

# Stretton Focus

Community Voice of the Strettons



May 2002 50p

**Out and About in May**  
**Shuttle Buses**  
**Skatepark**  
**Churches**  
**Children's Page**  
**Global Justice**  
**Crossword**  
**History of St Laurence's**



## STRETTON FOCUS

(founded 1967)

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

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**Disclaimer.** Stretton Focus prints a wide range of articles and letters. The views expressed by signed articles are those of their authors and not necessarily those of the Management Board.

**Copy day** is normally the first Monday of the month. For the June issue it is Tuesday 7th May 2002.

**Diary** items should be sent directly to Rev. Ward Davies, 1 Central Ave, CS, SY6 6EE. (Tel. 724304) by Friday 17th May 2002.

The June *Stretton Focus* will be distributed on Friday 31st May.

**Outlets.** *Stretton Focus* may be purchased by annual subscription (delivered) or directly from Newsworld (Sandford Avenue), All Stretton Stores, the Esso Filling Station or the Churches.

*Stretton Focus is printed by WPG, Welshpool*

## Farewell and Welcome

Like all living things, Stretton Focus changes and adapts as it responds to what goes on around it. We are already in our fourth month in this format, which no longer seems new. At our AGM in March, it was time to say Farewell, with many thanks, to three of our management team. Martin Plumptre, who guided us through the big project to launch 'New Focus', ended his tenure as Chairman, and his wife Janet relinquished her role as Secretary. Jill Turner-Jones, who has been a tower of strength as Assistant Editor, felt it was time to devote her energies elsewhere. Thank you to all three of you.

We welcomed to our management team another Jill and another Janet - Jill Millard, who accepted our invitation to become Assistant Editor, and Janet Peak, who will try to keep the rest of us in order as Secretary. I have donned the mantle of Chairman, and Jon Cooke has stepped into my shoes as Distribution Manager. John Wainwright (Treasurer) and Len Bolton (Advertising) escaped this round of musical chairs. Norma Taylor has joined us as a roving reporter, so let her have your news.

The list of the management team is printed inside the front cover of Focus. We will continue to work hard to produce a first-class magazine as the Voice of the Strettons - the voice of the whole community. Do let us know what you think. We would very much like to have a Letters page, and articles of general interest are always welcome.

*David Jandrell*

## Nathan Wildblood 'Out and About' in Cardingmill Valley

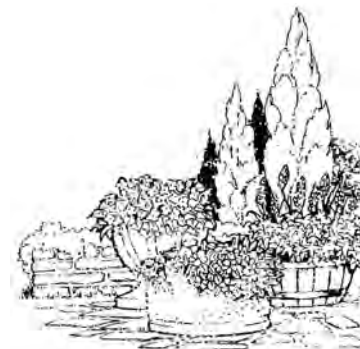


*Photo: Paul Miller*

# Get Out and About this Month – Make the Most of the Lighter and Brighter Days

## Nearby Gardens Open for Charity under the National Gardens Scheme

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May - Preen Manor, Church Preen, Church Stretton 2-6pm  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May - Millichope Park, Munslow, Craven Arms 2-6pm  
Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May - Cricklewood Cottage, Plox Green, Minsterley 2-5pm  
Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May - Cruckfield House, Ford, Shrewsbury 2-6pm  
Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May - Bitterley Court, Ludlow 2-6pm  
Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May - Peplow Hall, Hodnet 2-5.30pm  
Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May - Adcote School, Little Ness, Shrewsbury 2-5pm  
Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May - Swallow Hayes, Albrighton, 2-5pm



*(A leaflet can be obtained from the local TIC giving all the Shropshire Gardens open)*

## How about a Rail Ramble? Guided walks from Railway stations in Mid Wales and the Marches.

If you want to walk in beautiful countryside but aren't sure where to go...

If you haven't got a car or would rather not use it at weekends...

If you enjoy the company of like-minded people but don't want to 'join' anything...

Then Rail Rambles are for you! For ten years experienced guides have been taking people like you to lovely places you might never otherwise have known about. All you need is a pair of strong boots or shoes, food, drink and a waterproof. And apart from your train fare, it is all absolutely free!

If you want to know more ring Richard or Barbara on 01584 612571.

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May - Penhelgy to Aberdyfi (9 miles moderate)

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May - Church Stretton Circular (7 miles easy)

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May - Ruabon circular (12 miles strenuous) or Ruabon to Chirk (7 miles easy)

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May - Knighton to Craven Arms (14 miles strenuous) or Knighton circular (8 miles undulating).

## Perhaps an outing with the National Trust?

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May - International Dawn Chorus Day 5.00am-8.00am

Why not get up early and join Property Manager, Peter Carty, to find out why birds sing and learn to identify the different bird songs. Location – Wenlock Edge car park on the outskirts of Much Wenlock.

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> and Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May - Local History Walk 9.30am & 2.00pm

A stroll up Carding Mill Valley during local history week to look at the remaining archaeological evidence that gives us information about the past.

For further information on Events Tel:01694 723068



Take a lift up the Long Mynd or visit the Stiperstones or even have lunch in Much Wenlock, with the Shropshire Hills Shuttles

These services run at Weekends and Bank Holidays from now until the end of October. Pick up a leaflet in our local Tourist Information Centre which will give you all the details and the times the buses are running. See also page 5.

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May - Much Wenlock Railway Walk discover the wildlife of the old railway line on this 2 mile walk. Meet at Station Road, Much Wenlock 10 am-12 noon.

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May - Wistanstow Sponsored Walks

Sponsorship forms available from Church Stretton Medical Practice. Two walks on offer – one of 10 miles and the other a 5 mile walk. Book in by 9.45am. Free lunch available for walkers on return to Village Hall.

Attingham Park

18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> May - Dressing Rooms. A day of activities and interior design inspiration drawn from the wonderful historic interiors.

26<sup>th</sup> May - Pots and Pictures. Family activities celebrating their wonderful collection of art and antiques, including valuations of your own treasures.

## SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE – SO GET OUT THIS MAY



## Festival Fringe in Association with Salop Musica

South Shropshire Festival Fringe and its touring group "Salop Musica" are organising a memorial concert for the late Philip Cunningham at Bedstone College Rees Hall at 7.30 pm on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2002. Performers from overseas and UK alongside local performers, including some of his ex-students, will be taking part. Special music is being written for the occasion.

Philip Cunningham was employed by Bedstone College as a woodwind teacher, but prior to that appointment was principal clarinet with the North Wales Symphony Orchestra. He was also involved with many other musical ensembles. On retirement, Philip's contribution to music in South Shropshire expanded considerably. His teaching programme flourished and he became an influential member of South Shropshire Festival Fringe and "Salop Musica". He will be remembered by all who knew him, particularly, for his tremendous enthusiasm, courtesy and desire to help others to enjoy music.

To perpetuate his memory, "Salop Musica" is setting up a Scholarship Fund for young woodwind players entering Further Education Colleges. Although the concert at Bedstone on 8<sup>th</sup> June will have free admission, there will be a retiring collection which will be put to this fund, to be named the Philip Cunningham Memorial Fund. The treasurer is Andrew Chapman, 30 Ludlow Road, Church Stretton. The trustees welcome donations from all who were influenced by Philip Cunningham or who would like to support his aim to help others enjoy music. In so doing they will also perpetuate the memory of Philip Cunningham, a man who will be sadly missed.

*Glyn Davies 01694 723195*

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## National Trust

### More shuttle buses

The National Trust is operating three more shuttle bus routes this year which will run each Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday throughout the summer until the end of October. Besides the well established and popular Long Mynd route, two others will start from Carding Mill Valley and call at Church Stretton Station and thence to Wenlock Edge and to Stokesay Castle. A third route circles the Stiperstones.

The Wenlock Wanderer goes via Longville, Wilderhope Manor and Wenlock Edge to Much Wenlock and returns via Cardington. The Secret Hills Shuttle goes via Acton Scott, Bushmoor, Wistanstow, the Secret Hills Discovery

Centre and on to Stokesay Castle. The new Stiperstones Shuttle starts at Ratlinghope and connects with the Long Mynd Shuttle. It proceeds via the Stiperstones, Snailbeach, Minsterley and Pulverbach.

The buses run at two-hourly intervals and allow passengers to stop off at the many pubs and cafes along the route, visit sites of interest and go for a walk. Rover tickets allow passengers to get on and off the bus as many times as they wish and family tickets make it an economical day out.

Timetables are available from the Carding Mill Valley information point and the Church Stretton Tourist Information Office. Telephone contact is 01588 673888 or 01584 875053.



# Church Stretton Town Council

EXTRACT FROM DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING  
HELD 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2002

## Planning matters

### District Decisions – Approved

- Erection of a dwelling and formation of vehicular access, Plot 6 Ludlow Road, Little Stretton.
- Installation of wall mounted antenna, Co-op Store, Church Stretton.
- Installation of 2 dormer windows and alterations to dwelling, 82 Sandford Avenue, Church Stretton.
- Formation of vehicular access, 77 Shrewsbury Road, Church Stretton.
- Erection of 8 care accommodation units, adjoining Sandford Nursing Home, Watling Street, Church Stretton.
- Installation of antenna (on existing structure), Hazler Hill Transmitter site.

### Town Council Recommendations – Approval

- Erection of extensions and alterations to Public House to provide Bed & Breakfast accommodation, The Green Dragon, Little Stretton.
- Erection of extension and alterations to dwelling, Fair Oak, All Stretton.
- Erection of dormer window, Gunwalloe, Caradoc Drive, Church Stretton.
- Extension to (existing) retail shop, Longmynd Service Station, Church Stretton.
- Erection of a dwelling, site at Ludlow Road, World's End Church Stretton.
- Erection of extensions to building, Continental Fires Ltd. Laundry Bank, Church Stretton.
- Construction of a pitched roof over existing flat roofed garage, 120 Watling Street, Church Stretton.
- Erection of a dwelling and garage, 9 Shrewsbury Road, Church Stretton.
- Erection of extension to Public House, The Kings Arms, 53 High Street, Church Stretton.
- Erection of a conservatory, Four Ways, Cunnery Road, Church Stretton.
- Erection of 3 domestic outbuildings, Old Rectory House, Burway Road, Church Stretton.

### Fish & Chip Shop, Shrewsbury Road

Complaints regarding this establishment are still being received. The Enforcement Officer is looking into complaints regarding the signs to determine whether they need planning permission. The Divisional Surveyor has written to the proprietor asking him to remove the 'A' board which is causing an obstruction. The local Police are looking into the parking situation. It was agreed to continue to monitor and press the Divisional Surveyor to ensure that all obstructions on pavements in the town are removed.

