Thursday mornings in Orcop parish hall. Now however Owl is pleased to announce a new service.

The Good Neighbour scheme in Ross has offered a free service to the Owl scheme, for two years initially. It will take the form of a helpline for non-urgent messages to be passed to the group. The help line which will be available 24/7 and have its own dedicated number and is in effect a virtual call centre. Anyone needing help or with a query can call and leave a message. They will be required to say " one " or press 1 to leave a message and if too shy to leave a message the system will record their number, and a volunteer will ring them back.

All volunteers undertake an Enhanced D.B.S. every 3 years and have done safeguarding training.

Typical queries are: befriending requests
help with IT
requests for information
assistance with access to online services
new volunteers

This service will breathe new life into Owl Good Neighbours so please use it when needed.

01981 200652

Jane Lockhart

TRETIRE AND PENCOYD

Our carol singing at Pencoyd this year was a rather different event from the other parishes, and indeed from those in our own parish in previous years. For a start, it was not on a Sunday, but a Monday afternoon. Unlike the last few years, it was under cover rather than outdoors, and I suspect that most of the congregation had probably not come prepared for what did happen! It was a pretty large congregation by Pencoyd's standards, and included parents, children and grandparents. This turned out to be exactly what was needed.

We sang well-known carols interspersed with interesting readings, beautifully read. One poem which was new to me was *Garbriel's Revelation* by Geoffrey Rust. It was quite long so it was helpful to hear half and then to sing a carol before hearing the rest.

Before our final carol we had an enactment of a little sketch which Peter and Liz Everall had introduced us to several years ago. Some people may remember it being performed in Tretire Church. It is called *This is the baby that God sent*. It requires a minimum of seven participants of a varied age range, which was no problem with such a large congregation. We ended up with no fewer than seven sheep and it could have been eight!

Our vicar, Angie agreed to take the leading role of Mary, the mother of the baby. All the other roles were filled with varying degrees of enthusiasm under the persuasion of our churchwarden, and director of the performance, Elizabeth. Each part had a few sentences to say, and there was plenty of scope for audience participation.

The play ended with a large pile of typical seasonal trappings, such as crackers, bauble, holly, cake, turkey and tinsel all completely smothering the baby Jesus, who disappeared under them all. Therein lay the moral of the sketch.....

The whole performance only took about 15 minutes and appeared to be enjoyed by both participants and audience! If you were unfortunate enough to miss it, I wouldn't be surprised if it re-appears by popular demand next Christmas!

Refreshments were served at the end in a lovely warm and happy atmosphere. A carol event with a difference, but the message of Christmas was clear!

On Christmas Morning, it was Tretire's turn to find the church filled with people from across the benefice, who appreciated a communion service in the daytime, rather than at midnight. Again we had well known Christmas hymns which people joined in enthusiastically. There were no refreshments after this service as people were eager to get home for their Christmas celebrations, and some, like us with a journey ahead of them to join with other family members further afield.

So our small parish was fortunate to have two opportunities to meet in each of our churches and celebrate the Christmas story and its significance together.

Margaret Oubridge

WANTED

Someone to write up news and forthcoming events in the villages of Tretire with Michaelchurch and Pencoyd for the monthly parish magazine.

For further details, contact Margaret Oubridge at oubridge@phonecoop.coop. Tel 01981580233.

Small Ads

For Sale - 10 x 20 kg bags of Taybrite Smokeless Ovoid Coal - £100 (Can deliver locally to Garway Hill area).

