

Parish & Community Magazine

For the communities of Coed-y-Go, Llanyblodwel, Nantmawr,



Porth-y-Waen, Treflach, Trefonen and places in between and beyond

Produced by All Saints and St Michael's churches

Free of charge - please take one

Vol 35: No.2 March 2025

Border Group of Parishes

Llanyblodwel, Llanymynech, Morton & Trefonen



Rector: Currently vacant

Benefice Administrator: Helen Parish bordergroupadmin@hotmail.co.uk
01691 590025

Helen will be in the office (the church office in All Saints Trefonen) each Thursday, 9.30am–2.30pm. Callers are welcome, but please phone first to let her know you're coming.

Benefice website: borderparishes.org.uk
Webmaster: Jeff Court: itadmin@borderparishes.org.uk

See p.4 for the times of services at All Saints Trefonen and St Michael's Llanyblodwel this month.

Magazine

Editorial team:

Content and compilation: Janey Fisher

Facebook page and cover: Isobel Fisher

Proofreading: Martin Fisher

Invoicing of advertisers: Barry Evans

For all of the above, use: trefonenparishmagazine@gmail.com

The magazine can also be read online and downloaded as a pdf file (in full colour) at either borderparishes.org.uk or trefonen.org. The clipart in this magazine that appears on p.3 comes from Freepik.com, used by permission.

Note: We warmly welcome all your contributions, but please be aware that on occasion these may need to be edited for length or to ensure relevance to our readership. I will always consult with the author if any substantive changes are needed, but in these cases please note that the editor's decision is final. Also, please remember that if you do send photographs showing people for inclusion in the magazine (particularly where faces are visible) you need to have obtained their permission.

Facebook diary

Please remember to let us have information for the weekly Facebook diary by Friday evening the previous week - the diary goes from Sunday to Sunday and we post it on the Saturday generally. Anything that's in the magazine, we will extract and add to the diary, but changes to timings/venues and anything that wasn't ready in time to go in the magazine (including posters), please send to trefonenparishmagazine.com and we will include them.

From the Editor

Welcome to the month of March!

This month sees the return to Oswestry of the Wilfred Owen festival , organised by Chris Woods of trefonenlightsout.org,, and our cover photo shows the statue of Wilfred Owen in Cae Glas park. The festival events are listed on p.5, and Chris tells us about the festival on p.6, while the WI report back (p.8) on their open meeting in February, when one of the festival events, Shaun Higgins' *Strange Meetings*, had an early viewing. In his introduction to the festival Chris mentions the incredible story of *The Fiddle* by Natalie Cummins, and we have a book review of this on p.7.



On the back cover this month we've included a photograph taken at the Trefonen Carol service in December 2024 - we delayed publishing this until we had permission from the children's parents to do so. So this is a timely reminder that if you do send photographs for inclusion in the magazine you need to ask any recognisable figures in the photo (particularly where faces are shown) for their permission to do so. This is standard safeguarding procedure, and it prompted me to ask the safeguarding officers of our two churches to write something about safeguarding at All Saints and St Michaels (p.31).

This month's focus on wildlife consists of Harriet Carty's article on frogs (p.23), and an account by Barry Evans in our Garden Renovations series of the construction of the wonderful wildlife pond at Fron Ucha (p.44). See also the announcement of a meeting of the Tanat to Perry Community Wildlife Group (p.20).

On more spiritual matters, Rebecca Colpus introduces us to the Books of Amos and Micah (p.46), Peter Woollam provides Thought for the Month (p.28), while Malcolm Kirk, Churchwarden at All Saints, shares the story of the renovation of the bell and its housing (p.24) and Alec Gordon writes the first in a new occasional series on Rev. John Parker, who rebuilt St Michael's Llanyblodwel in the 19th century (p.35).

We also have our regular contributions from Ann Hindley (p.20), the Garden Club (p.28), Trefonen School (p.43), Bryn Offa School (p.41) and the Poetry Group (p.36), and various announcements of events for our diary. It looks like a busy month!

In this issue for the first time we have a Wordsearch (p.26), which contains words to be found in the magazine. I hope you like it - please let me know whether you'd like more puzzles in the magazine. I have some other ideas up my sleeve.