### Morbury House development off High Street

Royal Mail have accepted the proposal for naming this development 1-18 Lion Court, High Street, Church Stretton. As it is the Queen's Jubilee year and the development is next to King's Court it was proposed that the name 'Queen's Court' should be suggested for this development.

### Development at Crossways

The developer suggests 'Village Pointe' as a name for this development. Councillors did not like this suggestion at all and it was resolved to continue with the Jubilee theme and suggest this development is called 'Jubilee Court'.

### Proposed representations to South Shropshire D.C. regarding Review of S.S. Local Plan 1996-2011.

The proposed Plan is a considerable improvement on the current Plan, but whereas the current Plan is weakened by the frequent use of the word 'normally', the proposed Plan falls into a similar error by weakening good policies by later comments. The basic philosophy behind the proposed Plan is excellent but it will be of little effect if Councillors or Officers proceed to ignore statements in the Plan when it suits them.

*(Further details can be obtained from the Town Council offices)*

### Swimming at Church Stretton Pool

A number of important issues need to be addressed regarding the future of the pool and the continued use of the pool by the public. It was agreed that this is a most important facility for the town which was originally provided by public subscription and must be maintained for everyone to use.

### Shropshire Health Authority

The GP out-of-hours service pilot exercise is being monitored by Southampton University and the Dept. of Health intends to roll out the full out-of-hours services by April 2004. Details will depend on the results of the evaluation of pilot schemes. It was resolved to invite any residents of Church Stretton who feel they have received a less than adequate response from NHS Direct (formerly ShropDoc) to write to Laura Sweeney at the Orthopaedic Hospital.

Concern will also be expressed about the lack of NHS Dental services in the town for new patients.

### Summer Planters

Thanks to all those who made a donation towards this year's display – it is greatly appreciated and helps the Council to provide this floral show.

### Highway Matters

B4370 to Little Stretton – The Council will ask for a vehicle count on this road in order to ascertain the increase in the volume of traffic. The Highways Agency will also be asked to look again at the whole situation at the traffic lights which is believed to cause the problems on the B4370 and in Watling Street.

B4370 to All Stretton – The County Council have discovered that they have a £250,000 problem on their hands. However, despite problems of drainage by the school and some opposition from a landowner, they do intend to go ahead and have placed the contract for the hedge removal/replanting with a view to this being done

*continued on next page*

# Rotary Club of Church Stretton

In conjunction with  
The Lingen Davies Children's Cancer Rainbow Appeal

## 'Rainbow Over The Strettons'

5 mile (1200ft) Sponsored Walk  
Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2002

This sponsored walk, for runners and walkers, passes over (like a rainbow) the Longmynd – 5 miles and 1200 feet of ascent, starting between 10-11am from the Scout HQ next to Rectory Field, Church Stretton.

This is a tough challenge, to be undertaken by the reasonably fit, wearing walking footwear and suitable clothing for a walk on the Longmynd. The walk is on tracks, footpaths and open hillside (no roads) over to Little Stretton, along Ashes Hollow, then up over the Longmynd between the Yearlet and Ashlet, to return to Rectory Field, down Townbrook Valley and through Rectory Wood. A route description and sketch map will be available for all participants.

**If you feel unable to undertake the challenge, please do sponsor someone who is walking or running for this important appeal.**

One in 600 children will be affected by cancer or leukaemia by the age of 15. The treatment for children in Shropshire and Mid-Wales is initially organised by a hospital in Birmingham, but the 'Rainbow Children's Ward' at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital shares their care, so they can have their treatment locally. However, currently the facilities for these children are limited. The **Rainbow Appeal** is for a new building to provide a protective environment for the children whilst maintaining a family friendly atmosphere.

Further details and sponsor forms (£3 each) are available from Anita White in Church Stretton 724222, or Chris George 724785 or any Rotarian.



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*continued from previous page*

in September. A public consultation has been promised for the near future.

### Concessionary Travel Scheme

The Town Council office staff are again issuing the travel passes this year, both the free District Pass and this year the County £20 pass which entitles half-price fares throughout Shropshire and as far afield as Leominster, Hereford, Chester, Crewe, Kidderminster, Wolverhampton, etc.

# South Shropshire Furniture Scheme

South Shropshire Furniture Scheme, the furniture recycling and reuse charity based in Church Stretton, has been granted £20,000 landfill tax funding by Biffaward.

Jean Jarvis, the project's Chief Officer, is thrilled to receive this grant. She says; "our scheme collects donated furniture to deliver to people on low income who have been referred by statutory and voluntary agencies to our charity for help. One of our charitable objectives is to advance the education of the public about the benefits of recycling, reuse and waste management and to promulgate the value of sustainable lifestyles.

In January we opened an R Shop (R stands for remember to reuse; repair, recycle, regenerate and reduce) in our Church Stretton premises and the publicity and general interest in this new initiative has not only helped us to spread the word about the work carried out by our charity, but has also helped us to save even more household items that would otherwise go as landfill. People can now bring their old computers and printers, mobile phones, telephone directories, ink cartridges, old spectacles for recycling. In January alone we diverted 4.5 tonnes of household waste from landfill sites.'

Biffaward awarded a two-year grant of £80,000 to the Furniture Scheme in September 2000, enabling the project to expand and move into the larger Church Stretton premises in Burway Road, where they have set up electrical and carpentry/joinery workshops. The establishment of the carpentry workshop will provide a stimulating work environment where students, trainees and volunteers can learn a range of woodworking and furniture restoration skills together with general workshop practices.

The new Workshop Manager will supervise and train people with learning disabilities who will help to produce a range of planters and other garden products, made from recycled wood, to sell to the general public. This will generate some income to help fund the collection and essential delivery service that helps people on low income. In a new initiative shared with South Shropshire Housing Association, the scheme now also employs trainee carpenter, Tony Macleod. District Councillor Jean Jarvis, has been involved with the scheme since its inception in 1994 working alongside Councillor Susan McCormack who serves as one of the 10 hardworking Trustees on the Charity's Board.

For more details, to donate furniture or to receive help from the scheme, phone 724464



# A History of Stretton's Parish Church Building

## 1. The Earliest Churches

On the Anglican page in April's Focus the Rector praised our ancient church of St. Laurence as 'a wonderful heritage', and rightly drew attention to the people in past centuries whose 'vision for the future' had time and again brought change and improvement.

Our first knowledge of a church in Stretton derives from the reference in the Domesday Book of 1086. Almost certainly that church was not the Norman structure of which part still stands, for after their victory at Hastings in 1066 the Normans were pre-occupied with imposing their authority on the country – parts of Shropshire were among the areas laid waste after rebellion. The Normans' initial building programme therefore consisted of defensive castles, followed by major churches and abbeys. If the present nave was not built in the first twenty years of Norman rule, the church noted in Domesday Book was an earlier Anglo-Saxon construction.

This Saxon church was probably erected in the mid- or late-10<sup>th</sup> century when churches were springing up 'like mushrooms in the night'. It could have been founded by a local minster – these were the missionary centres of the mid-Saxon period – but more likely was provided by the leading local landowner, perhaps in conjunction with the people of the emerging manor of Stretton. A simple wooden building is probable as such constructions were general at that period; there was also abundant timber nearby, and the local community could provide the necessary skills. The inside walls are likely to have been plastered and painted with religious scenes to assist the understanding of the illiterate.

Why and when was this first church replaced by its Norman successor? No doubt the gradually growing population of the parish, perhaps about 150 at the time of Domesday

Book, made a larger building desirable and, as stonemasons mastered the Norman variation of the Romanesque style, Stretton folk would have wanted their church to be up-to-date. Without documentary evidence it is not possible to allocate a precise date to the Norman building. The fabric suggests early 12<sup>th</sup> century and between 1110 and 1130 seems most probable, for a contemporary chronicler wrote that one might see 'churches rise in every village'.

The question 'How old is St. Laurence's?' has to be answered in three ways:

1. We know that there has been a church here since 1086;
2. It is likely that the original church was built at least a century before that (i.e. over 1,000 years ago, half the time since Jesus walked the earth);
3. The oldest part of the present church, the nave, probably dates from the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. As the Rector wrote in his letter, therefore, the church 'is approaching its 900<sup>th</sup> birthday'.

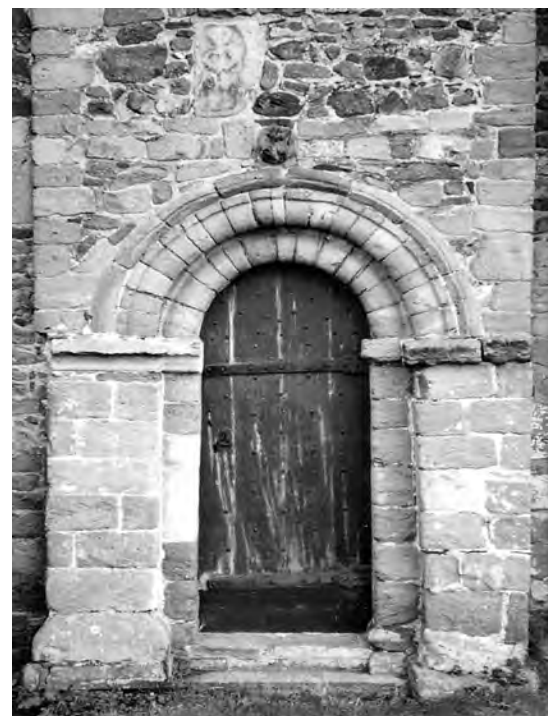
Those who sit in the nave today know something of what that church looked like because its 'rubble' walls remain. The corners facing Church Street also show characteristic flat Norman buttresses. But there have been great changes – larger windows inserted, a new west entrance created, and the original chancel replaced by the crossing (with tower above), transepts and a much larger chancel. These will be described more fully in later articles.

The Norman church was almost certainly a 'two-cell' structure, with the nave giving access through an arch to a shorter and narrower chancel. The total length of the building would have extended as far as the present front pews. It was entered by the south door, now the way into the vestry. The Norman semi-circular doorway has an ornamented capital on the west side. It remained the entrance to the church for 700 years. The north door, now bricked up, is even more interesting. The doorway is

unmistakably Norman, recessed in a thickened wall and with two rolls to the arch. On the west side cable, rosette and round billet ornamentation is still just visible. The feature that attracts most attention, however, is the 'sheila-na-gig' above the doorway. This is now considered to be an early fertility figure, probably inserted into the original wall by masons who retained some belief in the old pagan practices. It is less well preserved than those at Holdgate or at Kilpeck in Herefordshire.

