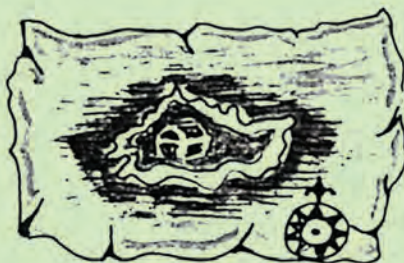




*Boots*



*Maps*



*Compasses*



*Hats*



*Binoculars*

## HOLIDAY CLUB 2002

19<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> August

Explorers, Adventurers &  
Travellers will be loose in  
Church Stretton this August



*Flags*



*Pick-axes*



*Tents*



*Camp Fires*

More details about the Holiday Club inside  
Contents include: Out & About, Church pages, Golf Club,  
Crossword, Letters to the Editor, Town Council,  
'Hanging Gardens', Showcase Farming

## STRETTON FOCUS

(founded 1967)

Average monthly sales: 1,368 copies.  
(About 62% of households in Church Stretton)

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**Copy day** is normally the first Monday of the month. For the September issue it is Monday 5th August 2002.

**Diary** items should be sent directly to Rev. Ward Davies, 1 Central Ave, CS, SY6 6EE. (Tel. 724304) by Friday 16th August 2002.

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## Holiday Club 2002

### 'Explorers, Adventurers and Travellers'

- Monday – Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>
- For primary school children (those who are aged 5 and not older than 10 by 31<sup>st</sup> August)
  - » 2:00 – 4:30pm at St. Laurence's Parish Centre
- For young people in school years 7, 8 and 9
  - » 7:30 – 9:30pm at St. Laurence's Parish Centre
- Contact Person - Jon Hutchinson 720 193

August wouldn't be the same without Holiday Club. No sooner had last year's event finished when a committee was organised to plan Holiday Club 2002. Under the direction of the Curate, Jon Hutchinson, an enthusiastic team has been working hard to make sure the children have a really special week - hearing Bible stories, doing crafts and drama, singing and watching Captain Tony Maidment's fantastic magic tricks. Activities planned will be relevant for each child's own age group.

The theme for this year's Holiday Club, Explorers, Adventures and Travellers, will give children the opportunity to look at how characters in the Bible encountered God and how Jesus can be a friend on our journey through life today. Special highlights this year will include a new worship band, puppets and a gunge tank! Also new this year is the Evening Holiday Club (also known as 'St. Larry's Club') for young people in school years 7- 9. Particularly wacky activities for this age group will take place in the evening.

*Everyone* is invited to a **Holiday Club Coffee Morning on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August from 10:00 – 12:30pm at the Parish Centre.** Come and see a presentation about all the fun that happened during the week and help the young people raise money for their weekend retreat in the autumn.

Although registration for Holiday Club took place in July, please phone Jon Hutchinson (720193) to check on availability and with any other questions.



Photo: Jonathan Millard



## Out and About in August

**H**oliday times are here again and here are a few suggestions for activities and trips this month. Make the most of the summer and get out and about.

### Gardens Open

**Sats. 3<sup>rd</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> August - Hodnet Hall Gardens**

Market Drayton, 12noon – 5pm. Visit the water garden with its drifts of white, rose and red astilbes.

**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August - Becheacre, Burway Road,** Church Stretton, 2 - 4.30pm (in aid of The Children's Society).

**Sunday/Monday 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> Stottesdon Village Gardens,** Bridgnorth. 2- 6pm.

### National Trust

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August – Moth Trapping Evening**

Join the Shropshire Moth Group and Ecologist Warden to see what flies at night. Top Car Park, Carding Mill Valley 9.30pm.

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August – Meeting at Shooting Box Car Park** to inform local people about NT decisions and work on the Long Mynd. 11am.

**Saturday/Sunday 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> August – Bee Keeping.** The Ludlow Bee Keepers will talk about how honey is made. Cutaway hive on display. Chalet Pavilion, 11am – 5pm.

**Saturday/Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> Aug/1<sup>st</sup> Sept. – The Time Detectives.** Watch archaeology in action. Live demonstrations and hands-on activities. Chalet Pavilion.

**Further afield – plan a trip to Sunnycroft, Wellington.**

**Telford.** A late Victorian gentleman's villa that has survived largely unaltered. The grounds amount to a 'mini estate'. 2-6pm

### Something different

**2<sup>nd</sup> August, Wistanstow Village Hall**

Gabriel Woolf presents Dylan Thomas in 'Once Below a Time'

**2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> August, Film Theatre, Shrewsbury.**

Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner) first film ever to be made in the Inuktitut language.

**Shrewsbury Castle 15<sup>th</sup> August, 'Richard III'.**

Heartbreak Theatre Co.(01746 281281)

**Kite Making for Children, 21<sup>st</sup> August, Ludlow**

Assembly Rooms. 3-6yrs 10.30-noon, 7-12yrs 1.30-3.30pm.

**Take a trip** to the other side of the Long Mynd and visit **Snailbeach Mine.** In this area there were lead mines. They were the most productive in Europe in the 1880s and Barytes mining continued until the end of 1950. The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and there is a self-guided trail to follow.

Focus apologises for printing the wrong time for the Coppice Leasowes Open Evening on the 20th June but we hope that it did not spoil the evening for those attending

## Anglican Voice: Men's Group



**B**ig boys don't cry. Real men don't eat quiche. Maybe understanding what it's like to be a man was never as simple as that. The fast changing culture of recent years has seen an erosion of many once held traditional masculine roles.

Listening to the news gives the impression that men are deserting their families, acting irresponsibly (and often violently) as well as living with acute stress in an increasingly competitive and insecure world. Our godless culture is flooding us with secular lies and these cause deeper confusion as men become more isolated from one another.

It is against this background that a small group of men, from St. Laurence's Church, began to meet on alternate Saturday mornings for fellowship, shared bible study and prayer. Over recent months the group has grown, and we now have between 18 – 22 men attending.



**O**ne of the attractions of The Men's Group has been the 'Men's Breakfasts'. These are held about 6 times a year and give us an opportunity to invite friends. A full English breakfast is cooked and

served by the men themselves. Around 30 of us sit down to enjoy a hearty meal with good fellowship in the Parish Centre. Often the meal is followed by a testimony by one of the men or a visiting speaker.

A few years ago it would have been a minor miracle to get so many men together for fellowship, bible study and prayer. Most of us find the early start of 7:25 am. challenging, but in the end, very rewarding and worthwhile. If you would like to know more why not speak to Jonathan Millard (tel. 722585) or John Hughes (tel. 722582).

### Focus Service

**T**he annual Focus ecumenical service will be held this year in St. Milburga's on the 25<sup>th</sup> August at 6pm. All readers and the Focus team will be warmly welcome to attend.

Stretton Focus is supported by West Midlands Co-operative Society Limited, Church Stretton Town Council, Shropshire Rural Development Programme, Strettons Civic Society and Well, Well, Well (UK) Ltd

# Stretton Choral Society

A pleasant May evening and once again the Society rose to the occasion and performed a highly successful concert to a large appreciative audience, some of whom were sampling the new seating in the school for the first time. Many weeks of rehearsing under the dedicated baton of Musical Director David Hart and with the ever reliable accompanist David Goodall produced music by Vaughan-Williams, Parry and Haydn, all of a high quality.

There was a warm welcome back for Catherine Benson and Michael Clee and the Society was delighted to be able to introduce David Usher and Joan Longmore to Stretton hospitality; their true professionalism was evident given the warmth of the applause at the conclusion of the concert.

*Ensemble Musicale*, a group of professional musicians, made a very welcome return visit for the third year

to accompany both choir and soloists and were joined by David Goodall at both organ and piano.



After a summer break, the Society is looking forward to celebrating its Silver Jubilee, for which plans are being finalised. The Christmas Concert promises to be an uplifting experience with the choir, guest soloists and a small orchestra performing Part I of Handel's Messiah and traditional carols.

The climax of the celebrations will be the next Spring Concert when the Rutter Magnificat and the CPE Bach Magnificat, will be performed with choir, soloists, organ and chamber ensemble.

More details of these events will be published nearer the time.

*Pam Cole.*

## Weather ~ June 2002

“Flaming June?” That was how I started last June’s report and it seems just as suitable this year, perhaps even more so as this year was even cooler and wetter. After a warm, dry start, the weather went downhill all the way and we had to wait until the 22<sup>nd</sup> before we had a real dry spell – and that lasted only eight days.

The average temperature for the month at 57.13°F was lower than last year’s 58.73°F - the record is 60.1°F. Last year June did slightly redeem itself when it had a record high temperature of 87°F on the 26<sup>th</sup>, but nothing like that occurred this year and we only had 6 days in the 70’s and the maximum was only 75°F.



Rain during the month was 1.65 inches compared with 1.17 inches last year. It could have been worse, 7.84 inches being the record in 1997, but the trouble with this June was the persistent cool and cloudy weather which we had almost every day. In fact we did not have any complete days when the sky was clear of clouds; only on one day was the sky clear until the afternoon, clouding over later in the day. The maximum sunshine hours were in fact, exactly the same as the maximum for May!

No new records were set up in June, which is rapidly becoming the most miserable month of the year.

*R.Smart*

## Holiday Activities in Church Stretton Library

Stories and Crafts for anyone aged 5-11. Sessions are 2.30-3.30pm on Tuesdays 30<sup>th</sup> July and 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> August.

For young people aged 12 and over, Scrapbies presents a special **Scrap Challenge Workshop** on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August 10am – 12 noon at the Library. Tickets are £1 available from the Library. This includes materials and refreshments. This event is limited to 15 places – so book soon. New comers and non-library users are welcome. For more details phone 01694 722535.

### Try a Basket

Pick up a library basket as you enter and browse in comfort instead of trying to control an armful of books, handbag, shopping, etc. as you select your reading. Take your time – and take a basket.



**Photo: Jill Millard**

# Little Stretton (Under 7s) Saturday Morning Club

The Little Stretton Saturday Morning Club has recently been formed to bring together children who have started school, with pre-school children. We meet in Little Stretton Village Hall which is small, but has a comfortable and homely atmosphere.

Our first event was titled "The Three Little Pigs". The children enjoyed themselves making masks, houses and even a bubbling cauldron. Then they acted out the story which was very lively. We had Song Time which included "piggy" songs. The children were then read an alternative version of the Three Little Pigs story which was very amusing. All in all the event was packed with things for the children to do all for the price of £1 per child.



As the summer holidays are rapidly approaching, we will be extending the Saturday Morning Club to include Wednesday mornings too. Below is a timetable of proposed events, although we may decide to change the event to suit the weather.



The Saturday Morning Club is held in Little Stretton Village Hall and is available for any children although it is aimed at the Under 7s. All children must bring an adult with them. This Club will be open on the third Saturday of each month from 10am until 12noon, although the times may vary according to the event. The price of each event will vary too, but we aim to keep the price as low as possible to make it available for all who want to attend. Refreshments are included in the price.



Our second event was a Make a Scarecrow Competition, where the children made their own lifesize scarecrows from scratch. The competition was judged by Alen Ridge and the maker of the winning scarecrow received a prize, but all the scarecrows will be displayed in one of the fields near the village, so if you see any scarecrows wandering around they may have something to do with us!