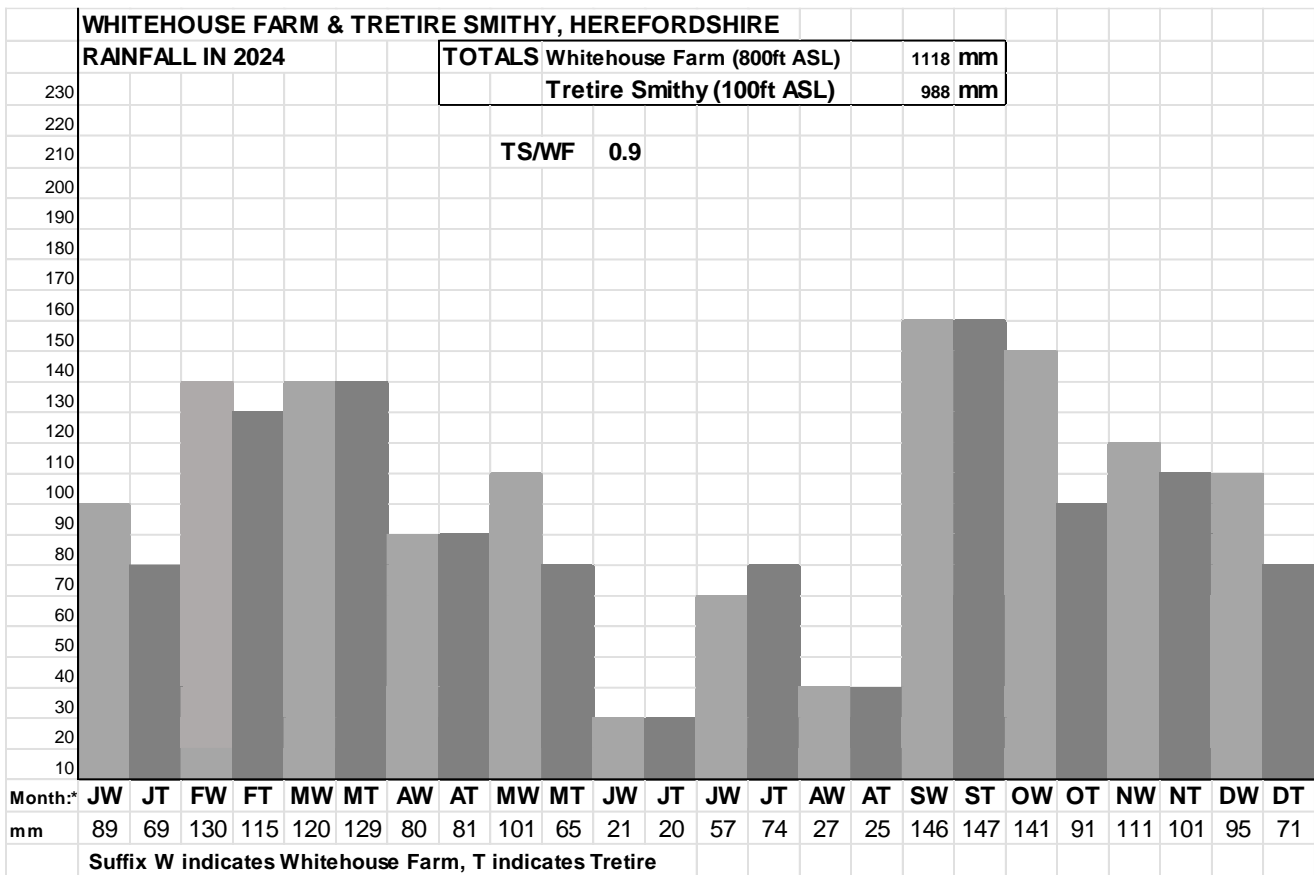
"This highly efficient fuel is easy to light and burns cleanly. Taybrite gives high levels of heat for long periods – even overnight. Suitable for open fires and closed appliances. Approved for use in smoke control areas."

Purchased earlier this year but no longer required. Generally for sale in bulk elsewhere at a minimum of £15 per bag. Call - 01981 240730

RAINFALL IN 2024

As for the past twelve years, this commentary is based on records from Whitehouse Farm (on the southern rim of the Orcop Basin at about 800ft elevation) and those kindly provided by John Oubridge for Tretire Smithy (Elevation about 100ft). The two sets of monthly totals are summarised on the bar chart below. I have records for Whitehouse Farm from 2009 to 2024. The average rainfall over this 16-year period is 946mm.