What Stretton's Norman church looked like can best be gathered by a visit to Heath Chapel in Corvedale built at about the same time but remaining almost unchanged as the village failed to develop. Lancet windows, supplemented by candles, would have given little light, the floor was probably of beaten earth – but the church was a great advance on its Saxon predecessor. It gave a finer setting for worship, could accommodate over a hundred standing, and would have served, too, as the settlement's meeting-place or community centre. Yet only a century later it would be transformed into a cruciform church.

*Douglas Grounds*



The North Door with sheila-na-gig above.

*Photo: Barrie Raynor*



# What on Earth is Going on at Mayfair?



Mayfair in February – the builders arrive

*Photo: John Halliburton*



Mayfair in April – the builders begin to strip the roof and a giant crane swings into place the steel frames for the second storey.

*Photo: Alan Fox*

**W**ell, the builders are in charge at Mayfair, working to add another storey which will double the size of the Community Centre. In the first week of April they brought in a huge crane which swung into position the massive steel portal frames which have been specially designed to speed up the construction of the second storey.

When the new Mayfair re-opens in the Autumn, Church Stretton will have a Community Centre and a Healthy Living Centre which will be the envy of other small country towns.

## Thanks!

**T**he Coffee Morning held on the 16<sup>th</sup> March raised £273 – thanks to everyone who helped to make this event so successful. I would also like to thank all who were involved in the community leaflet drop – what a great team!

## Jubilee May Ball

Make sure you don't miss out – tickets are selling well. They are available from 44b Sandford Avenue at £20 each.

## Mayfair Lottery

for . . MARCH

No.	467	£100	No.	21	£20
	430	£50		69	£10



I came across this soup a few weeks ago when calling at a local pub for Lunch. Fortunately my friend had the recipe – so here it is for you to try – It's good.

## Apple and Parsnip Soup

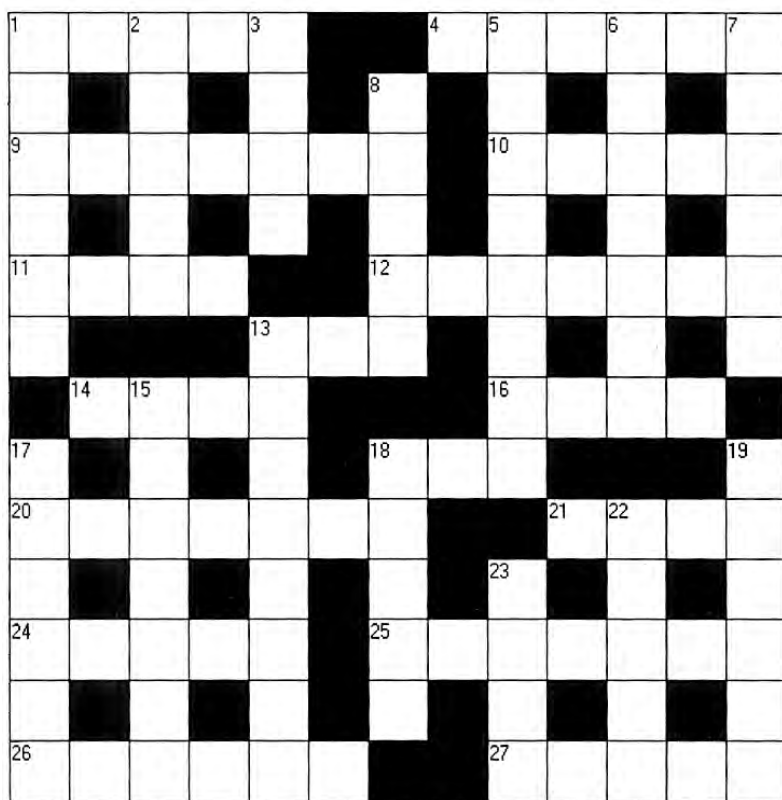
- 2 parsnips (peeled and chunked)
- 1 large apple (peeled and cut into chunks)
- 4 fl.oz. of apple juice
- ½ a medium onion
- 2 tablespoons low fat yoghurt (plain)
- 12 fl.oz. low fat chicken broth
- ¼ teasp. ground coriander
- 1/8<sup>th</sup> teasp. cardamom
- 2 teasp. rapeseed oil

**H**eat the oil in a pan and sauté the onion until soft. Add broth, coriander and cardamom and bring to the boil. Add the apple and parsnips and bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until the parsnips are tender. Cool slightly, pour into blender and puree. Add the apple juice to thin the soup as preferred. Add the yoghurt before serving.

This is a low fat soup. Enjoy.

*'Her Ladyship'*





- 11. May be stuck in a life-peer (4)
- 12. Fruit almost tropical in distribution (7)
- 13. Small fish in the pan? (3)
- 14. Aspersion cast over music (4)
- 16. Sticker used on either side of a trunk (4)
- 18. Ground-breaking end of Scott novel (3)
- 20. The transgression of railing (7)
- 21. Obedience, heartless for a time (4)
- 24. Where Greeks got together in attempt to gag oracle ... (5)
- 25. ... Electra turned sticky! (7)
- 26. It is less hard with forest around (6)
- 27. Live, not badly, on the last of the food (5)

**Down**

- 1. Praised and appraised (6)
- 2. Occasional, 4 or 5 times perhaps (5)
- 3. Way passed, but not on foot by the sound of it (4)
- 5. Worship, never about the goddess of revenge (8)
- 6. Stratagems of the French about sin (7)
- 7. Tailed off to stretch (6)
- 8. Incidentally without the track (5)
- 13. A façade of the best period (8)
- 15. Rocket leaving, one must walk up (4,3)
- 17. Slough artist in cryptogamous growth (6)
- 18. Warms up for the earlier races (5)
- 19. Revoke, or ring again (6)
- 22. The statue's place in ethnic heresy(5)
- 23. Post it to Southend (4)

**CLUES Across**

- 1. He picks one of those who stand in order to sit (5)
- 4. Dave returned before Edward and made a getaway (6)
- 9. Contains books on shelving and other subjects (7)
- 10. Tale of the North, with love-tangle (5)

*Solutions on page 35*

## Church Stretton Skatepark Group

The Church Stretton Skatepark Group has been formed with aims and objective as follows:-

- 1. To advise and assist on the development and maintenance of the Skatepark facility at Church Stretton, subject to management by the Church Stretton Town Council.
- 2. To raise funds which the Council can spend on improvements and maintenance.
- 3. To foster and encourage skateboarding, skating and BMX cycling for the youth of Church Stretton as recreational sports.
- 4. To promote and encourage safety awareness, self-discipline and skill on the skatepark.

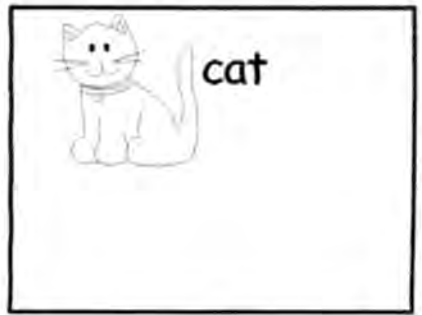
We need to raise £5000 for additional ramps to complete the Skatepark area. A pair of quarter-pipe ramps and some "street" equipment will enable the area to be

utilised to its full potential and accommodate the numbers who want to use it. Funds are also required for future maintenance, as the equipment does wear out, especially at the rate it is being used at present!

Skateparks have gained in popularity in recent years and most towns and cities in this country have a skatepark of some sort. They started in the more deprived urban areas to "get kids off the streets" but now the popularity of skating is right across the social scale, and some parks, like those in Wolverhampton and Kidderminster, are privately owned. In Church Stretton our modest Skatepark is owned by the Town Council and free for all to use. I hope you agree that it is a valuable facility in the town where kids can meet to develop a sport of their own which is outdoor, demands skill and practice, and, at least at the present time, is one of the most popular action recreational activities for the pre 18 year old age group. Anyone wanting further information can phone me on 771254.

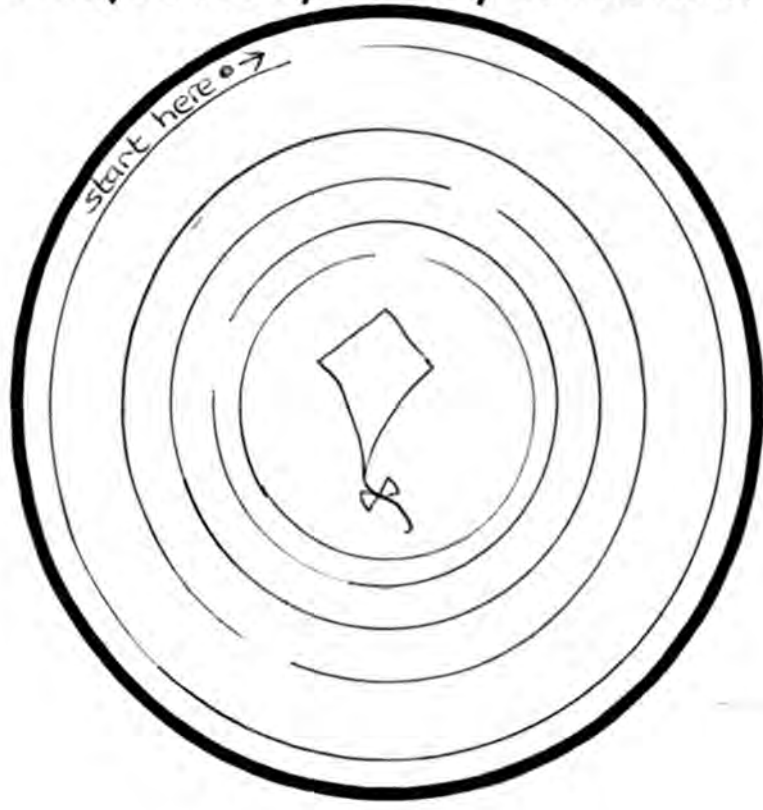
*Will Priestley, Chairman*

How many words can you think of to rhyme with these animals?



# Springtime Puzzles

Can you find your way to the kite?



**S**ome  
**P**eople  
**R**elax  
**I**n  
**N**ice  
**G**ardens

Sentences where each word begins with a letter of **SPRING** - can you think of some?