Janey Fisher

Church services in Trefonen and Llanyblodwel, March 2025

Date	All Saints Trefonen	St Michael's Llanyblodwel
2nd March	10.00am Holy Communion <i>Leader: Rev John Tranter with K Kimber</i>	11.00am Morning Worship <i>Leader: Abie Tudor</i>
5th March Ash Wednesday		7.00 pm Benefice Holy Communion Canon Robert Parsons with Rebecca Colpus
9th March	10.00am Morning Worship <i>Leader: K Kimber</i>	11.00am Morning Worship <i>Leader: Rebecca Colpus</i>
16th March	10.00am Morning Worship <i>Leader: Chris Kirk</i>	11.00am Holy Communion <i>Leader: Rev Adrian Bailey with Abie Tudor</i>
23rd March	10.00am Morning Worship <i>Leader: Peter Woollam</i>	11.00am Morning Worship <i>Leader: Linda Gladman</i>
30th March Mothering Sunday	No service at Trefonen	10.30am Benefice Service

Trefonen flower arrangers: 2nd March KK; 5th March to 13th April - Lent: no flowers

Principal church contacts:

Trefonen:

PCC Secretary: Helen Parish helen-parish1@hotmail.co.uk 01691 670979
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Llanyblodwel:

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Churchwardens: Roger Taylor roger@blodwell.com 07967 652217
 Alec Gordon alecgordon@btinternet.com 07970 544945
Safeguarding Abie Tudor abie.tudor@gmail.com 01691 830350
Bookings and events St.Michaels.Llanyblodwel@gmail.com

From the Registers

Funeral: January 16th, John Reginald Evans, service at All Saints followed by burial in Trefarclawdd cemetery

Wilfred Owen Festival

15th - 23rd March 2025



A series of events to commemorate and honour Wilfred Owen, soldier and war poet in Oswestry the town of his birth.

The festival will feature - Music, Drama, Poetry, Film & Talks.

Saturday 15th March - Folk & Fiddles

Folk music at its best - Oswestry Cricket Club - 7pm - £12

Wednesday 19th March - Film, Journey's End - 7.30pm - £8

Oswestry Film Society - Hermon Chapel

Thursday 20th March - Talk - The Fiddle

A talk by Author Natalie Cumming - Oswestry Parish Centre - 7pm - £3

Saturday 22nd March - Drama Double Bill

Strange Meetings & The Unknown Soldier - Hermon Chapel - 7pm- £12

Sunday 23rd March - Concert for Peace and Reconciliation

Classical Music Concert - Christ Church, Oswestry - 7.30pm - £15

For information and Ticket sales

Visit www.wilfredowenfestival.co.uk



Return of the Wilfred Owen Festival

March 2025 will see the return of the Wilfred Owen Festival to Oswestry. The catalyst for the revival was the incredibly generous offer from the maker of the Wilfred Owen violin and other associated instruments to donate them to the people of Oswestry and the town of the poet's birth. Steve Burnett, the renowned Edinburgh-based instrument maker, hand crafted these instruments from the limb of an old sycamore tree that still grows in the grounds of the former Craiglockhart Hospital in Edinburgh, where Wilfred Owen was treated for shellshock during WW1 and where he met fellow-soldier, poet and mentor Siegfried Sassoon. The instruments include: the Wilfred Owen Violin, the Siegfried Sassoon Violin, the Robert Graves Violin, the Maggie McBean Viola (named after the matron at Craiglockhart) and the Rivers & Brock Cello (named after the doctors who treated Owen whilst in hospital)

The Wilfred Owen Violin last played in Oswestry during the 2018 Centenary festival when it was played by actor and musician Thoren Ferguson at the unveiling of the Wilfred Owen statue in Cae Glas park. Now it will return to its new permanent home along with the other instruments and be handed over at an official event on the 15th March 2025 at Oswestry Guildhall. Festival organiser Chris Woods, who was also instrumental in getting the commissioning of the Wilfred Owen statue for the town of Oswestry, has been working with Steve Burnett to bring about this opportunity. He says: "This is a remarkably generous offer and I like Steve want to ensure this wonderful gift to the town is appreciated and used as an envoy to promote peace and reconciliation in these troubled times."

The festival will run from 15th March to the 23rd March 2025 and feature a series of events including music, poetry, drama, film, informative talks and more.