Photos: Paul Miller

Please note that children must be accompanied by an adult at all times and for all events. Look out for notices outside Spar and at the Library for details of individual events or for further information, please call 01694 723021

Juliet Koufou

## Programme for the summer.

Date	Event	Details	Time
Wednesday, 7 <sup>th</sup> August	To be arranged		
Wednesday, 14 <sup>th</sup> August	Pirates Day	Come dressed as a pirate, make hats, swords, a pirate ship and treasure	10am until noon
Saturday, 17 <sup>th</sup> August	Teddy Bears' Picnic	Bring your own teddy bear and have a picnic – teddy bears of all ages welcome!	12noon until 2pm
Wednesday, 21 <sup>st</sup> August	Clown Day	Come and make a clown – materials provided	10am until noon
Wednesday, 28 <sup>th</sup> August	Bill and Ben Day	Come and make characters from the Bill and Ben series and decorate flower pots	10am until noon
Saturday, 21 <sup>st</sup> September	Treasure Hunt	Treasure Hunt around Little Stretton	10am until noon



# A History of the Parish Church Building

## IV Years of Piecemeal Improvement and Embellishment

High on the west front of St. Laurence's Church is a plaque bearing the dates 1619 and 1978. The former, two years before the death of William Harries, Stretton's first Protestant rector, commemorates the insertion of the large west window. It was the gift of Jane Norton, who lived almost opposite the church in a mansion called The Hall. She also gave the seating at the west end – where the poor sat, while their more affluent neighbours filled the new box pews.

Jane was the daughter of Judge Owen of Conover and wife of a wealthy London stationer, Bonham Norton, who had bought up the former Arundel lands in Stretton and served as Sheriff of Shropshire in 1611. He played an important role in the redevelopment of the town after the great fire of 1593, and was granted the right by King James I to hold a market on Thursdays (the earlier one had presumably lapsed). It was Norton who in 1617 gave the attractive Market Hall that survived in the Square for over two centuries. He may also have funded improvements to windows in the transepts and chancel of the church. Indeed, it is possible that it was at this time that the original squat tower of the church was given its elegant Perpendicular extension, with battlements, pinnacles and gargoyles. The extension has usually been considered 15<sup>th</sup> century, but more modern judgments tend to favour early in the 17<sup>th</sup>. The later date would suggest a gesture of thanksgiving to God for the commercial revival after the fire – with Bonham Norton able to make a handsome contribution. When Jane, 'the widow Owen', died in 1640 she left a property in Mardol, Shrewsbury, to provide an annual sum of £1 to maintain the west window.

Unlike some Shropshire churches, St. Laurence's seems to have escaped damage in the Civil War, and a survey of 1662 reported it 'in good repair'. By the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, however, there were signs of neglect. At the end of the long rectorship of Henry Clayton in 1725, the interior was described as 'indifferent', swine had got into the churchyard and dug up the graves, and the new incumbent found the rectory 'very ruinous' and 'part of the house tumbled down'. In the time of Stretton's longest-serving rector, John Mainwaring, whose tenure of 58 years exceeded even Henry Clayton's, probably little more than routine maintenance was carried out. Mainwaring was a talented and distinguished figure, elected Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, but until his retirement would have been in Church Stretton only in vacations. He did, however, rebuild the Old Rectory which, with later additions, still stands, and created the walk through the Rectory Woods. In his last years the churchyard wall was constructed (the date 1798 can still be seen on some stones) in place of the fence that had been the churchwardens' nightmare for centuries.

The advent of a young rector when Mainwaring died in 1807 held out the promise of renovation in the church, but

there had been further deterioration by the time of Thomas Coleman's early death. It fell, therefore, to another young rector, Robert Pemberton, who arrived in 1818, to make the church more fit for dignified worship. Pemberton became a very wealthy man and made generous contributions to effect the changes he inspired. His first action was to clear the chancel of clutter, moving the organ (first reference) and some tiered seating to the west end of the church. Today's striking east window was the rector's gift in his first year, and it was he who collected the carved Jacobean woodwork which was fashioned into the impressive reredos. In the body of the church the box pews were rearranged in a more uniform manner. The discovery in 1827 that the end wall of the south transept was in danger of collapse led to a major repair by Thomas Corfield and the moving of the door there to the centre of the wall.

Pemberton found the vestry, a tiny room near the tower stairs, to be impossibly small. In 1831, therefore, the old south porch was replaced by a new vestry, though only half the size of today's room. After 700 years' use the south door was no longer accessible and a new entrance had to be found. The answer was today's west doorway whose insertion necessitated the removal of the tiered seating and the building of a gallery over the rear pews for the organ and schoolchildren.

When Robert Pemberton inherited the More estate at Millichope his building priority became a Hall there and little more was done at St. Laurence's, though retiling the roof had begun and the first heating been installed (with hot water pipes sending warmed air up through gratings) before his death in 1848.

Over more than two centuries marked improvements had been made and the church embellished but it had been done in piecemeal fashion. The thorough restoration of the parish church had to wait for another twenty years.

*Douglas Grounds*

I have just completed a history of our church and parish. It is to be published in October by Logaston Press of Herefordshire. The book will be of 300 pages with over 100 illustrations.

The publisher's advice is that most copies should have a soft cover and be priced at £14-95. He knows from experience, however, that some people prefer hard-back copies even though they are more expensive – in this case £18-95. In order to help us make a decision on the number of hard-back copies to order, I invite anyone who would like to have such a copy to let me know as soon as possible – either by ringing me at home (722017) or through the Parish Office (724224). Thank you.

All profits will go to the Friends of St. Laurence.

# Maintaining the Mynd

Various comments have been made and questions asked about recent activities on the Longmynd. We should like to take this opportunity to explain the reasoning behind some of our maintenance work.

**Question:** The Port Way is a neolithic trackway. It has gently matured over hundreds of years. Why has it been necessary to surface this path? Could it not have been left to erode gently as no steep parts of the hill are affected?

**Answer:** The moorland on the Longmynd is visited by at least 150,000 people each year. The Port Way has been so heavily used and poorly drained that the degree of erosion had reached an unacceptable level. Water was eroding the path, leading to large pools and areas of mud in the walkway. In turn this has encouraged visitors to make wider and wider detours into the heather. The trampling has often extended many feet each side of the path, slowly defacing the landscape. This major path is also used to provide emergency access in case of heath fire.



**Question:** Could the Port Way have been surfaced in a more sympathetic way? At present it looks like a great grey stripe across the landscape.

**Answer:** We have been fortunate to receive 2000 tons of rock excavated from a building site in Madeira Walk and from Carding Mill Valley. This local stone has given us the unique opportunity to improve eroded areas such as the Port Way and Devil's Mouth car park with rock from the Longmynd itself. Drains have been placed every 10 metres to slow down erosion in the future. The "grey stripe" will weather to match the surroundings and heather and grass will grow, blurring the edges. Anyone who has tried to keep a garden path free of plantain and other weeds will realise that it will not remain a clean grey stripe for long. The surfacing work has also made good damage to the Port Way which unfortunately occurred when Dr Motts

road was being repaired. In the long term we believe the appearance of the track will be improved by the surfacing work.

**Comment:** Dr Mott's Road has been made up so well that it makes the top of the Longmynd too accessible to unsuspecting tourists unsuitably shod and dressed. They may be caught out by the wildness of the top of the mountain.

**Reply:** Dr Mott's road is a bridleway. It is therefore maintained by the County Council. They have rebuilt the path making use of local stone and providing suitable drainage which will be maintained by volunteers. It is essential that bridleways are maintained adequately to provide a safe thoroughfare for both horses and people.

**Question:** Are there plans to resurface any more of the 50Km/30 miles of footpaths on the Longmynd in a similar way?

**Answer:** We intend to complete the surfacing work on the Port Way when more Longmynd stone becomes available, hopefully later this year. However, we do not plan to resurface paths in any valleys other than Carding Mill Valley. On the other hand we do expect to maintain paths generally by putting drains in wet spots and placing rocks in paths in order to hold them together, particularly in steep areas such as the Lightspout waterfall. This is in line with work in other upland areas such as Snowdonia and the Lake District.

*The National Trust*

**P**eter Carty, National Trust property manager for the South Shropshire Hills, is holding a meeting to tell local people about National Trust decisions and work on the Longmynd and to hear their views. Everyone is welcome.

The meeting will be at **11 am on Sunday, 11 August at Shooting Box Car Park**. It will last about one hour. There is no charge.

*Photos: Paul Miller*





## URC Voice

**W**hile on holiday I met some fine, kind, generous people who used to be enthusiastic churchgoers. Over the years they have become disillusioned with church structures, and scarred by a series of traumatic personal experiences. For a few years one of them occasionally went to a retreat centre, but does so no longer; another just found formal religion a turn off and rarely frequents a church at all.

Their position is repeated in varying forms in countless places. Those who once went regularly to corporate worship, who were totally committed to the life of a local church, no longer darken the doors of the house of God, except on rare occasions. Perhaps they make the effort to go to a funeral, or politely accept an invitation to a wedding, but that may be all. For some individuals this has come about very gradually, while in other cases, perhaps because of a specific incident, they have made a sudden change and reacted strongly against their past record.

Accepting that this happens, for all sorts of reasons, I grieve when people sweep their predicament under the carpet, and refuse either to attempt to resolve it, or at the very least examine it. On the other hand I am greatly encouraged when people feel able to express their feelings, possibly to vent their resentment and anger, their loss of interest, and describe their change in circumstances, or whatever. In some instances this provides an opportunity for the church to explain a misunderstanding, or to apologise for its past record. Regrettably we do let people down, and turn them away from the benefits of knowing a personal relationship with God.

I have also, of course, to accept that we live in an age when a number of people apparently have no interest at all in Christianity, or indeed in any other faith. John Diamond, the 'Times' journalist, who died last March of cancer at the age of 47, wrote in his autobiography "I'm happy not believing, and that's what evangelists don't seem to understand"

While having to accept such a viewpoint as a fact, it saddens me greatly, and spurs me on to invite all who are prepared to examine where we stand as regards a belief in the living God to do so. Although I regularly attempt to underline the importance of facing up to, and overcoming, whatever hinders spiritual awareness and growth, I have also to respect those who just do not want to engage in the subject at all. Bend my ear when you next bump into me!

*Norman Smith*



## Looking for something good to read?

How much have you experienced the sheer variety and excitement there is in the Bible?

**What THRILLER** can match the story of David and Goliath or the roller-coaster journeys of Paul?

**What ROMANCE** has the emotion of Ruth or the attraction of the Song of Songs?

**What PHILOSOPHICAL** work comes close to the reflections of the teacher in Ecclesiastes?

**What TRAVEL** book has as vast a canvas as Exodus?

**What SELF HELP** book cries out with the passion of the Psalms?

**What POEM** has the power of Jeremiah's questioning or God's answer to Job?

**What SHORT STORY** says as much about the human condition as the parable of the Good Samaritan?

**What RELIGIOUS** book, even, expresses the mystery of life as simply as John's Gospel?



**The BIBLE** describes itself as light and food. Christians have found that it is both - providing us with insight into God's character, illumination for life's challenges and direction for shaping our choices.