*Moriel Gidney*



## Words and names – 46 : Lost languages

When one considers the number of languages that currently exist in the world one might be forgiven for thinking that there are quite enough. The curse of Babel comes to mind, well illustrated by the need for European Community documents to be duplicated in several versions for lack of agreement on a common language. This article is not about the need for a single language though – in fact quite the reverse.

There are at present about 6,500 languages in the world, though estimates vary. Only 4% of them are in Europe, with 15% in the Americas, 31% in Africa and 50% in Asia and the Pacific, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia having over 1500 between them. The top 4% of languages in order of population speaking them account for 96% of all the speakers; which means that 96% of all the world's languages are spoken by only 4% of the population.

The total number obviously depends upon how a separate language is defined, and this is not entirely easy. Dialects do not count; but the difference between a dialect and a separate language is not clear-cut. Many languages have more than one name, even as many as a dozen for some African languages. What is generally agreed by all language scholars is that languages are currently becoming extinct at the rate of about one every two weeks, and that about half the total will have disappeared before the end of this century. Is this a cause for concern, or should it be accepted as merely a natural evolution, with some minority speakers actually better off for adopting the language of a powerful majority? After all, no-one would be left without a language.

To take the last question first: language has very deep cultural roots. Most of us feel identified by our mother-tongue, and this is especially true of smaller nations, countries or regions. The Basques, for example, with an unclear territory divided by the French/Spanish border, defined themselves chiefly

by their unique language – which has seven dialects and some sub-dialects. There is very visibly within the United Kingdom a determined resistance to the loss of the Celtic languages, of which Welsh is the best established, having survived deliberate political attempts to eliminate it; and bi-lingual signs are now a commonplace. Scots (that is, the language of Burns, not Celtic Gaelic) is being adopted by the Scottish Assembly as an official language. In Europe Catalan and Breton went through the same vicissitudes as Welsh.

Languages, being inextricably bound up with culture and history, are important to scholars as evidence of how mankind developed – the use of language being one of the defining aspects of *homo sapiens*, the only animal that can tell lies. Some languages still exist which probably originated in the Stone Age; but all the 'minority' languages demonstrate how thoughts were first translated into sounds and then interacted with them. Can we afford to lose any of this crucial evidence?

Umbrian? Sabine?  
Pictish? Norn?  
Etruscan? Minoan?

When does a language die? The most obvious answer is that it dies with the last native (though not necessarily monoglot) speaker, though there may be survivors who retain some vocabulary or even grammar from the lost language. The last Cornish-speaker, Dolly Pentreath, died in 1777, but the language has been revived, as has Manx. One of the problems of all languages that have been given new life in this way is that there are often different versions fighting for recognition, and this tends to inhibit general acceptance. An essential requirement for the maintenance of a threatened language is widespread support in the community, leading to its use in education, official communications and works of literature; and an

existing body of literature helps – though of course not all languages are written down.

A language may also disappear through conquest, when the invading force suppresses the vernacular, and via the disappearance of a whole people through disease, famine and other natural catastrophes. The exact point at which a language has declined beyond rescue will vary a good deal according to circumstances. One thing that very clearly happens is that under the pressure of international media teenagers, having spoken the vernacular in the home from birth, tend to adopt the language which is perceived to be trendy or useful for getting on (very often this is English) and to reject the native language. It is the *next* generation which starts to regret the loss of the language and the history and culture which it represents, and which starts a preservation movement.

Would it be a good thing if, as some scholars believe possible, the world were to finish up with one language per country in a century or two? Will English (or Chinese) take over and even develop into sub-languages which take on a life of their own as new languages, replacing ancient indigenous tongues?

I believe that the loss of languages at the present rate is disastrous, and that everyone should at least be aware of the problem. There are international bodies, for example the Foundation for Endangered Languages, but a general awareness, countering the feeling 'what do one or two languages more or less matter?' is crucially important.

Colin Balmforth

*Note.* Anyone wishing to explore this subject further will find greater (and fascinating) detail in David Crystal's book *Language death* (Cambridge UP 2000 ISBN 0 521 65321 5

## Rural Success Story

It has become necessary for many rural businesses to diversify from the traditional farming industry and Gleedon Hill Farm in Much Wenlock has done just that. Tucked away in a beautiful part of the Shropshire countryside Gleedon Hill Farm has started a business run by Susan Mathers, stocking a range of decorative items for the home and garden, from saddlestones to suitcases and scythes. The premises were originally a dairy parlour. There is also a selection of ornamental and classic bygones.

Four years ago Susan joined the Shropshire Rural Stress Support Network as a volunteer. Her knowledge of the difficulties in the farming community has led to her donating a percentage from the sale of goods purchased from farms to the charity to help enable it to fulfil its important role.

Susan said, "After the seeds had been sown for establishing the business, I converted the empty dairy parlour, set up a workshop and started restoring all manner of interesting items that I had discovered at various farm auctions. As a voluntary member of

the SRSSN committee I donated 10% of my immediate earnings to the charity. Local farmers have been only too glad for me to purchase all kinds of vintage implements and old garden tools and to turn these unwanted items into much-needed cash. As the business develops the aim is to encourage local craftsmen and women to join us and provide an interesting venue for country folk, tourists and indeed, schoolchildren, who can have a glimpse of a bygone age.

Susan Mathers may be contacted on (01952) 727104, or you can visit the website at [www.gleedons.com](http://www.gleedons.com) The farm is on the Sheinton Road, just outside Much Wenlock.



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## The Man on the Seat

He joined the Good Friday 'Walk of Witness' in Sandford Avenue towards the end of the journey from the railway station to The Square. The most poignant moment for me was to observe the invitation by a walker to the person sitting on the wooden seat outside the Bank close to the crossroad with the High Street. With a gentle, slightly outstretched arm, an invitation was extended to the man that he was welcome to join the walk. A beaming smile immediately crossed his face and he sprang from the seat into the midst of walkers on their pilgrimage.

Was it a mere coincidence that the same man was sitting on a similar-type seat in St Laurence's churchyard on Palm Sunday during the congregation's procession around the churchyard during morning service? History was repeating itself on Good Friday as I had seen someone, in that procession, give the same man a Palm Cross as a gift. Another person then, almost immediately, invited the onlooker to join the procession, which he promptly did.

The Good Friday 'Walk of Witness' involved all of the churches in the Strettons and of all denominations. A beautiful sunny morning greeted an estimated 150 walkers as they assembled in the road by the station. The large wooden cross, carried gallantly, that led the procession, left no one in any doubt about the reason for the 'Walk of Witness'. The prayers at the beginning, led by a local clergyman, served for creating the spirit for what was to follow.

Sandford Avenue was very busy as it usually is on a Bank Holiday. Lots of shoppers were about and the traffic was significant. The procession marshals were most efficient in keeping the walkers, including a traveller

in a wheel chair, and the motorists both separate and moving. The fluorescent jackets were a great help. From near the back of the procession, everything appeared to be moving quietly and with a dignity that was fitting to such a memorable occasion.

It was heartening to see that all age groups were well represented. I had the privilege of walking close to a family that included a boy in an Arsenal Football Club shirt. Nothing unusual about that these days some might say when soccer has achieved the impact that it has in our society. However, the sponsor's name that was daubed across the front of the shirt was 'Dreamcast'. Could there be some obscure connection between our walk and events of 2000 years ago in Jerusalem?

The Church Stretton 'Walk of Witness' on Good Friday was a moving and significant occasion for the whole town. Everyone was encouraged to take part, including the man on the bench. The ecumenical service that followed in The Square served to strengthen the sense of community that was shared by all who had taken part.



Photo: Jon Cooke

Barrie Oxtoby



# EVENTS DIARY: what's on in May

## EVERY WEEK

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, 44 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
Thurs & Fri	Good Neighbours' Bereavement and Loss Befriender. 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
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## WEEK ONE

Wed	1	Women's Network. Revd Bernard Nixon. Methodist Hall, Watling Street South . . . . .	2.30
Thur	2	Mayfair Holy Communion. Town ministers preside in turn. At Social Club, Essex Road . . . . .	1.30
		Hope Bowdler MU. Deanery Outing to Colwell	
Fri	3	Prayers for Peace (suggestions: Methodists). Drop in at Emmaus Chapel, St Laurence . . . . .	10.00 to 4.00
		Senior Citizens. Roger Whitehead with slides on Africa's far south. Silvester Horne Institute . . . . .	2.30
Sat	4	Shrops. Wildlife Trust. Coffee Morning and stalls. At the Parish Centre. . . . .	10.00 to 12.00
		Choral Society Concert "Harmonious Classics". Music by Haydn, Parry, Vaughan Williams, and Elgar. Ensemble Musicale and organ. Tickets £6.00. School Theatre Hall . . . . .	7.30

## WEEK TWO

Mon	6	Wistanstow Sponsored Walk. Part proceeds Medical Centre for capital equipment.	
Tue	7	Flower Club. Mrs Jackie Harris, "Come with me". (Table: arrangement in a basket). Visitors very welcome at a charge of £3. Silvester Horne Institute . . . . .	7.30
Wed	8	Christian Aid. Video "Against the grain" and coffee. For collectors and all interested. Authorisations and materials to hand. In the Parish Centre. . . . .	10.30
		Women's Network. A guest panel will respond to "Any Questions". Methodist Hall . . . . .	2.30
		Middle Marches Lions Club. Every 2nd Wed at Travellers' Rest. Contacts 724337 or 722020 . . . . .	8.00
Thur	9	Traidcraft fairly traded goods every 2nd Thursday at 36 Watling Street South . . . . .	10.30 to 12.30
Fri	10	Senior Citizens Club. Reg Heiron, "Memories of Old Stretton". Silvester Horne Institute . . . . .	2.30

## WEEK THREE

		Christian Aid Week May 12th to 18th.	
Mon	13	Ladies' Monday Group. Percy Price with a spinning demonstration. United Reformed Hall . . . . .	2.30
		Stretton Cancer Care. Aromatherapy Treat. 2nd year students of Stoke College. Parish Centre . . . . .	2.30
Tue	14	Church Stretton Women's Institute. Resolutions for IGM. Bring & Buy (gardening stall). Competition: A six line poem about May. Silvester Horne Institute. . . . .	7.15
Wed	15	Women's Network. Leone Murray (former Methodist Church Vice President ) Methodist Hall . . . . .	2.30
Fri	17	Stretton Arthritis Care. 3rd Friday of each month. Social Club, Essex Road. . . . .	11.00
		Senior Citizens. Adrian Williams (S. Shrops. Librarian), "Reading for laughs". Silvester Horne . . . . .	2.30
		Stretton Bible Society. Supper. After-supper speaker Prof. Briggs (Queen's College, Birmingham). Tickets £3.50 from committee members or at the churches. Parish Centre . . . . .	7.00

## WEEK FOUR (to the 31st)

Sun	19	WHITSUNDAY United Pentecost All-age Worship at Church Stretton School. . . . .	10.30
Tue	21	Countrywomen's Guild. John Leighton, "Concorde House". At the Parish Centre. . . . .	2.15
		Hope Bowdler MU. Helen Townend, "Working with blind children". At 36 Alison Road. . . . .	2.30
		All Stretton WI. "Resolutions" for IGM. Sheila Seal about Healthcare. Members' crafts and hobbies. Competition: A Spring flower. All Stretton Village Hall. . . . .	7.30
Wed	22	Women's Network. Revd Jill Groves (Priest in Charge, Hope Bowdler Group). Methodist Hall. . . . .	2.30
Sat	25	United Nations Association/UNICEF. [UN Childrens' Emergency Fund] Street Collection	
Sun	26	Northfield Methodist Choir, Birmingham, at the Methodist Church for anniversary evening. . . . .	6.00
Wed	29	Hope Bowdler MU. Diocesan Festival Service at Hereford Cathedral.	