'Folk and Fiddles' at Oswestry Cricket Club on Saturday 15th March at 7.00pm is an evening of Folk Music by local talented singers, songwriters and musicians including performances with instruments from the Wilfred Owen String Quartet.

On Tuesday 18th March at 6.00pm in Oswestry Cae Glas Park there will be an informal commemoration of Wilfred Owen's birthday with the laying of a wreath at the statue of Wilfred Owen.

The festival in partnership with Oswestry Film Society will be showing the film *Journey's End* at the Hermon Chapel on Wednesday 19th March at 7.30pm.

On Thursday 20th at Oswestry Parish Centre, 7.00pm, there will be a talk by Natalie Cumming, the author of the book *The Fiddle* (see opposite), with its story of a family with their precious violin fleeing the Bolsheviks in Russia through the Nazi concentration camps to safety in the UK.

On Saturday 22nd March, 2.00pm, Oswestry Library are hosting Dave Andrews, local author of the book *Wilfred Owen Poet of Oswestry*, who will be giving a talk about Wilfred Owen's life. Details available from the library.

A double bill of drama is next on Saturday 22nd March, again at the Hermon Chapel at 7pm. Local actor and writer Shaun Higgins will portray Wilfred Owen in his play *Strange Meetings* which documents the later life of Owen. This is followed by the Edinburgh Fringe award-winning solo performance of actor and writer Ross Erickson in *The Unknown Soldier*. A stunning piece of work and not to be missed.

The final event of the festival is at 7.30pm on Sunday 23rd March at Christ Church, Oswestry, a classical music concert directed by Oswestry's Chris Symons and featuring the Wilfred Owen String Quartet of instruments. The music for the concert has been chosen to reflect the festival's general theme of Peace and Reconciliation and will include Elgar's glorious Piano Quintet of 1918, Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending*; other short works, played by various combinations, will reflect the same mood, including the hauntingly beautiful music by John Williams, *Schindlers List*, which will be performed using another very special violin, written about in the book *The Fiddle* by Natalie Cumming.

The festival has also secured funding for the delivery of educational workshops related to Wilfred Owen's poetry to several local primary schools. The festival has been supported by Oswestry Town Council, the Mary Hignett Bequest Fund and the Stonehouse Brewery

For tickets on all events and further information regarding the festival visit:
www.wilfredowenfestival.co.uk

Book Review: *The Fiddle* by Natalie Cumming

This is an amazing, and harrowing, true story, tracing a precious violin across landscapes devastated by war and terror, to safety and restoration in 21st century Britain. The fiddle left St Petersburg in the wake of the Russian Revolution, and travelled with the Levinsky family, who were Jewish, on foot to Odessa, where they took a ship to Britain. It went back to Germany with Rosa Levinsky to play in the Berlin Philharmonic during the 1930s but after *Kristallnacht* she was sent across Europe to Auschwitz, where the violin saved her life when she was forced to play in the women's orchestra there. Rosa survived and took the violin back to Britain with her, where her brother Israel played it round the country as part of an ENSA troupe entertaining the troops. Its most recent adventure was to be renovated at The Repair Shop on TV!

The author is Israel Levinsky's daughter. This is an extraordinary story and well worth reading, but not for the faint-hearted.



Trefonen WI



Trefonen WI was delighted to welcome visitors to our open evening in February. An audience from neighbouring villages and other local WIs joined us for a performance about Wilfred Owen entitled *Strange Meetings* by Oswestry playwright and actor, Shaun Higgins.

Wilfred Owen, undoubtedly the greatest World War I poet, was born and spent his early years in Oswestry. He was teaching English in France before enlisting in the army during the First World War.

Shaun's one-man performance took us through the final 15 months of the life of Wilfred Owen, beginning with his treatment for shell-shock at Craiglockhart Hospital, the meeting with the poet and writer, Siegfried Sassoon, which greatly influenced his writing, his return to France, and his final and fatal battle on the Western Front in November 1918.

Shaun studied Owen's poetry, letters and biographical accounts to bring to life for his audience the thoughts and inspirations of Wilfred Owen. His performance captured Owen's wry sense of humour, his outlook, and his style of language and revealed to us Owen's hidden strength, fragility and the untimely end to his huge creative potential.