As well as its account of God's personal revelation to us, the Bible's wisdom and values and its account of God's relationship with us provide a framework for living in today's world.

Engaging with the Bible stimulates courage, joy, integrity and hope.

There are many very helpful translations of the Bible available today, and a wide range of aids to assist in its understanding.

Remarkably it is still by far the best selling book, but also the one least read!



An initiative called **GROW WITH THE BIBLE** is a partnership of four leading Bible Reading agencies: the Bible Reading Fellowship, Crusade for World Revival, International Bible Reading Association and Scripture Union. Each organisation has its own distinctive profile, vision and

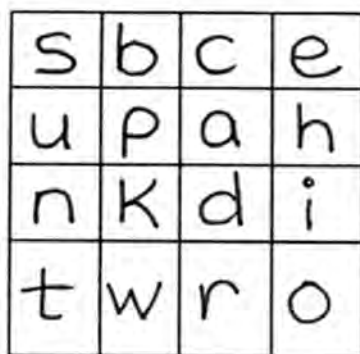
range of resources, but they have one objective in common; that of helping and encouraging as many people as possible of all ages to read, value and appreciate the Bible and through it encounter the living God.

## Christian Aid Week 2002

Christian Aid Week 2002 in the Strettons produced the excellent sum of £2,501.45, excluding the proceeds of the All Stretton Coffee Morning which in previous years had augmented the grand total. The organisers express their gratitude to all who contributed, and especially to those collectors and workers whose efforts helped to make the



## For Children of all ages



Think about a holiday at the seaside. How many things can you find using the letters in the grid. You can use them more than once each time.



What are these things to have at the seaside? The letters have been jumbled.

### August Puzzles

deaps      teckub      uns  
macre      tha      ase  
ceimacre      nuf      bullemar

Some people don't get away for a holiday and many come here. We're lucky to live here.

*Moriel Gidney*

## For Cooks of all ages



**T**his easy to make loaf/cake recipe appeared on the back of packing on a new 1 lb. loaf tin. I have made it twice and it is lovely and moist; and keeps well. (That's if it lasts long enough to keep !!)

### PINEAPPLE and CHERRY LOAF

**Ingredients:**    2 oz. glace cherries                      1 oz. glace pineapple                      2 oz. ground almonds  
                         4 oz. butter or marg.                      4 oz. caster sugar                          2 eggs  
                         2 oz. S.R. flour                                2 oz. plain flour                              a pinch of salt

**L**ightly grease your loaf tin, chop the cherries and pineapple and mix with the ground almonds. Beat butter until soft then add the sugar, and cream until the mixture is light and fluffy. Beat the eggs and add to the mixture one at a time. Fold in the flour and salt. Lastly add the fruit. Spoon into the tin and bake in a pre-heated oven 350F or 180C or gas mark 4 for about one hour. Cool a little and then turn out on to a wire rack. Enjoy...

*"Her Ladyship"*

# 'Hanging Gardens of Babylon'

## or Gastropod Wars II

**A**s a novice – and erstwhile reluctant gardener – I was horrified to find myself involved in a war of attrition against the predations of gastropods (slugs and snails) as I struggled to convert our garden from a monotonous patch to a Shropshire Kew Gardens. I did not remember this problem from my parents' garden in Sussex, nor even from my own somewhat damp garden in Birmingham. On a high plateau in the Tarn Valley Region of France two years ago, I gazed enviously at the clumps of dahlias, of cosmea and lettuces growing in the dry-stone walled potagers. All of these plants would be eaten by gastropods at first sight in our garden here. In sheer desperation I thought that I had come to love g-proof gladioli!

There was a respite this year due to the very hot and dry April, when not a gastropod was seen, but far from being relaxed I was anxiously looking at cracks in the ground and plants dying of drought. Then May came and with it the rain and cold and the g-proof Californian Poppy I had seeded just disappeared. However the tulips bloomed in a splendid flare of yellow and red stripes and a kind neighbour told me what to do next – dead-head as soon as the petals have dropped off and apply fertiliser so that good bulbs form for next year.

Meanwhile, until the untidy tulip remains finally died, I planted some bright French marigolds in between. I had remembered hearing something about marigolds and pest control, but the gastropods just swooped in and one by one my brave yellow marigolds disappeared. This was despite my resorting to the ultimate control – 'slug picking' – a horrible process which they certainly do not tell you about on the gardening programmes. But I cannot stomach doing this too often. As I will not use slug pellets what else to do? I must admit in a moment of stress I had thought of

boiling oil (society still, I believe, puts live crabs into boiling water may I remind the squeamish) and some gardeners cut them in half with scissors, but I have so far desisted on both fronts as too unkind – but is poison pleasant, or being eaten by a frog? So I will continue to remove or outwit them. In the meantime a little frog has been seen leaping happily about and the thrushes eat the snails in the dawn.

**M**y main tactic to avoid the predations of the gastropods is to put in plants that they don't like, even though this means that they, not I, are designing our garden! Thus in my principal flower bed (red/pinky/yellow theme) are now the following g-proof plants: antirrhinum, red geraniums, self-seeded aquilegia, evening primrose, two splendid new paeonies, ornamental strawberries with variegated leaves, two new lavenders, bright green euphorbia, boring but reliable pink sedum, a small patch of pink geraniums strictly under control, large patches of marguerites, tall irises, reliable geum, and some tender little seedling nasturtiums for contrast. And I am delighted that my oxalis from the National Trust is coming up again although I thought I had lost it to frost. The only casualty is a new Michaelmas Daisy which is hanging forlornly half-eaten.



As I believe the garden should not only be pretty, but produce good too, in another bed I have planted two thymes of differing colours, two bushy rosemary, some pale green sage, seeded with pale blue 'love-in-the-mist' and finally bedded out power blue ageratum and some dark blue and some white lobelia – again all g-proof. Against the house



are coming up (g-proof) carnations and hollyhocks, but the clematis are proving more vulnerable. One has been killed completely by the stalk being stripped of cover, and upon the other all the flowers have been eaten. Obviously we are harbouring not only gourmand but also gourmet gastropods. No wonder the French and the Africans eat them.

Becoming more and more enthusiastic in this complex and rewarding pastime, I have purchased two sets of lovely pots from Vietnam – one royal blue and the other sea green. In the sea green set is now my leaf garden; in the large pot, heartshaped hostas, next to that a new oxalis with fascinating tiny pale green leaves (four hearts) and pink flowers and in the third pot, white lilies and some gypsophila. In the royal blue a pale green eucalyptus tree is sulking temporarily until I can have some *Leylandii* removed, next to that a small *ceanothus*, with the perfect colour combination of powder blue flowers and dark green leaves, and in the smallest pot, another white lily – which was eaten! Not content with this riot of colour and planting I now want some hanging baskets. Idly I wonder about the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, famed for their beauty. Might they not have been also an elaborate means of pest control?

And what did happen to the gladioli? Well, the geraniums grew and grew and the poor gladioli were smothered at the front and at the back it is my feeling that they did not form bulbs for some reason – genetically engineered so as not to reproduce? I leave you with that thought.

*Thelma F Thompson*

**PS:** Now slugs are headline news with a leader in *The Times* (27<sup>th</sup> June 2002) *in their defence* after the recent discovery that coffee kills them stone dead.



# United Nations Association

## Church Stretton Branch to help an Afghan School

**A**n ambitious specific objective has emerged from the Afghanistan Education Day held by the Church Stretton Branch in June. In its quest to improve education for all ages in Afghanistan, the Group felt that the way forward was **to support a single school and its community.**

Among the forty-three people who attended the discussions were six Afghan guests, four of whom talked about the education system in their country. Muneer and Mustajab also took part in a 'Question Time style' panel and shared the hardships and importance of their school system with us. Education has been severely disrupted and virtually all schools in rural areas operate outdoors. There is a need to encourage teachers to return to teaching and for youngsters, both male and female, to take up education.

The Group is enthusiastic to find out more about the needs and desires of the Afghan people themselves and is keen to learn from Afghans. It is in touch with other branches of the UNA as well as UNICEF and the Afghan Youth Council. The Church Stretton members are analysing sheets of information and establishing contacts in order to identify a village school in a community which is being rebuilt. They hope to decide upon a school which would welcome and benefit from resources which the Branch could supply.

By January 2003, the Group hopes to have identified a school and to have received information from that school about what is required. It is then hoped that it will be able to supply resources and information during the following 6 months and receive feedback by June 2003. In a parallel move, it is hoped to establish contact with the village leaders and to find out which items would be useful in helping adults to learn during the rebuilding of the community.



One of the Afghan guests, has since e-mailed saying how impressed he was by the feeling that the people in Church Stretton have for Afghanistan and its people. He has friends in Afghanistan who are sending information about their community and its educational needs.

Members of the Branch are working hard in their search for a suitable school and if you have any knowledge, experience or time which you could offer to help with this work, Barrie Oxtoby (01694 723199) or Susan Beale (01694 723679) would be very pleased to hear from you.

*John Bennett,*



From the left: Susan Beale, John Bennett with Majid Ali, Muneer Afzal with Hana Nasreen, Mustajab Malikzada..

*Photo: Paul Miller.*

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## School Summer Fete Raises Over £4,400

**E**arly indications are that the Summer Fete raised over £4,400 for School funds. The annual event was a great success and the PTA wish to thank all those who help and supported the event on the 29<sup>th</sup> June.

The tug-of-war competition was won by a team from The Traveller's Rest. The under 12 Football Tournament was won by the team representing Wistanstow, whilst the Eagan FC were the winners in the Year 8 and 9 competition.

Future PTA events to look forward to are a Quiz Night on 28<sup>th</sup> September, a Casino Night on 18<sup>th</sup> October and the

Annual Craft Fayre on the 16<sup>th</sup> November. Further details in due course.

The school is continuing plans for further improvements following on from the installation of theatre seating. A sound and lighting booth is planned which will enhance performances at the school. Funding for this work is still being sought. It is hoped to reach completion of this work in time for a presentation of 'Bugsy Malone' in the autumn. Anyone interested in helping to raise money for the sound and lighting booth should contact Alan Fox, Fund Raising Co-ordinator, Knoll Cottage, Little Stretton, SY6 6PL or telephone 723865 (home) or 723867 (work).

**We urgently require a new distributor for Central Avenue. Also a few more occasional distributors to help cover holidays etc. would be much appreciated. For further details, please contact Jon Cooke, Distribution Manager on 723205.**

## Methodist Voice:

### Changes at the Helm



This year's Methodist Conference was held in June in Wolverhampton and, in accordance with Methodist practice, it included the installation of our new President and Vice-President. For the benefit of any readers who are not fully "au fait" with Methodism, the holders of these two posts are in office for 12 months, during which time they tour extensively both nationwide and worldwide, representing our Methodist Church. The President is always a minister of our Church and the Vice-President is always a lay person.