After a very unusual monthly pattern in 2023, 2024 exhibited a more normal rainfall distribution. February lived up to its reputation as a wet month, after only 4mm in February 2023. Otherwise, it is interesting to note that in five months out of the twelve, the totals for Whitehouse Farm and Tretire Smithy were virtually identical, despite the disparity in elevations. The annual total for Tretire was about 90% of that for Whitehouse, as tends to be the case in most years. Most will look back on 2024 as a very wet year and indeed it brought some serious flooding events. However, it is only the 5th wettest in the 16 years of record, with 2023 relegated to 6th wettest. I have been asked whether the records exhibit an increasing trend as a result of climate change. The answer is no, but the record is far too short to throw any light on long term trends.



Peter Garratt

Trends in Christmas cards 2024

When Meg (Margaret) and I opened our Christmas cards last month, we were struck by the number of brightly coloured cards depicting stylised views of Bethlehem. It seemed to us these were more numerous than in previous years, and that they had increased at the expense of what we call “fat robins”. (I know they are not really fat, just puffing up their feathers against the cold.)

I decided to do a count. The total number of cards was 61, down 3 from last year, a smaller drop than I would have expected. The number of cards depicting what we took to be Bethlehem was 10, one of which could have been Jerusalem, or even some other unidentified town with plenty of domes. The number of cards picturing robins, or containing robins, was only 7, tending to confirm our impression that Bethlehem is now more popular, at least amongst our friends.

I wonder if you have had a similar experience?

John Oubridge, 8th January 2025.

A Peek In The Bookshop

Editor: we are most grateful to Julie Hudson for her informative suggestions for reading. She is having a break for a while, although we hope she may come back in the future. However before she goes, she has given us the answers to Here are the answers to last month's book quiz.

1. ***James by Percival Everitt***
2. ***Yellowface by Rebecca Kuang***
3. ***The Hotel Avocado by Bob Mortima***
4. ***Orbital by Samantha Harvey***
5. ***Raising Hare by Chloe Dalton***
6. ***Tom Lake by Ann Patchett***
7. ***The Siege by Ben Mackintyre***
8. ***Butter by Asako Yusuki***
9. ***The Place of Tides by James Rebanks***
10. ***The Glassmaker by Tracy Chevalier***
11. ***Intermezzo by Sally Rooney***
12. ***We Solve Murders by Richard Osman***
13. ***The Beefy Boys by The Beefy Boys***
14. ***The Women by Kristin Hannah***
15. ***You Are Here by David Nicholls***

Book Review

Reasons to Stay Alive by Matt Haig

Matt Haig is an English author and journalist who has written both fiction and non-fiction books for children and adults. *Reasons to Stay Alive* charts the course of the depression that he suffered for the first time at the age of 24 and does so with honesty and clarity. He lays bare the sheer hell of his illness whilst also outlining those strategies that helped him to begin to overcome this.

Any other illness that caused over 720,000 deaths a year worldwide would not be treated with an exhortation to get over it or pull yourself together, and this book is a contribution to enhancing understanding and helping loved ones to find constructive responses.

As someone once similarly afflicted many years ago, I was deeply moved by his ability to describe the indescribable; to get to the nub of the mysterious and desperate internal pain and to recognize how very hard it is for anyone to truly grasp the nature of this illness. Sufferers themselves cannot begin to understand it, and yet they need those around them to try and do so. His book goes some way to bridging this gap and his eloquent descriptions of what depression felt like for him are enlightening.

"I wanted to be dead. No. That's not quite right. I didn't want to be dead, I just didn't want to be alive."

"If you have ever believed a depressive wants to be happy, you are wrong. They could not care less about the luxury of happiness. They just want to feel an absence of pain."

Fundamentally he busts the myth that depression has a clear cause:

"Unlike a book or a film depression doesn't have to be about something."

Bereavement or a break-up or long-term stress can make someone feel sad – often very sad – but depression descends from nowhere and paradoxically can exist in the presence of happiness; of loved ones, and beautiful views and kindness. And never forget that someone who has suffered this once will never shake the fear of its recurrence – it dropped from nowhere once and there is no way of being sure it might not do so again.