Dates for June due by 12 noon on Friday 17th May to Focus Diary, 1 Central Ave. CS. SY6 6EE Tel. 724304
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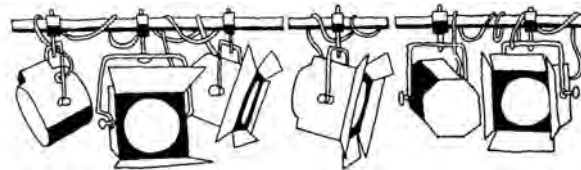
# Jeeves & Wooster come to Church Stretton

From 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> May at Silvester Horne Institute, Dorrington Players present *JEEVES and the FEUDAL SPIRIT*, a play in three acts, adapted for the stage from the 1954 PG Wodehouse novel.

Originally it was intended that Beryl Lewis would produce the Spring play, but unfortunately last December Beryl suffered a stroke (from which she is still recovering) so the group had to find another production. Some years ago the group had made a video production of *The Code of the Woosters* and it was decided to adapt the novel again for the Spring Stage production.

When Dorrington Players approached The Trustees of the Wodehouse Estates for permission, they were told that all rights to this book had been sold to Andrew Lloyd Webber's "The Really Useful Theatre Company". Andrew Lloyd Webber refused permission to the Dorrington Players to produce their own "Code of the Woosters" play because of his musical version. It was flattering to think that Andrew Lloyd Webber's company felt that Church Stretton's amateur players were a threat to the future of their musical production!

With just over three months to go, it looked as if the Spring production might have to be cancelled. It then came to light that only the rights to this one book had been sold. Permission was received to adapt "Jeeves and The Feudal Spirit" for the stage. The group have had a lot of fun preparing for this production, including writing their own script, and are confident that it will be



an evening of fun and laughter for everyone.

The play opens on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30 pm in the Silvester Horne Institute, High Street, Church Stretton. On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm we have a gala evening, when guests are invited to wear evening dress or pre 1950's period costume if they wish. By popular request there will be a Saturday Matinee at 2.30 pm. We hope this will give younger families and those who don't go out in the evening an opportunity to join in the fun of live theatre. (The FA Cup final is the week before!!). The energetic group will do it all again on the Saturday evening at 7.30pm. One member of the cast was heard to say "Well, we always wish we could do one more performance to get it just right!"

So, what's it all about? I hear you say. Where do I begin? Florence Cray, now engaged to Stilton Cheesewright, still has a soft spot for her former fiancé and cousin Bertie Wooster. When Wooster's intentions towards her are misunderstood he finds Cheesewright breathing threats of bodily harm against him. Meanwhile Percy Goringe, another of Florence's suitors, is trying to get financial backing for his dramatisation of her novel. Bertie's Aunt Dahlia is also in search of cash to prop up her ailing magazine, which she is trying to sell to LG Trotter. Uncle Tom finds his peace and quiet disturbed by the arrival of the Trotters and other guests! And when Aunt Dahlia summons Jeeves & Wooster to Brinkley Court she sparks a trail of farce and hilarious fun.

*Andrew Chapman*

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## United Nations Association

The Church Stretton Branch of the United Nations Association has held two important and well-attended meetings already this year; In the first of these, Malcolm Harper, the Director of UNA-UK, came from London to talk on the subject of "The Role of the United Nations in Fighting Terrorism". In the second talk, Paul Marsden MP, talked to the Branch at the Shirehall in Shrewsbury on "Reforming the United Nations to Deliver Peace and Security

A feature of both talks was the need to tackle the root causes of conflict, and not just the conflict itself. The causes include the gross inequality between the rich western nations and the third world, the lack of basic human rights in many Third World countries, the U.S. support for Israel and its apparent antagonism to Muslim countries, and the arms trade - particularly in small arms and land mines.

Suggested solutions to these problems include doubling

aid to developing countries (the U.K. currently gives only 0.35% of GDP and the U.S. only 0.1% of GDP in aid compared with the UN target of 0.7%), the establishment of a UN Court to deal with international issues, the end of the Security Council's right of veto, and the cancelling of all unsustainable debts with Third World countries.

This Branch is determined to make a positive contribution to a more peaceful world by channelling the commitment and experience of its members to address specific goals over the next twelve months. The first subject chosen by the UNA Committee is to support education in Afghanistan, and an Open Day is to be held at Church Stretton School on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> June, to look at ways in which we can do this. The event is being organised by Barry Oxtoby (Tel: 723199) and he would welcome support from anyone who would like to help.

*R.Jukes-Hughes*



# 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:** Meeting for worship in the Sylvester Horne Committee Room. Children 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.

# Roman Catholic Voice

## Celebrating Europe

Each year we celebrate Europe Day on 9 May. It recalls the ending of the Second World War 57 years ago. There are good reasons why Christians ought to celebrate Europe Day because the persistent drive for European unity has been one of the great *political* (rather than economic) developments of the post-war years.

So what is there to celebrate? We should chiefly give thanks for peace between France and Germany and in Central and Eastern Europe. With the passage of time it is easy to forget that the Second World War was the third time that France and Germany had gone to war with each other in only seventy years. The ending of this historical conflict is something for which we should be profoundly grateful.

How did this reconciliation come about? Providentially, at the end of the war, three great statesmen: Adenauer in Germany, De Gaspari in Italy, and Schuman in France, inspired by a common Catholic faith, sought to achieve forgiveness and reconciliation. Their aims were realized through the efforts of a remarkable Frenchman, Jean Monnet, whose strategy was to remove the source of competitive conflict in strategic industries. His Coal and Steel Community developed over the years to the European Union of fifteen nations today.

The original founders were all inspired by their understanding of Catholic social teaching as it developed since Pope Leo XIII wrote about the needs of the working classes in 1891. He had stressed the dignity of each individual human being and hence the priority of capital over labour. This thinking was developed further forty years later by Pius XI who enunciated

the principle of subsidiarity and the importance of intermediate associations between the state and the individual. In the 1930s and 40s the great French philosopher, Jacques Maritain, developed ideas of Christian humanism which were also important in the thinking of the founding fathers of the EU.



For several post-war decades these ideas were given political expression in the social and economic policies of the Christian Democrat parties in Western Europe and in the notion of a social market economy which aimed to support the weak and replace industrial conflict by dialogue and harmony between capital and labour.

In the six decades since World War II and the four decades since the Second Vatican Council there have been huge developments in Catholic social thinking. There is space only to identify five key themes:

- The dignity of each human being created in the image of God.
- People are social beings; hence the need for policies to be directed towards the common good.
- People of the one creator God must live in solidarity and concern for each other.
- The importance of subsidiarity and the need to decentralize and support intermediate bodies.
- The Preferential option for the poor who have a special place in God's affections.

As we celebrate Europe Day, let us commit ourselves to promote these themes in our relations with each other, with other nations in Europe, and with the wider world.

MPHS

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## “I’d Pick More Daisies”



If I had my life to live over again... I'd dare to make more mistakes next time. I'd relax, I would loosen up. I would be sillier than I have been this trip. I would take fewer things seriously. I would take more chances. I would climb more mountains and swim more rivers. I would eat more ice cream and less beans. I would perhaps have more actual troubles, but I'd have fewer imaginary ones.



You see, I'm one of those people who live sensibly and sanely, hour after hour, day after day. Oh, I've had my moments, and if I had to do it over again, I'd have more of them. In fact, I'd try to have nothing else. Just moments, one after another, instead of living so many years ahead of each day. I've been one of those persons who never goes anywhere without a thermometer, a hot water bottle, a raincoat and a parachute. If I had to do it again, I would travel lighter.



If I had my life to live over, I would start barefoot earlier in the Spring and stay that way later in the Autumn. I would go to more dances. I would ride more merry-go-rounds. I would pick more daisies.



Anon



# Methodist Voice

## Five Million Smiles In A Shoe Box

Most Church members will be aware that over the past few years, our Junior Church has given generously to the "Shoebbox" initiative, whereby shoe boxes are filled with Christmas gifts and are sent to underprivileged children around the world.

I understand that over 5 million gift-filled boxes were sent around the world as a result of last year's Operation Christmas Child campaign. Over 1.1 million of these were sent from the UK, boosted by a link-up with Breakfast T/V Broadcasters, GMTV.

Project Manager, Dave Cooke, commented: *It was very touching to see the gratitude of parents. They couldn't speak English, but the smiles, nods and waves were enough.*

**May the annual Shoebbox initiative continue to flourish.**

## Young Is Beautiful

At our annual Church Day, on Saturday 16th March, about 30 members attended the morning session, which was dedicated to the theme of "YOUNG IS BEAUTIFUL" and sought to consider how our whole church family can become involved in helping our young people to grow spiritually. The Rev. Susan McIvor guided us through the programme, beginning with an imaginary conversation between Peter and Jesus, during which Jesus said: *It matters if we make worship something only adults are comfortable with.*

In the ensuing deliberations, we considered how we might ensure that the whole church community can worship together - perhaps doing things together out of doors; or maintaining contact with young people who move away from the fellowship (to go to college, for example).

The afternoon session centred round the General Church Meeting and included discussion on the pre-circulated reports which covered all the various activities associated with our church.

Plans for a Church Weekend Away are being considered for the first weekend in April 2003, for which a suitable venue is to be booked. A less ambitious plan for a Sunday outing will also be looked at and this might include a packed lunch, a car or coach trip, followed by tea and evening worship at another church.