Our new President for this year is the Revd. Ian White, who comes to office whilst serving as Chairman of the Channel Islands Methodist District. I am grateful to the Methodist Recorder and to the Revd. Ian Suttie, from whose profile of the President I draw the following information: Ian White is a native of Manchester and, not surprisingly, is a supporter of Manchester United. Leaving school at 15, he served an apprenticeship as a bookbinder and meanwhile trained to be a local preacher. Eventually, he candidated for the Methodist ministry and was sent for training to Hartley Victoria College. His first ministerial appointment was in Hull, where he met and married Diana - they now have two daughters, both of whom are themselves circuit ministers. From Hull, Ian and Diana moved to Retford and thence to Bristol and, throughout his ministry, Ian has been particularly active in encouraging young people, including disadvantaged children. "He has an open and friendly manner and his concern and time for others are freely given .... He spent time, as Chair of the Bristol District, getting alongside people in their working environments; a day on a farm and a day behind the counter of a seaside general stores were just two of his assignments." He is regarded as being "a shrewd judge of character, astute in his judgments and adept at ensuring that all views are heard".

The Revd. Ian White will need all of these qualities over the coming months and we pray that his year of office will be stimulating, successful and richly blessed.

### Circuit Mission Statement

It is right and fitting that our Circuit should continually be reviewing and reassessing its mission within both our Church and our community. Its most recent mission statement affirms "We believe our churches must be places where God is at the centre, where the Bible and prayer are considered to be crucial, and where decisions and actions are based on God's will. Our churches should be places where the way of Jesus is taught, learnt and followed, and where there is an expectation that through the Holy Spirit, lives will be touched and change will take place".

The statement goes on to consider our mission under several captions, such as the Role of the Circuit; Working Together; Growing in Faith and Reaching Out; Personnel; Caring; Children and Young People; and Resourcing Mission. If the opportunity arises, we can perhaps consider these various aspects at some later date.

### Royal Shrewsbury Hospital

This topic may well be raised elsewhere in this issue of Focus, but such is its importance that I make no apology for raising it here. Churches Together in Shropshire has recently drawn our attention to some disturbing proposals at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. It would appear that there are plans in hand to close and demolish the South Copthorne complex, including the main Hospital Chapel, and to build additional facilities at the North Copthorne site. Worse still, the plans also propose the conversion of the small Chapel in the present North building into another facility, effectively closing all Chapels on the site. It has also been established that the plans for the North side extensions **do not** include any replacement Chapel.

As Ged Cliffe, the County Ecumenical Secretary for Churches Together in Shropshire, writes: *It would seem that no financial value can be placed on spiritual input for the sick and for the hospital staff, and so no money can be budgeted for this purpose!*

Churches Together in Shrewsbury has already written to protest to the hospital authorities, but so far to no avail. The hope now is that as many Christians as possible will write individually to the hospital authorities to protest about the position, letters to be addressed to the Chief Executive, Neil Taylor, Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, Oak Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 8XO.

As one who has benefited from the superb medical care of the intensive care unit of the RHS, I am well aware of the true healing value of the Chapel facilities and of the need for an holistic approach to treatment. I urge all our readers to join me in expressing their concern.

*Eric Stephenson*

### Greeting Card Competition

This competition is open to individuals aged 60 years and over and resident in Shropshire. Entry is free. Create a Greeting Card on the theme of Birthday or Christmas only. The card may be made from any form of handicraft such as cross stitch, collage, decoupage, etc. or may be painted and should measure not more than half A4 size when folded.

Write for an entry form from Helena Whittingham, 3 Mardol Gardens, Shrewsbury SY1 1PR. Closing Date: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2002. Cards will be on display at the Age Concern Handicraft Exhibition 22<sup>nd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> October.



# EVENTS DIARY: what's on in August

## EVERY WEEK

- Sundays **Quaker Meetings for Worship** in August will be held at 106 Stretton Farm Road ..... 10.30  
Thursdays **Disabilities and Benefits** information and advice. At the Social Club, Essex Road ..... 10.00 to 12.00  
**Citizens Advice Bureau.** At Mayfair Rooms, behind solicitor's, 44B Sandford Ave. .... 10.00 to 12.00  
**Traidcraft** fairly traded goods. At the Social Club, Essex Road ..... 10.30 to 1.00  
**Chess Club.** At the Social Club, Essex Road ..... 7.30  
Thu & Fri **Good Neighbours' Bereavement and Loss Befriender.** At Social Club, Essex Road ..... 10.00 to 12.00  
Fridays **WI Market.** At the Social Club, Essex Road ..... 9.00 to 10.30

For Mayfair Community Centre events dates and venues not listed here, please consult the office at 44B Sandford Avenue (behind the solicitor's, near pedestrian crossing) ..... Tel. (01694) 722077

## ARTS FESTIVAL 20<sup>th</sup> July to 3<sup>rd</sup> August. SEE BROCHURES FOR VENUES AND DETAILS

**Art and Crafts Exhibition** in Church Stretton Primary School: Opened by Sir Neil Cossons OBE

Continues until Friday 2 Aug 10.00 to 6.00: Sat 3 Aug 10.00 to 12.00

**Events. TICKETS & BROCHURES** – J Thomas (florist) 722194: Info Centre 723133 or 723807

Fri 2<sup>nd</sup> Gabriel Woolf. "Once below a Time" by Dylan Thomas. Wistanstow Village Hall. £5 ..... 8.00

Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> Dazzling Digits. Beverley Davison and Helen Crayford (virtuoso violin and keyboard)

£8.00. At Church Stretton School ..... 7.30

## WEEK ONE

- Thur 1 **'Mildred's Coffee Morning'**. For Methodist Church Overseas. Methodist Hall. .... 10.00 to 12.00  
Fri 2 **Prayers for Peace** (suggestions by URCs) Drop in at Emmaus Chapel, St Laurence ..... 10.00 to 4.00  
Sat 3 **Shropshire and Mid Wales Hospice.** Book Sale. Coffee and biscuits available.  
Admission free. In the Silvester Horne Institute. .... 10.00 to 1.00  
Sun 4 **United Evening Service** at the United Reformed Church, High Street ..... 6.00  
Wed 7 **Carers' Support Group.** Every first Wednesday: Contact Jean Maddox on 722127.  
At the Health Centre, Easthope Road ..... 2.00 to 4.00  
**Open Garden.** Stalls (plants, cakes, jams) teas, children's play area, part access for disabled.  
Proceeds for Church of England Children's Society. Admission £2 (accompanied children to 6 years free) At Bechacre, Burway Road (town side of The Belvedere) ..... 2.00 to 4.30  
Thu 8 **Traidcraft** fairly traded goods at 36 Watling St South ..... 10.30 to 12.00  
**Stroke Club.** Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at the District Social Club, Essex Road ..... 2.15  
Fri 9 **Senior Citizens.** Mr Andrew Stevenson – optician – "Eyes as time flies". Silvester Horne Inst ..... 2.30

## WEEK TWO

- Sun 11 **United Evening Service** at All Stretton St Michael's Partnership Church. .... 6.00  
Wed 14 **CS Women's Institute.** Outing to Jodrell Bank.  
**Middle Marches Lions Club.** Each 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed at Travellers' Rest. Contacts 724337 or 722020 ..... 8.00  
Fri 16 **Stretton Arthritis Care.** Each 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday at the the Social Club, Essex Road. .... 11.00

## WEEK THREE

- Sun 18 **United Evening Service.** "How do Christians relate to other faiths?"  
Talk and discussion followed by refreshments. At Methodist Hall, Watling St South ..... 6.00  
Tue 20 **All Stretton WI.** Simon Airey – Pets Corner, Mardol – "Exotic Pets".  
Competition: Six biscuits. Open meeting: especially juniors. All Stretton Village Hall ..... 7.30  
Fri 23 **Senior Citizens.** Revd Philip Bytheway. Silvester Horne Institute ..... 2.30  
Sat 24 **Gardening Club.** The 2002 Jubilee SUMMER SHOW. Adm 50p. Silvester Horne Institute ..... 2.30

## WEEK FOUR

- Sun 25 **Annual United STRETTON FOCUS Service.** At St Milburga's RC, Watling St North ..... 6.00

Dates for September due by 12 noon on Friday 16th August to Focus Diary, 1 Central Ave. CS. SY6 6EE Tel. 724304

The Church Stretton Official Web site is at [www.churchstretton.co.uk](http://www.churchstretton.co.uk)

# CHURCH SERVICES in the Strettons



**ANGLICAN CHURCH** (The United Parish of St Laurence's, Church Stretton, with St Michael's & All Angels, All Stretton, and All Saints, Little Stretton) Rector: The Rev. Jonathan Millard (Tel: 722585)

## Sunday Services

Holy Communion (a quiet reflective service) ..... 8.00 am.  
 Morning Worship. A service suitable for everyone of all ages with crèche and Kidzone (for children 3 - 11)  
 followed by refreshments in the Parish Centre.  
 Holy Communion on 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays..... 10.30 am.  
 Evening Worship. (On 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Holy Communion with special prayers for Healing)..... 6.00 pm.  
 Pathfinders (Years 6 - 10) in Parish Centre ..... 6.00 pm.

**Weekday Activities.** Many house groups and activities are held throughout the week. Contact the Parish Office for details.

Thursdays: Holy Communion ..... 11.30 am.

**All Saints, Little Stretton.** A traditional Sunday Service is held each Sunday

Week 1. Evening Prayer ..... 6.00 pm.  
 Weeks 2, 4, and 5. Holy Communion ..... 11.00 am.  
 Week 3. Morning Prayer ..... 11.00 am.

**The Parish Office** is in the Parish Centre, Church St. (Tel: 724224). Open Tuesday & Wednesday 10.00 - 12.30 pm.  
 Thursday & Friday 9.30 - 4.30 pm  
 Secretary: Nancy Cleaton. Email: parishoffice@onetel.net.uk



**METHODIST CHURCH**

Minister: Rev. Bernard C Nixon (Tel: 724923)

## Sunday Services

Morning Service ..... 10.30 am.  
 Junior Church & Crèche ..... 10.30 am.  
 Evening Service ..... 6.00 pm.

## Weekday Activities

Mondays: Prayer Group (weekly) ..... 6.45 - 7.15 pm.  
 Mondays: Bible Study (as announced) ..... 7.30 pm.  
 Tuesdays: Wives and Friends (2<sup>nd</sup> week of the month) ..... 8.00 pm.  
 Wednesdays: Women's Network (weekly) ..... 2.30 pm.

**Holy Communion:** one Sunday morning each month and two evenings each quarter (as announced)



**RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)**

Clerk: Jamie Wrench (Tel: 723923)

**Sundays:** August Meetings (4th - 24th incl) for worship at 106 Stretton Farm Road. All are welcome ... 10.30 am.  
 For details of home discussion groups which meet at 7.30 pm. please telephone the Clerk.



**ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Priest: Rev'd. Fr. Patrick Shivnen (Tel: 722897)

**St Milburga's, Church Stretton**

Sunday Mass ..... 9.15 am. Monday - Thursday Mass ..... 10.00 am.  
 Friday Mass ..... 9.00 am.  
 Saturday Mass ..... 6.30 pm.

**St Walburga's, Plowden.**

Sunday Mass ..... 10.45 am.