It was a poignant and impressive performance and Shaun answered many questions from the audience before there was a relaxation in tension over refreshments, raffle and bric a brac stall.



Our next meeting is on Thursday 6th March at 7.00pm in Trefonen Village Hall when our speaker will be Natalie Bainbridge, Chair of the Oswestry in Bloom committee. Following great success last year, we are looking forward to an update on this year's event. Visitors and new members are always welcome. For further details please contact Victoria (v.gemmell@hotmail.co.uk).

Shaun Higgins is repeating his performance of *Strange Meetings* as part of the Wilfred Owen Festival in March, so if you missed it you have another chance to experience it then (see p.5 for details of the Festival events) - Ed.



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All Saints Church needs someone with nimble fingers....

... who could play our electric keyboard and possibly the organ. We enjoy singing and, at the moment, our Sunday morning worship is suffering because we have lost the services of our regular keyboard player through illness. Each service lasts about an hour when we typically have four or five hymns or songs. Do you play? Could you accompany us? If you are unfamiliar with church services, we would happily arrange for someone to sit next to you throughout to guide you. We could offer a small honorarium.

If you are interested and would like to talk about this wonderful opportunity to bring our music to life again, please contact (Mrs) Chris Kirk (Tel: 01691 688595; kirk.garden@btopenworld.com).



News from St Michael's Llanyblodwel

Cafe Blodwel will be on Wednesday 5th March 10.30am to 12.30pm. Come and join us for a chat, a coffee and maybe a cake or two.



Ash Wednesday: There will be a service at Llanyblodwel Church at 7.00pm with communion.

Mother's Day: The service at 10.30am will be a special Benefice service for all four churches at Llanyblodwel church. **Please note change of start time to 10.30am.**

Our social evenings will start again on Friday the 4th April at the church. Each month *First Friday* will have a different theme and subject; the first one is about Shawbury Helicopters. The speaker will be from RAF Shawbury, start time 7.30–8.00pm. It promises to be an interesting evening.

Looking ahead:

The Easter Services: There will be a service on Good Friday morning and also on Easter Sunday – more information in next month's magazine.

Church Cleaning: If anyone is willing to take a turn on the church cleaning rota (it will be only two to three times a year on a monthly basis), please telephone me on 01691 659906. If you can help, it would be very much appreciated.

Eirlys

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CHURCH OF
ST MICHAEL
LLANYBLODWEL



**Holy Communion
with disposition of ashes**

**On Ash Wednesday
5th March 2025 at 7 pm**



Entering into Lent together

St Michael's Llanyblodwel is planning a
Good Friday Meditation
On Friday 18th April, at 2:00 pm
using well known hymns plus
readings and choral pieces
from Stainer's music 'The
Crucifixion'.

We welcome any singers who
would like to join us.

Please contact Rebecca at
rebm29@outlook.com
for more details and choir practice
times.



COMMUNITY RESOURCE

Let's Talk Falls

Feeling less steady on your feet?

Community Resource offers a falls prevention session - Let's Talk Falls – to help reduce the risk of falling.

Monday 7th April, 10.30am – 1pm
Llanyblodwel & Porthywaen Memorial Institute, Oswestry, SY10 8LZ

Call **01743 360641** to book or
 Email healthevents@community-resource.org.uk



Community Resource is an operating name of the Community Council of Shropshire. A Company Limited by Guarantee 4652487 and a Registered Charity 1096779

Do you feel at risk of falling? Why not attend a free Let's Talk Falls session.

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A film and guidance of how to get up safely if you do fall.

A booklet of chair-based exercises for each participant and a demonstration of how to do them.

Information on recommended physical activity guidelines for older adults.

A short taster session in gentle exercise and information on suitable local and online exercise opportunities.



About us

Community Resource is a charity that is committed to making life better for people and communities facing challenges in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin. A donation towards the work of our charity would be greatly appreciated.

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Llanyblodwel prayer meeting and bible study

We meet on second and fourth Wednesday afternoons each month, 2.00-3:30pm at Sharneyford, Coopers Lane, Porth-y-Waen, SY10 8 LY.

All are invited whether you attend church or not.