On the first Sunday in May, Chris George will take over from Ruth Davies as our Senior Steward. We take this opportunity to thank Ruth for the tremendous job she has done in that capacity, and I personally thank her for all the help and encouragement she has given me as Methodist correspondent for Focus. We wish Chris every success and also welcome Ann Cooke on her election as Steward.



We also welcome Betty Kynaston as Communion Steward, following the resignation, due to ill health, of Sue Tye.

Sue's stewardship has been much appreciated and we extend to her our grateful love and best wishes.

It has been decided to serve coffee after morning service every Sunday, as a 3-months experiment, starting on the Sunday after Easter. It is hoped that this will enable the adults to form closer links with our Junior Church members, as well as with each other.

## How Could God ..... ?

The following is an extract from a recent issue of Plymouth Central Hall's magazine, "The Messenger", which I hope might stimulate thought.

During a recent T/V programme in the USA, Anne Graham, Billy Graham's daughter, was being interviewed in a T/V series called "The Truth". She was asked, in the light of a recently murdered schoolgirl, "How could God let something like this happen?"

Anne Graham replies: *I believe that God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we have been telling God to get out of our schools, out of our government and out of our lives. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection, if we demand that He leaves us alone?*

*I think it started when Madeline Murray O'Hare (who was murdered; her body was found recently) complained she did not want any prayer in our schools and we said O.K.! Then someone said you had better not read the Bible in school (the Bible which says you shall not kill, you shall not steal and you shall love your neighbour as yourself) - and we said O.K.!*

*Now we are asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong. I think it has a great deal to do with **WE REAP WHAT WE SOW.***

*Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world is in such a mess. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Funny how the lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene pass freely through cyberspace, but the public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and workspace.*

Anne Graham is of course referring to the USA - but are things so different for us here? If you feel moved to respond to anything in this article, do please jot your thoughts down and let me have them.

*Eric Stephenson*

# Anglican Voice: Youth Minister Appointment



Throughout the Bible we read of God's provision in response to men and woman taking risks at his prompting. Here at St Laurence's we have a story to tell about taking risks and we are very excited about it!

Over the years many teenagers and young people have been involved in clubs, activities and various other events at St Laurence's, but for some time it had been felt that more could be done. We wanted continue to nurture the faith of those already interested and involved. We wanted the younger children who readily participate in the many events on offer to be encouraged to maintain a commitment to finding out about God as they reached adolescence. We wanted to build links with the community

Then in July 2001 'The Youth Worker Task Group', commissioned by the PCC, met for the first time. Our brief was to consider the possibility and feasibility of employing a youth worker. The six committee members, all parents, were concerned personally with the issue. Prayer underpinned this whole venture, and we began our first meeting asking for God's guidance. We then discussed some of our hopes and dreams and found that we all shared a common vision – that young people would know something life changing of God's love.

Then we got down to the nitty gritty. What did we want our youth worker to do? What sort of person were we looking for? How much would it all cost? How long would an appointment be for? Where would this person live? Where would we get the funding? - And that was just the first meeting! To help us with our task we were soon joined by Lyn Money, Diocesan Youth Officer, who has provided us with invaluable professional advice

throughout the entire process. After lengthy discussions about all these issues we came to a meeting of minds - an encouraging sign of God's presence with us.

Clearly funding was a key issue. In November the option to pledge money to the youth minister fund was included on the annual stewardship forms. Many people took a risk and increased their regular giving. How encouraged we all were to learn that enough had been promised to employ a youth minister for at least three years! We could go ahead!

The work for the committee intensified– the draft job description, person specification and advertisement all needed refining and finalising and an application pack had to be prepared. In December the Diocese agreed to purchase a curate's house. This leaves the School House available for the youth minister. (We continue to pray for that the right house will come available for purchase for the curate).

The post was advertised in February and there were 24 enquiries. The committee short-listed 5 excellent candidates. During the interview weekend all 5 candidates made a 10-minute presentation, took part in 2 interviews and were given a guided tour of the area and schoolhouse accommodation. They also met many of our Pathfinders. The committee and candidates spent time together on Saturday evening and we all had lunch together on Sunday. At the end of the weekend our prayers were once again answered. We unanimously decided to offer Claire Nagioff the position. To our delight, she has accepted! We look forward to her arrival in mid August and to sharing more about her in due course.

*Vicky Barnes*

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## Christian Aid Week 12 - 18 May

The theme for Christian Aid Week this year is 'International Trade - where's the catch?' and focuses on Christian Aid's new trade campaign *Trade For Life*.

Instead of bringing prosperity, trade often causes injustice and poverty, making the world's poorest people poorer. The problem is that the rules which govern international trade are shaped by rich governments and companies to their own advantage. Rules are important. With the right rules, trade could bring new products, new technology and new opportunities that would help countries tackle poverty. It could create income, employment and investment for the world's poorest people. Rules could work for poor people not against them. But they have to be the right rules, fully endorsed by those they seek to protect. **As a sign of your support for the Trade for Life campaign why not wear the badge?**

### Do you Love Football?

Football fans will need no reminding that the World Cup

finals will soon be underway in Japan and South Korea. But how much will they be told about the origin of the sports equipment and souvenirs available during the summer?

The Delhi-based organisation Global March Against Child Labour is campaigning against the use of merchandise which has been produced using child labour. To find out how this campaign is progressing, log on to the Global March website: [www.globalmarch.org](http://www.globalmarch.org)

Why not check with your local team that they are already using and selling child-friendly kits and merchandise? To match last year's record total of over £3000 we need your help as a donor and/or a collector. If you are a newcomer to this area please offer your services as a collector on 722064. Seasoned collectors please help us again.

On Wednesday 8 May at 10.30 in the Parish Centre, coffee will be served and Christian Aid video 'Against the grain' will be shown to all who are interested.

*Sheila Smith*



# URC Voice

This year the festival of Pentecost falls on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May, and it is an occasion of great celebration. Local people from all churches will be gathering in the Senior School for a special service.

The first Christians, who had experienced the miracle of Easter, and who knew a lot about the earthly ministry of Jesus, suddenly discovered that all the theory became a reality in their own lives! After a unique prayer meeting in a room in Jerusalem, many with little education, found themselves preaching so powerfully that people listening were converted. Those, who had sympathetically groaned over the plight of the physically ill and mentally deranged, discovered, probably to their surprise, that they were in a position to provide dramatic relief, and long term healing to people around them. Most significant of all the small group of Christian believers became so enthusiastic, confident, courageous, and selfless, that Christianity began its unrelenting spread around the world. They had been on the receiving end of the promise which Jesus had made to them earlier, and were empowered by the Holy Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit who provides the dynamic for any church community to worship, work and witness effectively. Without the breath of the Holy Spirit the programme of church activities becomes dry, mechanical and formal, and that which is meant to be a living organism of pilgrim people, becomes a club which attracts a few like-minded individuals.



Welcoming the Holy Spirit day by day can be a risky business, because he is creative, he can quickly upset our carefully drafted plans, for he is keen to help us achieve God's purposes, and to equip all of us to play our part in God's church.

Around the world countless people testify to the effect the Holy Spirit does have on their lives:-  
"I have a new confidence in God and an incredible desire to pray and read the Bible.....I find I have a fresh love for other people and want to do all I can to help and encourage them....I long for my neighbours to realise how much God loves them.....I welcome different ways of worship..... I realise just how wrong I have been .....I want to play a fuller part in my community... ..I am attempting things I never thought I could undertake..."

How about you and me?

Norman Smith

The new guy, and his 'missus', at the URC have not taken long to find out that you can hardly do or say anything in the Strettons, without other people knowing! "I hear you have been... I saw you...How did you like?" Recently he was seen slipping into a local

shop looking for boots. He appeared pleased with his purchase, and within days took the missus there too. She emerged with a different variety, but apparently among the most recent on the market. By the end of the week, joined by a couple of friends from the neighbouring county, they were starting off on their first gentle climb.



They had hardly gone a few hundred yards when a car stopped. The driver clearly thought they all looked lost. Comment was made about the map dangling round the old man's neck. He admitted he was new to these exploits, at which point the car driver just beamed and drove off. Fortunately one in the party proved a helpful map reader, and the four of them negotiated the route more or less successfully. The old man frequently strode ahead and then stopped to check with the others he was still going in the right direction. Not surprisingly, given his track record, he puffed and panted up the hills (shockingly unfit!) and slithered down the slopes.

In case you don't know, the old man is a preacher- *of sorts!* He tries to get across the fact that, being a Christian can be likened to going on a journey. Sometimes the path can be an uphill grind, presenting its own demanding challenge, bringing out the best in a person or the worst!. Sometimes it is more of a level playing field, and there is time and opportunity to appreciate much that gladdens the heart and mind.

But sometimes a Christian goes downhill, slithering off the path and then there are positive steps to take to get back on track. Important points along the journey of life are when specific decisions have to be made - the "official" guide book is an extremely helpful aid, but it is still not always straight forward to make the right choice. I suppose the old man would say, "Ask the Spirit to help you", - easier said than done in my opinion!  
*as witnessed by the local bird of "pray"!*

## Church Anniversary

The present church building was opened on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 1866. The site cost £295, and the building itself a little over £1000. The real church, the fellowship of God's people, had begun some six years previously ( 7 members). The people met in the loft of a carpenter's shop, now demolished, the approach to which was by a narrow step ladder (good symbolism there!). At the dedication service a hymn by John Newton was sung, containing the words "As thou hast given a place of prayer, so give us hearts to pray." That plea is as vital today as ever.

This year we celebrate our anniversary on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May, when we welcome Professor John Briggs as our preacher. He is the recently retired Principal of Westhill College, Selly Oak. Do join us if you can.

# Percy Remembers St. Dunstons 'Take-over'

After the fall of France in 1940 the Brighton Headquarters of St. Dunstons moved to the tranquillity of Church Stretton and hotels and boarding houses were occupied by patients and staff. Buildings such as the present Antique Centre were utilised for training and rehabilitation. To say that Strettonians welcomed them with open arms was an understatement and they soon became a normal and inspiring part of the community.

Everything possible was done to provide them with company, entertainment and leisure pursuits like tandem cycling, horse riding and the ever popular hill walking. Homes had ever-open doors and many patients found themselves adopted for the duration of the War and some even for life. Apart from blindness, many suffered horrendous injuries to face and body. Those were given ingenious artificial limbs and McIndoe plastic surgery to their faces. Their acceptance of their condition and their spirit of determination to adapt themselves and lead normal lives was an inspiration to those of us who were privileged to know them. Closer contact came often via the local pubs. Those were packed full every night and that is how 'the locals' came to appreciate their patience and at times wicked sense of humour.