He looks at the reasons why depression is so widespread and why suicide is one of the major killers of young men. He asks why we now live in “*a society which demands we be normal even as it drives us insane*” and speculates that “*we humans might have evolved too far. The price for being intelligent enough to be the first species to be fully aware of the cosmos might just be a capacity to feel a whole universe’s worth of darkness*” - and he postulates that the global economy - with its incessant in-your-face encouragement to consume, to buy the latest model, to embrace obsolescence, to be ahead of the game - is set up to encourage dissatisfaction from which flows the consumption that keeps the financial institutions in power:

“The world is increasingly designed to depress us. Happiness isn’t very good for the economy. If we were happy with what we had, why would we need more? To be calm becomes a kind of revolutionary act. To be happy with your own non-upgraded existence. To be comfortable with our messy, human selves, would not be good for business.”

One of his most important messages is that depression is not who someone is; it is something that is happening to them.

“However much in the foreground depression feels, you are separate to it. This is going to sound cheesy but I’d say: You are the sky. A cloud comes and dominates the sky. But the sky is still the sky. Depression tells you everything is going to get worse but that’s a symptom. Don’t give depression power – constantly discredit it.”

Hilary Smallwood

Garden Notes

I am always full of good gardening intentions in autumn, planning to do all sorts over the winter. It never happens. I came out of hibernation briefly on 31st December to plant four packs of spring-flowering bulbs given to us for Christmas by a non-gardening relative. The bulbs were plump and healthy, so I hope they won’t mind being planted this late. It felt cruel to plunge them into cold wet compost in the old, galvanised bath, but they stand more chance in soil than cocooned in their cardboard packets. It was, however, lovely to receive a mixture of bulbs that I probably wouldn’t have bought for myself. I look forward to a colourful display of orange-red Triumph tulip ‘Jimmy’, the very unusual *Tulipa* ‘Bull’s Eye’ – a fully double flower which starts as a ball of green petals and opens to reveal a red centre, showy blue hyacinths, deep violet-blue grape hyacinths (*Muscari* ‘Night Eyes’), pretty blue *Anemone blanda* and dainty *Scilla*.

On a dingy wet day, I got much pleasure from doing a gardening crossword – even the cryptic clues which I normally avoid - and increased my gardening knowledge in the process. I was pleased that I was able to recall various Latin plant names without resorting to the plant encyclopaedia. I did have to resort to on-line searches for some of the answers though. I finally established that ‘*A named, deep-purple tulip – blended in sago*’ was ‘Saigon’ and I spent a good ten minutes drooling over gorgeous photographs as I scrolled through all the tempting purple tulips on the bulb suppliers websites. As, of course, they are all out of stock at this time of year, I was in no danger of filling my shopping basket with packs of bulbs.

I also learnt that a common name for Pulmonaria or lungwort is Adam and Eve. It is also the common name for several other plants, including lords and ladies or cuckoo pint, monkshood (*Aconitum napellus*) and a North American orchid (*Aplectrum hyemale*) and hence a good illustration of why we are encouraged to use the Latin names for plants to avoid any confusion.

The clue ‘*Repeat-flowering apricot-pink climbing rose – Arabian Nights hero collapsed*’ sent me to the internet again browsing through many beautiful rose photographs. Aha, here it is – ‘Alibaba’. Pretty obvious when you know. And a ‘*Deep-pink cactus dahlia...caption changed*’ is of course ‘Pontiac’. In hunting for that one, I discovered several dahlia suppliers I wasn’t familiar with and yet again, was amazed at the extraordinary variety of colours and shapes of dahlias.

Enjoyable as the crossword was, the end result (apart from the satisfaction of completing it) was that I started having ideas. Now, where can I plant some dahlias this year? And wouldn't it be nice to have some more varieties of pulmonaria in the garden? And where can I grow a climbing rose?