**ST MICHAEL'S & ALL ANGELS, ALL STRETTON** (Local Ecumenical Partnership with URC) Contact: 724224

## Sunday Services

Week 1 Morning Prayer (ASB) ..... 11.00 am.  
 Week 2 Holy Communion (URC) ..... 6.00 pm.  
 Week 3 Family Service ..... 11.00 am.  
 Week 4 Holy Communion (BCP) ..... 9.00 am,  
 Week 5 Holy Communion (ASB) ..... 11.00 am.



**UNITED REFORMED CHURCH**

Minister : Rev. Norman Smith (Tel: 724903)

## Sunday Services

Worship and Activity Group (On the 1st Sunday in month includes Holy Communion) ..... 10.30 am.

## Weekday Activities

Mondays (week 1) Ladies' Group ..... 2.30 pm.  
 Mondays (week 3) Church Meeting ..... 7.30 pm.  
 Wednesdays (week 1) Ladies' Link ..... 8.00 pm.



# Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,



Many thanks for making 'Stretton Focus' such an interesting magazine and for improving the format so successfully without losing the friendly feel. 'Focus' really is outstanding value-for-money and helps to keep me in touch while I'm away from Church Stretton.

I was very disappointed to learn, however, that 'Words and names' will be ending in September. For my family and friends, this is the undisputed jewel in the crown, being thoroughly professional, well-written, interesting and entertaining. I do understand that you may need space for other items but perhaps the editorial team would consider a partial reprieve, publishing 'Words and names' every two or three issues perhaps, so that its fans aren't completely deprived of their treat.

Whatever you decide, thank you again for giving 'Focus' readers so much pleasure.

*Judith Stone, London*

Dear Editor,

Our daughter went to London on Wednesday, to the mass demonstration in favour of fair trade. As we were staying with her in Sheffield, we joined her. It was a happy event, blessed by good weather. It started with an ecumenical service at Emmanuel Hall and ended with a mass at Westminster Cathedral. Because the Hallam contingent was too large, their MP came informally to meet us on the lawn outside Parliament.

Do you know that the market price of cocoa is so low that most plantation owners cannot afford to pay their staff, and therefore employ slaves? There are now more slaves in the world than at the time of Wilberforce. The price of such commodities should be fixed world-wide, fairly and honestly, so that producers are not exploited.

Do you know that our government supports projects in the Third World, which benefit our companies but

ruin the lives of local populations? Sophisticated air-traffic control systems have been sold to one of the poorest nations in the world, while a dam, which would displace 70,000 Kurdish villagers, is being considered. Do you know that the E.U. by subsidising its farmers, competes unfairly with developing countries? Beet sugar is now much cheaper than cane sugar. The E.U. also encourages the privatisation of water world-wide. Twenty thousand Indian farmers have gone bankrupt, because they can no longer afford to irrigate their land.

We, as Christians, should make it our business to know what our government is doing in our name – and to make our voices heard. Of course, our government, our banks and our firms are exploiting developing countries on our behalf. They believe we want money at all cost, in order to get comfort, luxuries and the false sense of security, superiority and power, which money brings. We, as Christians, should make it clear to them that, if wealth is built on the exploitation of the vulnerable, we want no share in it.

*Simone Crawley*

## Little Stretton Play Group

The Little Stretton Play Group offers a warm welcome to any pre-school children and their carer. We recognise that being at home with young children can be very isolating and this offers an opportunity to come and meet other families in the area. We try to offer different stimulation to all the pre school age groups. For the babies we have soft toys and stimulating toys with bright colours, sounds and movement. The older children have a variety of toys to play with. We change them each week or so to add variety – one week we have ride on toys, the next week balls and water!

In the craft section the children can make something different each week. We try to tie in the craft with the seasons and have made bumble bees, maypole pictures and Union Jack flags. Half way through the

morning we have Song Time where the children sing nursery rhymes and other songs and where they can join in with shakers and actions. Later we have story time which the children love.

I have to admit that parking is a problem at the Village Hall, but the management of The Green Dragon have kindly offered to let us use the parking spaces in front of the pub. Many thanks to them.

The Little Stretton Play Group is held in Little Stretton Village Hall on Mondays between 10am and 12noon at the price of £1 per family. Refreshments are included in the price. We will be running the Play Group throughout the summer holidays and children who are visiting the area are more than welcome to join us. If you require any further information,

please call Juliet Koufou on 01694 723021 or Karen Brayne on 01694 781655.

We look forward to seeing you.

*Juliet Koufou*

### Civil Service Retirement Fellowship Church Stretton Group

On Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September, there will be a coach trip to Llangollen and a cruise along the canal including over the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. We shall have a Welsh Cream Tea on board and the cost will be £12.50 per head. Any non-members of the Fellowship who would like to join us on that day will be warmly welcomed. For details telephone John Davies (724703) or Charles Simmonds (724117) during August to book your place.

## Gardener's Show Time

How I enjoy June as the Stretton Hills tend to delay the arrival of Summer warmth and it is not until this month that we really begin to see some worthwhile results in our gardens - the gooseberries, strawberries, new potatoes, broad beans, peas and much more to fill the salad bowl. In the greenhouse there are cucumbers to eat and tomatoes forming to ripen up in July's sunshine - hopefully.

A big delight, of course, are the longer days with the possibility of actually enjoying the garden by working outside. This is when the roses, honeysuckle and jasmine are appreciated and, at last, the bees are at work in some numbers having failed to make their appearance in the dark days of April and May.

There remains the constant fight to keep the blackbirds off the soft fruit. Perhaps the biggest problem for all gardeners is how to deal with the slugs and snails that abound. I've tried to get a hedgehog or two, but was told they would not remain as there are badgers in the neighbourhood. But essentially we gardeners are optimists, so providing we haven't eaten all the choice vegetables and cut all the prime blooms, we should have something for the Summer Show.

This being The Queen's Jubilee Year, there is something special about our gardening show. In the programme for 2002 we offer plenty of scope for beginners and experienced gardeners alike to enter Fruit, Vegetables and Flower Classes. For cooks we have a special prize for a Decorated Sponge to celebrate "The Queen's Jubilee Year". For the Floral Art Classes we have "The Garden of England" and much more.

Schedules for the Summer Show are available from Salts in Church Stretton's High Street or from John Lloyd (01694 723143). All entry forms need to be returned by teatime on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2002.

Members and non-members who live in Church Stretton and District are very welcome to the Show bench, so let this year be even better than the very successful 2001 show.

**The 2002 Jubilee Year Summer Show  
Silvester Horne Institute  
Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2.30 p.m.**

*John Lloyd*

## Volunteering Opportunities

The following vacancies are available Monday-Thursday, between 3.30pm - 9.30pm, on a weekly, monthly or occasional basis - Can you spare an hour or two?

**Mentoring:** Volunteers required to work alongside and support young people - training provided.

**Information Technology:** Come and speak to us if this is an area that interests you, or you have previous experience.

**Counselling:** This position requires someone willing to offer support where necessary, previous experience not essential, training provided.

**Catering:** Help required for all aspects of catering, kitchen, waitress/waiter, etc.

**Helping with Homework:** This is a supporting role requiring some subject knowledge, patience and a willingness to seek information.

**Arts & Crafts:** Do you have a flair, skill, or an interest in this area that you would be willing to share?

These are just some of the opportunities available at Mayfair Community Centre. For further information contact Sue Wood 01684 722077.

**Volunteering really makes a difference!**

**Quiz Night -**

23<sup>rd</sup> August at Social Club 7.30pm



The Mayfair Youth Forum meet at school to discuss plans and activities that will take place in the expanded premises of the Mayfair Community Centre. This group has been meeting since 1999 and have been instrumental in guiding the development of the Centre.



Janet Guy, one of Mayfair's first volunteers, and Mrs E Aspinall, resident of Mayfair Court, cut our 5th birthday cake. The cake was made by Gill Humphries and donated to Mayfair by the Church Stretton W.I. Congratulations and thanks to everyone who has played a part in nurturing Mayfair at this tender age.

# It Happened One Night

The house sits on the side of a steep hill. Far below is Carding Mill valley and, a little way above, the single-track road winds over the Long Mynd. It was winter and two of the bridge players were late arriving because the heavy frost made driving difficult. We had just cut for partners and my husband, who loathed cards, had put on some headphones and settled down to watch T.V.

The ring of the doorbell was unexpected and irritating. On the doorstep I found my nearest neighbour who lived in the valley. He and his young son were supporting a somewhat ill assorted couple. An extremely pretty young girl was sobbing uncontrollably in the arms of a nondescript middle-aged man. Ron said he had heard screaming and he and the lad had climbed up to the road and found the car. The driver had been lying in the road but the girl had slipped over the edge and was hanging on to the roots of dead bracken. They had helped the couple as far as my house but did not feel able to take them any farther. Would I take charge of them? The bridge players murmured restively but there was really nothing to do but agree. I drew them into the living room and went to make a hot drink and telephoned the police to say that there had been an accident and that the road over the Mynd was blocked.

When I came back into the room the man was talking and the girl was still crying and still clinging to him. Despite her tears she looked lovely and I wondered about the relationship; father and daughter maybe. Not quite right somehow, still, "See if you can drink some hot, sweet tea" I urged. "I've phoned the police so you will have some help soon."

"It's my car I'm worried about. We've got to get to West Bromwich to do another job. Will they get the car down for me?"

"No," I said decidedly, "They won't do that. You'll need your motoring organisation to move it."

"I haven't got a motoring organisation. I don't have that sort of money. We've got to have the car to get to the next job. We're expected."

"What were you doing on the Mynd?" I asked. "Where had you come from?"

"We just did a job at Wentnor and I asked the quickest way to the A49 and they sent me up this hill. I didn't know it was like this. Never been here before in my life. It was dark wasn't it? Couldn't see a blind thing and the road getting slippier all the time and I said to her "If I jump out you jump out," and when we started to slide I threw myself out and so did she. I didn't know she was going to go over the edge. I didn't know there was an edge did I?"

There seemed to be no answer to this. We were silent and he reverted to his original plaint. "We've got to have the car to get to the next job. We need the money."

We were silent and I was considering their position. If they did not have any money how was the car to be moved?

John Sproson, who was one of the bridge players, asked, "How did you leave the car? Is it damaged?"

"I don't know. Bloody thing went over my thigh. That's damaged."

My eyes went towards my husband, still deeply engrossed in one of the peninsular battles. I had helped him once to lower a car foot by foot using a heavy rope and two of the sturdy posts that marked the edge of the road. That had been in daylight though and the car owner had been at the wheel. I put the idea away. It would not be fair to ask anyone to perform a manoeuvre like that that in the dark.

I began to feel vaguely resentful. I had been looking forward to a quiet game of bridge and now the evening was ruined by a madman who wanted to go to West Bromwich.

"Why do you have to go to West Bromwich?" I asked rudely. "What is it that you have been doing in Wentnor and now you have to do it again in West Bromwich? And at this time of night too! Even if you get the car shifted it will be very late by the time you get there."