To aid 'St. Dunstaners' based at the Longmynd Hotel and Tiger Hall, posts and guide wires were laid up the hill, through the rectory field to their billets. In a rash moment of conviviality after an evening in one of the locals, I offered to lead a party 'up the wire'. However, in the dark, slipping and sliding, my progress was particularly slow, prompting one happy warrior, Jimmy White, to shout loudly, "Percy, get to the back of the queue or we shall be here all night". On reaching the top and wishing them goodnight, I said, "Just a minute, Jim, how do I get back down again?" "That's easy", he said amongst great hilarity from all, "Just grab the wire, close your eyes and the Buck's Head beer will do the rest".

After four and a half years in Malaya, India and Burma, I returned in the Spring of 1944 to find 'St. Dunstaners' fully entrenched and an everyday part of the community. I was given 28 days rehabilitation leave and as most of the people of my age were in the forces, I spent much time with the 'St. Dunstaners'. To the left of the entrance to the Longmynd Hotel was a large leisure complex. There, under the direction of a professional musician, Claude Brampton, was formed a dance and rumba band, accordion band, light orchestra and a Mozart quartet. They produced a series of revues and concert parties graced by the inclusion of two girl 'St. Dunstaners'. Their final show was in August 1946, entitled 'Illuminations', before St. Dunstons moved back to Brighton.

My involvement came by way of a request to attend and dance with the blind girls. One was a truly remarkable girl who had been blinded at 18 when working in a Cardiff munitions factory. The explosion also took off her right hand. After painful medical treatment and the trauma of recovery from that shattering experience, she came to St. Dunstons for training. Gwen Obern is her name. She is unlikely to remember her young dancing partner from so long ago, but I shall never forget her. She possessed a lovely singing voice, and with tuition formed the centre piece of the concert orchestra. Later her charity funding and great commitment to working tirelessly to promote the activities of St. Dunstons, culminated in her being made a Freeman of the City of London.

Another outstanding 'St. Dunstaner' was David Bell, blinded by virtue of a desert mine. He was minus both hands and had severe facial injuries. His courage and strength of spirit had no compare. He was to find love, marriage and a lifetime of care and devotion from a pretty Stretton redhead named Sybil Page. Their first venture was to open a shop in Scotland. King Farouk was so impressed by the story of his ability and fortitude that he stocked up the shop with cigarettes – Egyptian, I presume!

David gave an address at St. Laurence's Church at a Reunion and he graced us with his presence at our RAF Roundel's 50<sup>th</sup> Battle of Britain evening 1990 at the Denehurst Hotel. He had children and was, with Sybil, the subject of a BBC programme, 'This is your Life'. His obituary in the Times newspaper, listing his academic achievements, filled a whole page. Sybil has since joined him, and rests now in God's good care.

The leading patron of St. Dunstons is HM The Queen. I think it would be appropriate in her Jubilee Year, to hold a church service to commemorate the close bond that existed between St. Dunstons and Church Stretton.

Any suggestions? Please ring me 01694 723330.

## Focus On Faith

### I believe in the resurrection of the Dead

Quite soon after Jesus' tragic death his disciples were proclaiming his resurrection. They were changed men commissioned to proclaim what they had learned and experienced in the company of Jesus. See the messages of Peter, recorded in Acts Chapter 2 vv 22-24 and vv 32-33; Chapter 3 vv 13-15 and Chapter 4 vv 8-12. That God had raised Jesus from the dead was central to their message.

The New Testament writers were not concerned to explain the resurrection, but to proclaim it. It was an act of God assuring people of His ultimate victory over sin, death and the devil. All believers in Christ take their sins and die with him on the cross and then share in his resurrected life. They live in Christ and so share in the life of God. They will experience physical death in the future, but by virtue of the resurrection life in Christ will go on beyond death to heaven. Look at Romans, Chapter 6 vv 1-11.

*Bernard Nixon*



# Reg's Ramblings - Leadership

We do not always seem to appreciate the importance of competent and effective leadership in relation to our general happiness, either in the workplace, in the community, in national and international affairs or in the spiritual content of our lives.

Taking these diverse areas in order – if we are happy at work we produce more, our firm or institution prospers and, even if we do not profit financially, we are far less likely to take out our frustrations on our family on returning home. Inspired and selfless leadership in the community nurtures all-round friendliness and a tendency to mutual helpfulness which can be channelled into countless initiatives of benefit to the community.

In the area of national and international affairs, good government will rid us of the constant nagging harassment arising from poorly thought out and 'fussy' legislation and resultant incompetent administration. In the field of international affairs it can confer that longed for peace of mind with regard to the sensitive and complex situations which so often arise and can signal mortal danger if clumsily handled.

As regards spirituality, by far the greatest source of personal unhappiness is the feeling of helplessness experienced by many people when things go badly wrong and, because of the lack of spiritual commitment in their lives, they are unable – in the words of the well

known hymn – to 'take it to the Lord in prayer'.

Possibly that particular form of unhappiness is a major factor behind present discords and disputes in society at a time when we seem to be blessed with material possessions to a previously undreamed of extent. In our commitment to, and pursuit of, materialism, we appear to increasingly adopt attitudes of 'I'm all right, Jack' and 'I am doing very nicely, thank you', to the detriment of care and help for our fellow men and women. Such attitudes cannot be conducive to content and peace of mind.

All of this surely demands truly inspired leadership on the part of our spiritual leaders; if the Church hierarchy could succeed in tapping into the latent and unidentified spiritual hunger which lies behind so much of today's anti-social behaviour, they could spark off a Christian revival of considerable dimension.

The natural gift of leadership quality is rare, but the rudiments of the art can be acquired through diligence and a degree of personal humility, whereby anyone aspiring to be a leader in any form or circumstance, begins by respecting those they aspire to lead and then hope that they themselves might be good enough to accrue respect in return. When all these facts are properly understood – who knows, we might just be able to attain real human happiness to a greater degree than ever before!.

*Reg Heiron*

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## Global Justice

With a seven year old attending St. Lawrence's Primary School, I imagine ours is not the only household in the Strettons where concern has been expressed regarding the recent changes in headteachers. Concern for the wellbeing of our children is not something peculiar to the Strettons, as I understand that 75% of parents nationally say they want the government to provide free separate measles, mumps and rubella vaccinations for their children.... just in case.

We should therefore not be surprised to learn that parents in Africa with relatives in Europe tend to send their children north, with a view to providing them with the best possible start in life. It would seem that Francis and Berthe Climbie, from the Ivory Coast, were two such parents and in late 1997 they entrusted their daughter Victoria into the hands of her great aunt. Much has been written in the press in recent months about Victoria's life with her great aunt and how after two years of terrifying neglect, starvation and abuse, Victoria died aged only 8 years old. Victoria's parents, who attended the enquiry into their daughter's death, were apparently appalled by the failure of any of the authorities to accept responsibility for the mistakes made by front-line staff. Indeed, they commented to their solicitor that the 'majority of witnesses appeared to be most interested in avoiding acknowledging personal responsibility for the death of their daughter'.



Towards the end of the 55 day enquiry, the Prime Minister flew off for a four-day tour of West Africa. Whilst he did not visit Ivory Coast, he did visit neighbouring countries. In each of the countries visited, it is reported that the Prime Minister spoke passionately about the need for African leaders to embrace democratic change, peace, regional stability and human rights. No mention is made of whether or not he told Victoria's story. Neither could I find a reference to the Prime Minister enquiring about current levels of child impoverishment and mortality in Africa and how these might be linked to the failure of Western leaders to drop the African debt.

Returning to Victoria's story, it appears that her parents also noted that ordinary individuals among the general public appeared to be much more interested in Victoria than did the authorities. Similarly, it seems ordinary people are more concerned with dropping the debt and a fairer deal for the world's poor, than are world leaders – according to opinion polls, a referendum in the UK on dropping the debt would result in overwhelming support. Presumably all that is now required is for our leaders to embrace democratic change .... I wonder where we have heard that before?

*Adrian Cullis*

## A Place Like No Other

Even by late afternoon the air in the house was still filled with thick grease. I must have become numb to it as I did chores around the house in the morning, but as soon as I opened the garage door after bringing the children home from school, I wondered whether we had mistakenly entered a transport cafe. Every room in the house smelled like it had been wrapped in streaky bacon.

We had started something new that day. Now, once a week we have a cooked breakfast – on a school day no less. The preparation is a hassle, and I certainly don't need any more grimy pots and pans in the sink. The funny thing is, I think it's a great idea.

I had been sitting at the kitchen table with my children a few nights prior, when my eldest suddenly blurted, 'why do we never have a cooked breakfast?' I'm used to complaints. As a mother, you soon learn that most of your children's problems are in some way your fault. I did not, however, take offence at this comment. It was true. We have enough cereal in our house to fill a paddling pool, but I couldn't think of the last time I had cooked breakfast. Now, at least for one day a week, this has all changed.

From an early age, we develop an attachment to traditions. Many families have them. When I was growing up we put our Christmas tree up on the same day every year. Every night we said grace holding hands. Quirky customs? To others perhaps, but to our family it was reassuring. These were reminders that despite everything else that might be going on in our individual lives, we had a way of doing certain things, together, that was special.

So when someone asked me not too long ago if anything was happening in the Strettons for the Queen's Jubilee, I was sorry to have very little to say. I have now learned of a few small activities planned, but nothing grand. This, to me, is a disappointment. Please don't misunderstand, I am not a royalist. I do believe, however, that communities, like families, need to develop traditions – customs which say, 'this day, these people, this place is special'.

Let's just pick a day, okay, an afternoon, where we close the high street near the square, put out some balloons, hang some bunting and maybe even get a brass band. I'll bake some biscuits, and I am sure we can find someone to organise making the tea. (Berry's ?, The Hollybush ?)

Developing traditions gives out a message. We, in the Strettons, need to develop a tradition which says, whoever you are, whatever you do, let's come together just because it's a nice thing to do- not to celebrate any particular holiday and please, no raffles. There are many worthy events which take place in our area throughout the year, but often there is an agenda – to raise money, to raise awareness, to raise political support. Let's do something to raise our spirits. This might start a new tradition in...*a place like no other.*

J. Wyeth

## Arts Festival



This is our guarantee. Unlike the BBC, we are not dumbing down. Whether our performers are experienced and internationally known, such as Anthony Rolfe-Johnson or Barbara Jefford and Geraldine McEwan, or starting their careers, as is David Quigley, all are of a very high standard. Even if you're not sure, it's worth taking a chance. Last year's Harp recital by Danielle Perrett was a wonderful evening, but not well attended. Those of us who went thoroughly enjoyed her performance, and felt sorry for the people who stayed away. So book the dates ~ July 20<sup>th</sup> to August 3<sup>rd</sup> ~ invite your friends and families, and come along. Full details will appear in our programmes, due to appear around now.