Julie Davies

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Lorna Williamson

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01432 383189 lorna.williamson@herefordshire.gov.uk

Dates for the diary:

February

- 1 Wise Woman Retreat, Garway Village Hall
- 2 Hoarwithy Benefice Communion
- 4 The Spice Girls Coffee Morning
- 5 OWL community lunch
- 5 Prescription Collection
- 5 Garway Community Stitching Project
- 9 St Weonards All Age Communion
- 9 Garway Service
- 9 Garway Hill Methodist Service
- 9 Meeting with Angie in Garway Moon
- 10 Magazine copy date
- 11 Flicks in the Sticks
- 13 Coffee Morning, St Weonards Village Hall
- 15 Orcop Village Hall Valentine Quiz
- 16 Hoarwithy Communion
- 16 Tretire Evening Service
- 18 Garway Heritage Group Talk
- 19 Garway Community Stitching Project
- 21 Jive by the Wye Swing Social Dance, Garway Village Hall
- 23 Hentland Communion
- 23 All Age Service
- 23 Orcop Communion
- 23 Garway Hill Methodist Communion
- 28 Borderlines Film Festival - My Favourite Cake

March

2 Garway Benefice Communion

4 Borderlines Film Festival – How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies

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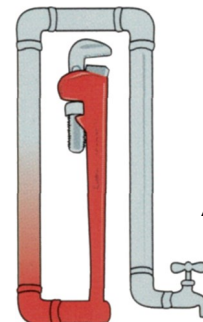
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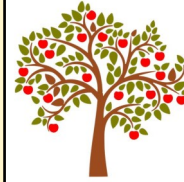
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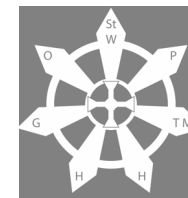
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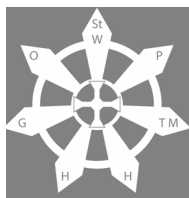
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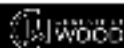
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Films in February - check the website for details

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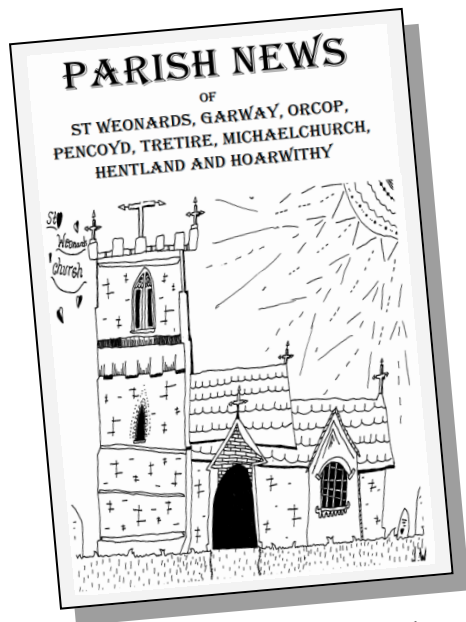
QUEER (18) Sat 1 - Thurs 6 Feb

THE ORDER (15) Fri 7 - Thurs 13 Feb NOT Mon & Tue

MARIA (12a) Fri 14 - Thurs 20 Feb NOT Sat

A COMPLETE UNKNOWN (15) Fri 21 - Thurs 27 Feb

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 3 (pg) Sat 22 - Thurs 27 Feb



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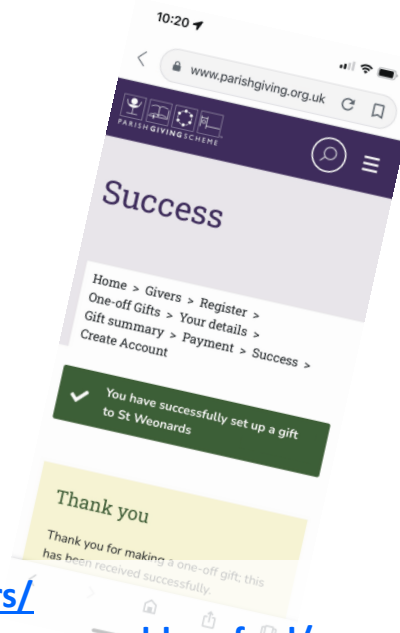
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£176	Full page	19.2	13.0

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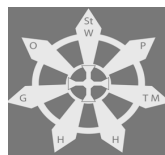
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