He gazed about him hopelessly still clutching the girl. "We go to parties, you know. Twentyfirsts and suchlike. I'm a hairy gorilla and she's a striptease policewoman. If we don't do this job tonight I'll be out of work cos' I've got to have the car or I can't earn any money."

For once I was speechless. After a moment John Sproson said, "You could sell your story to the newspaper. Think of the headline. Striptease policewoman and hairy gorilla in car crash on the Long Mynd. I bet it would make the nationals."

The girl suddenly came to life. Her lovely face was unblemished by all those tears "Naaah!" she screeched, like Eliza Doolittle, "You can't do that; my boy friend doesn't know what I do."

Into the ensuing silence came the sound of a car outside. I opened the front door and watched a policewoman walking carefully down the icy steps. A little later she took them both away, presumably to help sort out their problems, I wondered if the girl would tell the policewoman what she did for a living.

My husband removed his headset and switched off the television. "Good film that. How was the bridge?"

*Miriam Eccleston*

## Household Rubbish Collection Arrangements for August Bank Holiday

No collection of Domestic Rubbish on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August

During the week commencing 26<sup>th</sup> August all rubbish collections will be made **ONE DAY LATER THAN USUAL**. Friday collections will be made on Saturday. Any queries telephone 01584 813396/7/8.



# Roman Catholic Voice - A Time for Truth



In parts of Western Europe and North America, interest in all aspects of eroticism is widespread, feverish, and obsessional – and creates wealth for many. Small wonder then that the recent disclosures of sexual misconduct on an alarming scale and over a long period by members of the Catholic and other Christian clergy, have aroused feelings of disbelief, horror and revulsion, not only in the faith community, but in the general public.

The heinous nature of the offences lies in the fact that they have been perpetrated against children and young adults, some of whom are permanently scarred by their experiences. The position of authority and trust which the abusers enjoyed made it easier for them to go on offending without fear of disclosure and, of course, compounded the scandalous effects of their conduct.

When it was no longer possible to overlook the criminal acts of a minority of clergy, it appears that in some cases gross errors of judgment were made by Church authorities. In their understandable eagerness to defend the reputation of the innocent majority of the clergy and to show the possibility of forgiveness to the wrongdoer, leaders are accused of failing to recognise the needs of the victims, much less make reparation. In a few cases in the United States, large sums of money were handed over to victims – but in a shameful attempt to buy their silence; a strategy which was notably unsuccessful.

Lack of expertise on the part of the writer, and limitations of space, make it impossible to tease out all the strands which contribute to the complexity of this sorry tale. For instance, in looking for explanations, many people feel that the obligatory celibacy of Catholic clergy is the obvious cause. Yet the majority of paedophiles in the population as a whole are married men. Others will see priestly formation within a restricted and all male environment as essentially limited and not conducive to the development of the sexual and emotional maturity which adherence to celibacy demands. Research indicates that ephebophilia (the abuse of post pubescent

boys and young men) is much more common with erring priests than is paedophilia (the abuse of children of either sex), which may suggest a misdirected homosexual tendency in the abuser. The rigidity of the hierarchical structures in the Catholic Church itself has been blamed for many of its difficulties in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some priests have felt at times that the authority figures who could have nurtured and assisted them were remote and unyielding.

However, very recently there have been some significant and very encouraging changes. Young aspirants to the priesthood are now trained in seminaries open to many influences, female as well as male, lay and clerical. All have links and interaction with universities and other organisations. Selection procedures are searching and most seminarians have work experience outside.

In dealing specifically with sexual abuse each diocese has in place protocols for the detection and reporting of incidents, as well as for the care and protection of victims. The isolation and loneliness of many priests is now widely recognised and there is concern to reduce the stress under which they live. All this is helpful and hopeful, but if we are to take seriously the assertions that 'we are the Church' then we must accept corporate responsibility for restoring its good name. We must acknowledge that respected men have committed grave sins by indulging their disordered desires regardless of the cost to others.

Although we realise that priests are but men and therefore subject to human frailty, we expect higher standards from them because of the sacredness of their office. We are all shamed by their fall from grace. It takes courage to own up to what has been done and, alas, we cannot undo it. But by being willing to examine the context in which abuse occurs, we go some way towards creating a climate in which young people can be protected and abusers can be healed.

*Maureen Lee*

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## Church Stretton Golf Club

Church Stretton Golf Club, possibly the oldest sports club in the town, having been established in 1898, has survived several crises in the past, not least the closure of the course for almost 6 months last year due to the Foot & Mouth outbreak.

Membership has suffered a little as a result of the closure, but the signs for recovery are encouraging, and membership in all categories is available. The response from visitors and organised societies has also improved, so we look forward to a steady increase in the number playing the course. There is a very strong Junior section, which is always a good sign for any sports club, and with coaching and teaching by the Professional, they are progressing well in the County league matches.



Competitions for the Men's section are held almost every Sunday during the playing season, April to October, with an Invitation Open on July 7th and the 36 Hole Open Foursomes on the 8th September. The Ladies play their competitions on Mondays, with the club Championship on 15th July and an Open Meeting on 22nd July. The Senior section has a very active calendar of matches and competitions also, with their Open planned for the 31st July.

New caterers were appointed from 1st April and are proving to be very popular with a wide and excellent range of meals and snacks on offer. The course is in superb condition so if you are a lapsed player or just beginning or even contemplating playing golf, why not come and join in?

Enquiries to: Ron Broughton 722633 or The Club 722281

# Church Stretton Town Council

Extract from Minutes of Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2002.

## Questions from the Public - B4370 through Little Stretton

There was a question on the dangers for pedestrians on this road. The SCC has said that speed humps were not possible because the lighting was not highway standard and also because it is a classified road. It was wondered if a 20mph speed limit through the village might help. This matter will be discussed further.

## Coppice Leasowes

A questioner asked about the possible hand-over of the management to another organisation such as the Wildlife Trust in which case it was felt that this might lead to particular interests being followed rather than looking at the site as a whole and preserving it for locals and visitors to walk and enjoy.

## Planning Matters

### District Decisions – Approval

- Erection of an extension to public house, The Kings Arms, 53 High Street, Church Stretton.
- Relocation of domestic garage, Windle Hill House, Hazler Road, Church Stretton
- Erection of extensions to dwelling, The Cottage, Cwmdale, Church Stretton.
- Erection of extensions to dwelling and domestic garage, Hurcott, Longhills Road, Church Stretton.

### Town Council Recommendations – Approval

- Installation of a pitched roof to garage, 20 Helmeth Road, Church Stretton.
- Internal alterations to dwelling and erection of garden shed, West Cottage, The Old Rectory, Burway Road, Church Stretton.
- Erection of a conservatory, 181 Watling Street South, Church Stretton.
- Erection of extension to dwelling, 4 Elms Paddock, Little Stretton.
- Change of use from retail to chiropody clinic, 49a High Street, Church Stretton.

## Naming of Crossways Development

It was reported that Jennings Homes will not change the name as they say they have spent £20,000 on brochures and advertising. It was agreed to go to press on this issue, making it clear that this Council totally disagrees with the choice of name, and to write to Jennings Homes again regarding their total disregard of local opinion.

## Swimming at Church Stretton Pool

It was reported that 10 people have signed up for the Lifeguard course and so hopefully public sessions will be up and running again. It was still felt that it is unfair that the Primary School should bear the financial deficit of the pool and the fight for a square deal needs to be kept up. The SCC Chief Executive will be asked to come and speak to the Council on this matter.

## Jubilee

It was reported that some people had expressed concern

that the Town Council did not decorate the town or do more for the Jubilee. The Council had offered to be 'enablers' if people had been willing to come forward to organise events.

## Noise Pollution Essex Road

Polymer Labs were working hard to carry out all the remedial work with only a few things left to do. However, up until now no real improvement had been reported. The SSDC Environment Officer will come back when all remedial work has been carried out.

## Traffic Lights A49

Discussion took place regarding the traffic light sequence and the problems in Watling Street South and The Highways Agency will be pressed for a site meeting. The SCC will be asked to look into the feasibility of blocking off the southern end of Watling Street or carrying out some serious traffic calming measures as a matter of urgency

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## Rotary Club of Church Stretton

### It's a Busy Summer for Club Members

Stretton Rotarians have a hectic summer programme planned, starting with croquet and BBQ on a lawn in Rushbury (playing to Rushbury rules which includes lots of roquets!!) Two weeks later, this physical evening is followed by bowls on a crown green against the Probus Clubs of Church Stretton, sustenance on this occasion being taken at the Bucks' Head in Church Stretton. This is followed by a Sunday "At Home" with President David Morris and his wife Valerie. Two weeks later, the Rotary Club have yet another charity BBQ, this time at Jill and Edgar's, Theman's Edge Farm, East Wall. Two of our golfing Members, Tom Benson and Pat Doyle, play in the Rotary District (Shropshire & Staffordshire) quarter final championship against a pair from Dudley.



Tom Benson & Pat Doyle congratulate each other on reaching the District Quarter finals  
*Photo: John Corfield*

Finally, I report that a number of Rotarians raised over £600 on the Rainbow over the Longmynd sponsored walk. The Rotary Club, with other local associations, helped with the organisation and running of this walk, which, to date, has raised over £6,000 for the Lingen Davis Rainbow Appeal for a new children's cancer ward at Shrewsbury Hospital.

Phew, you have to be fit to be a Rotarian!!!

*John Corfield*

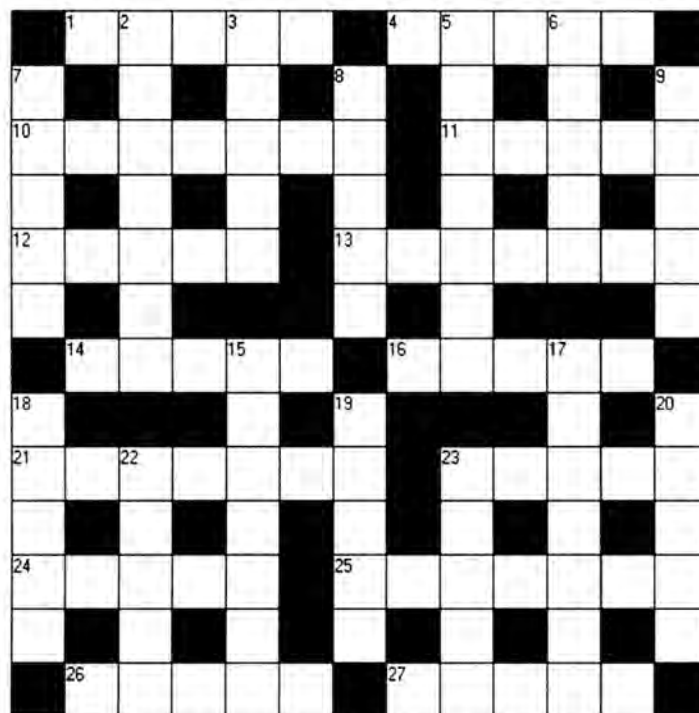
# Crossword sixteen - Cryptic (5s & 7s) by Toucan

## Across

1. A good man to help, but set in his ways (5)
4. Pungent, sharp – about right (5)
10. Insect which may have short legs (7)
11. Western show to be seen in your Odeon this week (5)
12. Found attractive as start of display (5)
13. Embrace in the binnacle (7)
14. Musical work encountered reverse in time (5)
16. Dial for hours? It's a kind of patience (5)
21. O bother! The old lute is broken (7)
23. Found only at the ends of the earth (5)
24. What is left is right, for example, in old pence (5)
25. Little Desmond has very small following – it's inevitable! (7)
26. Put off market display (5)
27. To avoid openness it should be laid regularly (5)

## Down

2. Fool short leg and make a run (7)
3. 1000 in anger, plus 500 irritated (5)
5. Sweet left after morning in trouble (7)
6. Country shown in main diagram (5)
7. Climb to be found on the Pike (5)
8. Fix the rod, don't give up! (5)
9. Think about nothing, for computer control (5)
15. 23 ac. as confused by a shady affair (7)
17. Dropping in or ringing up – it's a vocation for some people (7)
18. Dusty, disordered scholar's place (5)
19. A worthless poet's material (5)
20. Toddler's first beams hold up one's tea (5)



22. The night before National Trust happening (5)
23. Gone east, like 8 down (5)

Solution on page 36

## Home Office to Fund Quaker Project to Help Sex Offenders

The concept of "Circles of Support and Accountability" to help sex offenders avoid re-offending has achieved a remarkable success. The Dangerous Offenders Unit at the Home Office has been so impressed with the idea that it is to fund a Quaker project for the next three years, at a cost of over £100,000 per year. An office has been set up in the Thames Valley with a staff of three, managed by Helen Drewery of Friends House. The work, under the care of the Crime and Community Justice Committee, aims to apply the principles and practice of restorative justice.