As in last year, we are anxious to do all we can to help rural tourism recover. If you provide accommodation, and would like some programme summaries to send to potential clients, or if you wish to notify friends, please contact us for a supply.

Preparations for the Exhibition are well in hand. Enquiries, please, to David Mace on 722289. Gerald Bolton, on 01694 723807, handles membership and ticket enquiries, whilst Jenny Repath, on 731350, is taking bookings for the minibus to the Concord College events. All other enquiries, or offers of help, to me on 722159

George Roby



**AGE**  
*Concern*

Age Concern, with help from Shropshire County Council, are setting up Older People's Forums around the county to provide space where senior citizens can keep informed on policies and services

which concern them. As a group they can work together to influence these policies and services and express their views. At present the Shrewsbury Forum has been meeting quarterly since October 2000 and between 50 and 200 people attend. Members of the Group are part of the Regional Committee of 'Better Government for Older People' which highlight the views of older people in the region and pass these views to Government. They have campaigned so far on various transport issues.

At this moment we are seeking help from local older people who would be willing to help us get a Ludlow group organised. If you would be willing to help, please contact Olly Rose at Age Concern Shrewsbury – 01743 233788.

## For Those in Need

**I** sit atop a garden where once the sheep did graze  
and look out over Long Mynd's back, where  
sunlit clouds their shadows grey the little red  
roofed town in vale below.

Parish church with flag of George so stiff in unseen  
breeze; the sound of strident bells from shaking  
tower ring out the message to the town to worship  
on this day of days.

When noonday comes and Sunday lunch is moving  
nostrils, flavour sweet, I wonder if God's people  
think of those with hunger when they their repast  
from their tables eat.

The God they worship teaches them to care for those  
who are less fortunate, but can they, locked as they are  
in culture strict react to others when the need is there.

They understand the need there's no mistake, their  
problem is that in their busy world there is not one  
who can protect them from an action of indifference.

They are but victims of the politician's game. Left  
to wonder why in times of need their leaders turn  
their eyes to many things they say are more essential  
to their cause.

The more their leaders inward turn the more world  
troubles multiply and increase man's indignity. The  
people should insist that in their name their country  
should respond.

There are those nations who reply when challenged  
that they do identify and do their best to help  
the poorer world, but only when some benefit be  
gained!

Bravely from the church tower Saint George's flag  
extends and sunlit clouds their shadows grey the  
little red roofed town below and people now at tea  
their conscience prink.

Where is the balance, how should they respond to  
need which faces them on every turn they make.  
Perhaps they still must think and give to agencies  
who do bring strength and help.

They cannot wait for times of government to change  
their sluggish ways; kind assistance, and the loving  
help is needed now else nothing will be done for  
those in need.

*John Voller*

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## The Old Countrywoman

**I**'ve been coming here on Sundays for seventy year or so.  
'Twas here that I was christened and 'tis here I'll want to go.  
Now I know you all get vexed about changes in belief –  
Well frills on top don't matter if you're comfy underneath.  
While I've got me Ten Commandments I shan't go wrong a lot.  
Now, I likes the old-fashioned prayer book and they like A.S.B.  
And they can have what pleases them, and I'll read what suits me,  
And half the hymns we sing these days I've never heard before,  
But I can stand and listen, and perhaps I'll learn some more.  
All these guitars and instruments – it's no more than they had  
Afore they put the organ in, when my Grandad were a lad.  
And I don't suppose God'll worry – he wouldn't make a fuss,  
As long as all the singing's meant for Him and not for us.  
We've had a clergy coming straight from college, full of summat new,  
From incense on the altar to posters in the pew,  
And I lets 'em all get on with it, 'cos all these fashions pass,  
And you'll still do the flowers, me dears, and I'll still clean the brass.  
I got this seat I always have, no draughts and nice and near,  
So I can hear the organ and see the vicar clear,  
And I tells God what's been happening, and what a week I've had  
And I thanks Him for the good times, and He helps me through the  
bad,  
'Cos all that really matters, as far as I can see  
Is that I, down here, remembers Him and He remembers me.

*Barbara Robinson*

*(First published in St.Nicholas' Church Chronicle, Kenilworth)*

### Churches Together Coffee Morning

**T**he coffee morning in the  
Parish Rooms in March  
was very successful, both  
as a fund raising event and as  
an enjoyable social gathering.  
Many thanks to all who gave  
their support in whatever way.  
The total raised was £758 to  
be divided between The Lingen  
Davies Children's Cancer  
Appeal and 'Harvest Help'  
water project.

*Mary James*





# Eat more fruit and vegetables

**H**ealthy eating includes eating *at least* five portions of fruit or vegetables each day. Five good reasons to eat plenty of 'fruit and veg' each day are as follows.

1. A lower chance of developing diseases due to 'furring up' (atheroma) of the blood vessels. This means less chance of developing such things as angina, a heart attack or a stroke.
2. A lower chance of developing some common cancers such as bowel and lung cancer.
3. They are rich in vitamins and minerals which are needed to keep healthy.
4. They have lots of fibre which help to keep the bowels healthy. Bowel problems such as constipation and diverticular disease are less likely to develop.
5. They are filling but are low in calories. So, they are ideal to keep the weight in control.

One study showed that, for people of the same age, there were about 25% (a quarter) less deaths in those who ate lots of fruit and vegetables compared to those who did not. This was mainly due to a reduction from three common causes of death in western society - heart disease, strokes and cancer. *In short, those who eat lots of 'fruit and veg' tend to be healthier and live longer.*



## How do fruit and vegetables prevent illness?

They are rich in vitamins and minerals which keep the body healthy. They also have chemicals called 'anti-oxidants' such as carotene which are thought to protect against damaging chemicals that get into the body. However, the exact ways in which they protect are not fully understood.

One portion of fruit or vegetables is roughly equivalent to one of the following:

- One large fruit such as an apple, pear, banana, orange or a large slice of melon or pineapple.
  - Two smaller fruits such as plums, kiwis, satsumas, clementines, etc.
  - One cup of small fruits such as grapes, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, etc.
  - Two large tablespoons of fruit salad, stewed or canned fruit. One tablespoon of dried fruit.
  - One glass of fresh fruit juice (150ml).
- A normal portion of any vegetable (about two tablespoons) or one desert bowl of salad.

## Some tips on how to increase fruit and vegetables in the diet

- Try some different types which have not been tried before. The variety of tastes and textures available may be surprising. Juices, frozen, canned and dried varieties all count.
- Try adding chopped bananas, apples or other fruit to breakfast cereals.
- Main meals should aim to include at least two different vegetables. Do not over boil vegetables. Steaming, stir-frying or lightly boiling are preferable to retain the nutrients.
- Always offer fruit or fruit juice to accompany meals.
- Try new recipes which include fruit. For example, some curries or stews include fruit such as dried apricots. Have fruit based puddings. Fruit with yoghurt is a common favourite.
- How about cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, dried apricots or other fruits as part of packed lunches? A banana sandwich is another lunch time idea.
- Fruit is great for snacks. Encourage children to snack with fruit rather than sweets.

Church Stretton Medical Centre

## The Borromini Ensemble

### Advance Notice

**O**n June 8<sup>th</sup> in St. James' Church, Cardington at 7.30pm, the Borromini Ensemble, directed by Richard Silk, presents another Baroque programme entitled 'London Music c1700', with works by not only famous composers like Handel, but also lesser-known ones living in London at the time – Francois Dieupart, J.C.Pepusch, Nicola Matteis, and our own 'local' composer William Croft, of Croft Castle.



After the concert there will be a complimentary glass of wine to launch our new CD 'Scherzi Musicali'. Tickets at Burway Books and on the door.

## The Church Stretton Branch of Save the Children.

**A** Soup and Apple Pie Lunch was organised by the local branch in the Silvester Horne Institute. This enjoyable event was well attended and is becoming a popular annual fund raising effort. A total of £231.65 was raised for Save the Children. The Committee would like to thank all who came for their generous support.

O E Cunnick

### Solutions to Crossword.

**Across** 1. Voter 4. Evaded 9. Library 10. Novel 11. Epee 12. Apricot 13. Fry 14. Slur 16. Tusk 18. Hoe 20. Offence 21. Once 24. Agora 25. Treacle 26. Softer 27. Dwell  
**Down** 4. Valued 2. Table 3. Road 5. Venerate 6. Devices 7. Dilate 8. Byway 14. Frontage 15. Lift off 17. Morass 18. Heats 19. Repeal 22. Niche 23. Send

# Occasional Advertisements

## DORRINGTON PLAYERS

present

### JEEVES & THE FEUDAL SPIRIT

P G Wodehouse's 1954 Novel Adapted for the Stage.  
PREMIERE: Thursday 9th May 2002 at 7.30 pm

#### GALA EVENING

Friday 10th May at 7.30  
You are invited to wear evening dress or pre-1950's costume

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To celebrate Adult Learners Week (11<sup>th</sup>- 17<sup>th</sup> May), the library will be highlighting the range of clubs and societies available in Church Stretton. We will also be holding a Hobby Coffee morning on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May from 10 -11.30 so people can drop in and browse round stands, displays and demonstrations. Everyone welcome! For more details please contact the library on 722535  
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Everyone who is interested in Mayfair Community Centre is welcome to the Methodist Church Hall on **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00 pm** for the Annual General Meeting of the Strettons Mayfair Trust. The Trust is responsible for running the centre. This year Mayfair has introduced a Membership Scheme in order to make the centre more responsive to community needs. Only members may vote at the AGM so apply for membership to the office at 44b Sandford Avenue.

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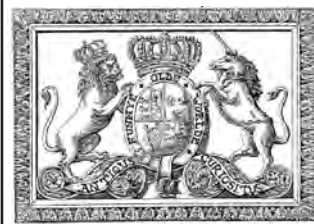
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Rates for **occasional advertisements** are £6 for 1 x 3.5 inch or £12 for 2 x 3.5 inch per month. Please send copy or text to the Advertising Manager with a cheque payable to 'Stretton Focus' by Noon on the first Monday of the previous month.