At a seminar held in London during the summer of 2000, the committee brought together professionals from the probation service, prisons, parole, psychology, the police, the churches and organisations representing victims to hear about the concept of "Circles". The original scheme was initiated by Friends in Canada and has achieved remarkable results with low re-offending from former prisoners. Volunteers are recruited, screened, trained and supported by the scheme. Typically four to six volunteers form a Circle. A high-risk sex offender, with high levels of need and little or no other support becomes the core member. Meetings of the Circle and individual contacts are frequent to start with, but diminish over time. The overriding aim is that there be 'no more victims'. Although the initiative has come from Quakers, the

pilot project will be a partnership with local police and probation service. The pilot project in the Thames Valley area, together with projects in Hampshire and one run by the Wolvercote Clinic have been set up, all with funding from the Home Office. Volunteers, many of whom may come from the faith communities, have been trained and offenders from the designated areas, due for release, have been notified about the scheme. Tim Newell, former prison governor, commented:



*"Circles are an application of the principles and practices of restorative justice in which the community has an opportunity to take responsibility for its disturbed and dangerous members. The work we are embarking on is demanding and sensitive; it comes from our belief in the potential of everyone to be peace-loving and sociable. The ex-offender (or core member) is closely involved in the process of the supporting circle, reflecting the restorative principle of voluntarism. The anxieties of high-risk sex offenders can best be met as they leave custody through this example of faith in action."*

From Quaker News No. 42 (with permission)

Further details: Helen Drewery, Q.P.S.W.,  
Friends House, London NW1



## Words and names – 49: Musical instruments

**M**usical instruments include some of the most beautiful artefacts ever made, probably because in shape they are so perfectly adapted to their function – though this has not precluded some fine surface decoration, especially on the larger areas provided by keyboard instruments. Their sound is produced in four ways (excluding electronics): by scraping, striking or plucking strings, by blowing into wooden or metal tubes, and by striking hollow or solid objects; and these families form convenient groups for the philologist.

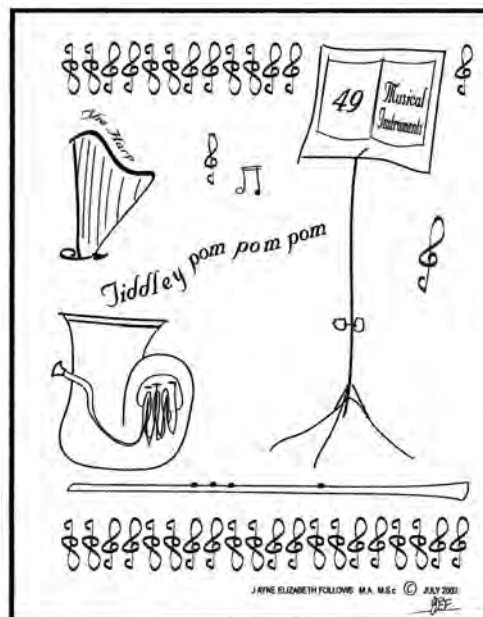
Most of the string family are based on the *viol*, a word which appears in a work published by Caxton in 1483, with the spelling *vyell*. The origins of *viol* are obscure, though it may be related to the French *vielle*, a stringed instrument played by turning a handle. The *violin* and the *viola* are different sizes of *viol*, with Italian or Spanish endings; and the *cello* is a smaller version of the large *violone*.

To digress a little: the ending *-cello* is simply a diminutive, but is now universally used in English for the whole *violoncello*, without even its prefixed apostrophe (*'cello*). Something similar happened to the *piccolo* (Italian for 'small'), which has completely lost its defining word *flauto*, flute; and also to the *piano*, originally *pianoforte*, 'soft-loud', the full name of which is now rarely used except on the most formal occasions. In the same way the *bugle* ought really to be the *bugle-horn*, since the *bugle* was the wild ox (Latin *buculus*) from which the horn was taken.

The Late Latin *vidula* for 'violin' bears a close resemblance to the more popular name *fiddle*, and the two words are almost certainly the same, with *fiddle* having been taken up by the Germanic languages while *vielle* developed into the French, Italian and Spanish forms. As so often, English adopted both; but perhaps the totally unrelated Russian *skripka* is a better reminder of the sound.

The *lute* is an eastern instrument, the

name of which spread into all the European languages from the Arabic *al-oud*. The name of the *guitar* may be even older, since it goes back to the Greek *kithara* and Latin *cithara*; and the *zither* and the medieval *gittern* have the same roots. The strings of all these instruments are plucked rather than scraped (bowed), and this is also the hallmark of the *harpsichord*, as compared with the *piano* in which the strings are struck by hammers. The *harpsichord* is a sort of horizontal



*harp*, operated by keys – hence the name, from the 16th-century Italian *arpicordo* ('harp-string'). The letter 's' in the English word was inserted by mistake, but it appeared from the very earliest times. *Harp* itself is an old Germanic name, which was taken into the other European languages; but in Welsh it is *telyn*.

**T**he *oboe* is the 'high wood' instrument, the Italian spelling of the French *hautbois*, and with many different English versions such as Pepys's *hautboy*. The *bassoon's* name simply refers to its low placing in the woodwind register; but its continental name *fagotto* is much more graphic, describing its bundle-of-sticks look after the eight-foot tube has been bent round for manageability. A *clarion* is a clear call on a brass instrument, the *trumpet*, but the *clarinet's* name seems to be related to this, as a diminutive of the French *clarine*, even though it is a

woodwind. In the 18th century it was often spelt *clarionet*.

**T**he earliest musical *horns* were, of course, the horns of cattle, (from the Latin *cornu*) adapted with holes and perhaps a mouthpiece. The *cornet* is a 'little horn' or small trumpet and the *cornetto* an early woodwind. The origin of the Italian *tromba*, of which *trumpet* is a diminutive, is obscure, but the name *trombone* indicates simply a large trumpet, with no reference to its sliding operation. The 15th-century name *sackbut* is more graphic, meaning 'pull-push', from the French *sacquier* and *bouter*; and the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives an earlier meaning of this word as 'a hooked lance used to haul mounted soldiers from their saddles'. Whether this implement was also extendable is not clear.

Some instruments commemorate the names of their inventors, hence the *sousaphone* and the *saxophone*; but the *xylophone* is named for its wooden bars, from the Greek *xylon*, wood and *phone*, sound.

Though many names have to be omitted for lack of space there is one that must be included – the grandest of all, the *organ*. The name has a very long history, though the instrument described has changed and developed a great deal over the years. In fact, in Greek and in Latin the basic meaning of *organon* and *organum* was 'something with which one works' – which is also the underlying sense of *instrument* – and was at first used for almost any size. Hamlet calls a flute or recorder 'this little organ'. The full church organ, however, is composed of several smaller organs: *great*, *choir*, *swell*, *solo* and *pedal*; and many of its stops bear the names of orchestral instruments: *trumpet*, *flute*, *bassoon*, even *viol*, and also the *vox humana* or human voice. For obvious reasons the name appeared from the 14th century to the 19th in the plural: *the organs*, as it does in French today; but nowadays, having a single player, it tends to be treated as a single vast instrument.

Colin Balmforth

# The Wind of Change

Shopping habits have undergone great changes since pre-supermarket days. Are they better or worse?

My village shop in All Stretton, Greens, was typical of the pre-War convenience stores, supplying everything from bread to paraffin, delivered to the door by a heavy carrier bicycle as far as High Peak on the Longmynd.



The normal opening hours were 8.30am – 6.30pm, but in some of the smaller village outlets, the 'shop' was often just a converted front room and 'open all hours' was the order of the day (or night!). The 'high security' Post Office was just an insulated garden shed adjacent to Buxton Cottage. This was also our sweet shop and the very centre for village gossip. A sign in the window stated, 'Don't be late, we close at eight'.

In the country areas the recommended retail prices for groceries were generally adhered to, so that price cutting was not then a factor, although customer loyalty was. The only attempt to 'corner the market' came when the Co-op opened their store in Sandford Avenue and they offered redeemable dividend coupons. A sign inside the shop stated 'Funerals. Let Us Provide Our Sympathetic Service' (complete with 'divvy of course!'). I don't think Church Stretton was

quite ready for that service then any more than it would accept it today.

Pre-War shopping had two main levels, hard cash and for those with a, sometimes supposed credit status, a monthly account – the more affluent claimed extended credit. As shown in this little rhyme to Messrs. Berry, Berry & Berry, 'You sent me a bilberry before it was dewberry, your father, the elderberry,

would not have been such a gooseberry. You can wait until the fall of the Christmas berry'.

It was not until the late fifties that cars became fairly common and therefore, country residents were still dependent on door-to-door deliveries. From my High Street premises I operated a large mobile shop serving a six-mile

radius, taking in the villages of Cardington, Longville, Rushbury, Acton Scott, Leebotwood, etc. This provided a good service to those without transport, but as the use of cars became more widespread and supermarkets made their appearance, I sensed the change and decided to concentrate on my new premises at 38 Sandford Avenue. One section was for flowers and the other for fruit and greengrocery. I specialised in these three units and used fresh local produce whenever possible and bought in person at the market. To do this I had to be up at 3am. to go over Wenlock Edge, in all weathers, to be in Birmingham Market by 5am.

There are no longer any independent grocery outlets in Church Stretton, but All Stretton and Little Stretton, with their Post Office facilities, provide a very necessary community service. Now has the wheel completed its

full turn? Supermarkets provide the everyday necessities but the privately-run establishments provide the knowledge and expertise. There are health foods, home cooking in cafes and restaurants, do-it-yourself and hardware shops, television and electrical goods, printing, carpets and furnishings, ladies' fashions and gents' tailoring. And with our pharmacists' helpful 'know-how', who needs a doctor!

The wheel turns again. Sixty years ago I was rescued, together with some 3,000 other servicemen, from the island of Java as the Japanese were closing in. The ship was a 7500-ton tramp steamer, 'Cota Cede', with a gallant and skilful Dutch Captain, Frederic Goosen. I, and my comrades, owed him our freedom, if not our lives. Now the latest High Street shop to open is Van Doesburg's Gourmet Food, owners of The Studio Restaurant. I wish my Dutch friend and his family every success

*Percy Edward Tarbuck*

## Ode to a Pill

Little pill here in my hand,  
I wonder how you understand  
Just what to do or where to go  
To stop the ache that hurts me so.  
Within your covering lies relief,  
You work alone in unbelief.  
You sink in regions there below  
As down my throat you quickly go.  
But what, I wonder, little pill  
How do you know where I am ill?  
And just how do you really know  
Exactly where you have to go?  
I've got a headache, that is true,  
My broken ribs need attention too.  
So how can anything so small  
End my aches in no time at all?  
Do you work alone, or hire a crew  
To do the lovely things you do?  
I'm counting on you mighty strong  
To get in there where you belong.  
Don't let me down and please don't shirk  
To do your undercover work;  
So down my throat, be on your way  
And end my aches for another day,  
Don't take a wrong turn I implore  
For I can't take another one 'till  
after four.

*Anon*



## Overweight and Obesity

**M**any people who are overweight or obese feel better with losing some excess weight. However, there are also definite health gains which have been measured. What is more, much of the health benefits come with losing the first 5-10 kg (10 kg is about one and a half stone). For obese people it is estimated that, on average, *a 10kg loss of weight will result in:*

- A 20% reduction in the death rate for a given age. Being obese increases the chance of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some types of cancer. These include some cancers of the bowel, breast, lung, ovary and gallbladder. In short, losing about 10 kg significantly reduces the chance of a premature death.
- Improvement in any arthritic pains of the back and legs joints.
- Improvement in breathing.
- A marked reduction in blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels. For someone taking medication for these problems, this may lead to a reduction or even stopping of medication.
- Improvement in some psychological problems (although this is difficult to prove).

### The 5 - 10 kg factor

It is common to aim to get down to a perfect weight. This goal may be a mistake. For some people, if the 'target weight' is too low, it may require many months of a weight reducing diet. It is difficult to keep motivated to stay dieting for a long time. It is common to become fed up about slow progress after a while and give up. However, *most health benefits come from losing the first 5-10 kg.* This is achievable over about 3 months with a steady weight reducing healthy diet.

**Some sums.** Each kilogram of fat contains about 7000 calories. It is best not to lose weight too fast. Losing more than a kilogram per week can lead to muscle being lost rather than fat. It is a reasonable goal to lose an average of ½-1 kg per week (about 1-2 lb per week). A diet which has 500-1000 calories per day less than usual is needed to do this. If this is kept up over 3 months about 6-12 kg will be lost. An increase in physical activity will help to lose weight more quickly. For many people this may simply be going for a brisk walk every day for 30-60 minutes.

Beware of using 'special diets' which may cause weight loss in the short term. If the usual 'bad' eating habits return after a special diet, the weight lost often returns. Losing weight and keeping it off is usually not about special diets. It's about learning to enjoy a healthy, active lifestyle and new, enjoyable, healthy foods. The change of the types of food bought and eaten should be a change for life, not just for a 3 month diet. A healthy balanced diet means foods lower in fat, lower in sugar and less alcoholic drinks. It also means foods higher in starchy carbohydrate (such as bread, pasta, cereals and rice), with lots of fruit and vegetables. If you are motivated to lose weight, why not discuss this with your practice nurse who will be able to give more advice and support?

*A realistic goal for an overweight or obese person to gain significant health benefits is to lose 5-10 kg over about 3 months and then to maintain this weight loss.*

## Reg's Ramblings

### Education, Education, Education.

**O**n a fairly recent occasion, a leading politician uttered that phrase as if reciting a mantra of our times, but in the process, left unsaid what type of education he had in mind – was it education fitted for the trends of our times, or for a greater degree of human warmth and consequent happiness? The opening up of opportunity for access to university education following the 1959 Robbins Report was a noble concept; previously this had been the perquisite of the well-to-do or naturally brilliant progeny of parents prepared to make the financial sacrifice. However, somewhere along the line the definition and purpose of 'education' seems to have become somewhat blurred.

To a large degree our present day syllabus seems to be directed towards providing those in higher education with a potential to achieve the higher earnings with which to fund an enhanced lifestyle and, in so doing, panders to the cult of materialism which is so disfiguring to present day society. Would it not be better for everyone if we concentrated more effort on also providing the means with which to enjoy a fuller life? This would involve encouraging our young folk towards a greater degree of personal satisfaction in terms of human emotions such as warmth of affection, neighbourliness and concern for others – all those qualities which are ultimately at the heart of human happiness.

Information technology, which today seems to dominate our lives, is by its very nature, an impersonalised mix of data, facts and figures which can focus our thoughts in a manner which diverts our attention away from the spiritual element in our lives and, perhaps even more importantly, from the circumstances of our fellow men and women in terms of their need for friendship, solace and understanding. Surely there is proof of that trend in the recent mind-numbing announcement that scientists are attempting to create a computer which is capable of thinking and reasoning like a human being – is there no limit to the arrogance and presumption of those people who prate on about 'the miracles of modern science'.

**T**here is, and always has been, only one source of miracles and that is our Lord and Maker whose greatest miracle is the way in which life is created and a truly amazing mixture of genes, personal characteristics and thought processes are transmitted through a tiny sperm which can only be seen through powerful microscope. But even that divine process is not safe from the meddlings of the self-opinionated and conceited men of science who now seek to tamper with that process. Perhaps it is time for us to rediscover humility – and a possible way of doing this might be to insert a greater emphasis on faith and human understanding into our education system before we succeed in making life not worth living in terms of being capable of those finer feelings which are the only ultimate source of true happiness.



# Showcase Farms for Shropshire

**T**wo Shropshire farms became the latest farms to join LEAFs (Linking Environment And Farming) national network of Demonstration Farms.

The farms, Great Wollaston Farm at Halfway House Shrewsbury and High Meadow Farm at Ashford Carbonnel, Ludlow are the first two farms in Shropshire to join the LEAF initiative. They join a further 41 farms across the country who are opening their farm gates to demonstrate Integrated Farm Management (IFM) - safe, sustainable farming practices producing healthy crops and livestock with environmental care,

As Shropshire's showcases for IFM, the farms will welcome a broad range of visitors across the county - from schoolchildren to policy makers; anyone who is interested in farming and food production will have a chance to experience first hand how through IFM, farmers are responding positively to consumer concerns, caring for the environment as well as making a living.

Launching the farms; Lord Whitty, Minister for Food, Farming and Waterways emphasised the importance of Demonstration Farms in reconnecting consumers with what they eat and how it is produced - issues at the heart of LEAF:

*"LEAF have made, and continue to make a valuable contribution to the farming community through their demonstration farm network - Sir Don Curry's Policy Commission on Farming and Food recognised the value of demonstration farms, and DEFRA is working closely with LEAF and other organisations to examine how the new pilot demonstration farm scheme, announced by the Prime Minister and Margaret Beckett on 26th March, can add value to existing networks"*

Speaking on their involvement with LEAF, both farmers said they were looking forward to showing both farmers and consumers what is happening on their farms and explaining what they do and why they do it.

**Robert Kynaston** of Great Wollaston Farm said: "As a LEAF Demonstration Farmer, I want to show that IFM has a place on a smaller mixed or livestock unit and that good healthy food can be produced by balanced sustainable farming where wildlife thrives. By joining LEAF and shifting to an organised IFM system, the environmental and economic gains for the farm in just a few years have been astounding."

**Nick Tilt** of High Meadow Farm said: "I see becoming a LEAF Demonstration Farm as the next step in establishing the farm's future viability and see our involvement as an essential part of ensuring a sustainable future for the farm and the industry as a whole. We are proud of what we have achieved and want to share it with others".

Caroline Drummond, LEAF Chief Executive, emphasised the role of Demonstration Farms in capturing the interest of farmers and disseminating best agricultural practice.

*"For more than a decade, LEAF Demonstration Farms have been welcoming visitors onto their farms, providing a nationwide platform on which to show how economic farming can go hand in hand with environmental responsibility. LEAF welcomes the recognition by Government of the value of LEAF Demonstration Farms and we look forward to sharing the expertise and knowledge that we have accumulated over the last eleven years. We are very pleased that the leaders of this scheme are keen not to re-invent the wheel".*

*"It we are to build a sustainable future for farming, then training and knowledge will have to form a central part of our vision. LEAF Demonstration Farms provide farmers with first class learning opportunities where existing skills can be developed and training tailored to meet specific needs. We see our Demonstration Farms as playing a key role in harnessing the interest of farmers and bridging the gap between consumers and growers. We are delighted to welcome Robert Kynaston and Nick Tilt on board and, in partnership with them, we will work for a more sustainable food and farming industry - one which contributes to thriving rural economies and protection of our environment."*

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## Strettons in Bloom

**I**f you sambahed through the afternoon of Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June with the triumphant Brazilian Football Team celebrating their victory you missed a 'blooming' treat. We are pleased to say that 240 people from the Strettons plus visitors, did not. They purchased a 'passport' that gave a description and location of ten gardens and this, together with tea in a terraced garden in Hazler Orchard and a plant stall in a courtyard garden in the centre of Church Stretton, raised £912 for charitable causes.

The afternoon was filled with opportunities to view interesting plants and gardens of varied designs and situations. There were multi-terraced gardens with superb views of the Long Mynd, a 'classical' style garden laid out in the 1920s with rare Yorkshire pavours and spring-fed fish pools, intimate courtyard and town and

cottage gardens. One garden, laid out in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had photographs showing how it had changed and events that had taken place on its sweeping lawns, such as a party held to celebrate Queen Victoria's Jubilee. So, see what you missed!

The Gardens Open event was a combined initiative between the Rotary and Inner Wheel Clubs in Church Stretton. Visitors and club members alike have expressed the view that this event enabled people of the Strettons to meet together in delightful surroundings and it should become an annual event. However, we need to recruit more garden owners to maintain the variety. Would you be prepared to open your garden? We will be thinking about next year so let us know if you would be prepared to become involved.

*Chris George (724785)*

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### Answers to Crossword sixteen

**ACROSS** 1. Staid 4. Acrid 10. Cricket 11. Rodeo  
12. Liked 13. Compass 14. Tempo 16. Clock  
21. Theorbo 23. Polar 24. Dregs 25. Destiny 26. Stall  
27. Hedge

**DOWN** 2. Trickle 3. Irked 5. Caramel 6. India  
7. Scale 8. Stick 9. Mouse 15. Parasol 17. Calling  
18. Study 19. Words 20. Trays 22. Event 23. Paste

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