Rebecca Colpus



The Community Café

Trefonen Village Hall

Tuesday mornings, 10.00-11.30am



A place to meet with friends and enjoy a cup of tea or freshly brewed coffee and homemade cakes. If you have never been before or are new to the area we would love to see you.

Foot Health Clinic on 4th March. Contact Lorraine on 07714 244359 to make an appointment.

Community Café rota:

Thank you to all who help out - the Café is about the Community!

NB - The Café opens at 10am. please be there at around 9.30am to set up

For queries, please contact Malcolm or Chris Kirk at kirk.garden@btopenworld.com or on 688595. If you are unable to do your turn, please arrange your own swap and change the copy of the rota at the cafe.

THANK YOU

Date	Set-up 9.30am Open 10am	10am to 11.30am	Close	Cakes
4th Feb	Val/Dawn/Michelle	Val/Dawn/Michelle	Val	Michelle/ Dawn
11th Feb	Jeremy/Nyria/Marilyn	Jeremy/Nyria/ Marilyn	Jeremy	Nyria/ Helen P
18th Feb	John/Diane/Helen F	John/Diane/Helen F	John	Diane
25th Feb	Malcolm/Chris/Carol	Malcolm/Chris/Carol	Malcolm	Chris/ Carol

Bible Introductions:

Amos and Micah – countrymen called by God

Does the phrase: ‘But let Justice roll on like a river and righteousness like an ever flowing stream!’ seem familiar? For fans of Agatha Christie’s Miss Marple, it should, as this is used in ‘Nemesis’ where Miss Marple is asked to seek justice for a murdered girl. The phrase comes from Amos, chapter 5 verse 24.



The cry for justice is a central theme for both prophets. In Micah, chapter 6 verse 8, we have the statement, ‘He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.’

So, a bit of background. Both men were born in the 8th century BCE, about 800 years before Jesus was born. Two hundred years earlier Solomon’s death resulted in a divided kingdom, an official of Solomon disputed the claim for the crown that Rehoboam, Solomon’s son had been given. The southern kingdom, called Judah, was based in Jerusalem, and ruled by Solomon’s’ descendants. The northern, and much larger area, was ruled by Jeroboam and then various others – frequently the kings were killed by their successors!

Amos and Micah came from the southern kingdom, Amos a hill shepherd and Micah from the plains, both countrymen living about 20 miles apart. They were both called to proclaim God’s judgment, especially on the northern nation whose kings had not followed the ways of God. Their focus was against the practices of idolatry including human sacrifice, the acceptance of violence and murder and massive injustice to the poor.

The nation had become very materialistic which went hand in hand with moral decline. Those who could, the rich with power and influence, oppressed the poor. The books are full of examples of unjust scales, bribery, selling the indebted into slavery, and crimes of violence. It’s not bedtime reading!

But both do have aspects of hope. They both prophesy the restoration of a Godly nation – people living happily under God’s law with love in their hearts – brought about by the presence and work of the Messiah. And in Micah this is forecast to be from a descendant of David – as chapter 5 verse 2 says: ‘But you Bethlehem, of the land of Judah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come to me, one who will be the ruler over your people.’ This is often read at carol services because it is a prophecy fulfilled by Jesus.

So what can we take today from these writings? Can we agree our time is one of materialism, injustice, violence and a turning away from belief in God?

But Jesus is our hope. As we move into Spring in this new year – about 2025 years after Jesus' birth, we can renew our trust in Him and work 'to act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God'.

Rebecca Colpus
Lay Reader

Prayer Chain

If you would like prayer for an immediate need, e.g. an emergency situation, you can ring any one of the people below. Your message will be passed to each person in the chain (who is available at the time) and we will pray for your need in complete confidence.



Betty Steele 652170
238561

Carol Pickering

Rita Mathias 657934

Chris Kirk 688595

Linda Gladman 07582 808588

Jill & Joan 656456

We have a small Pastoral Care team at All Saints Trefonen who are happy to offer prayer, a friendly visit, or practical support. If you, or someone you know, would welcome some help or support in this way, there is a Prayer/Visit box just inside the church (open daily between 10.00 and 4.00). Just write the details on one of the cards provided and pop inside the locked box. The box is checked at least weekly. Someone will then be in contact or we will pray for the need. Any queries, contact lindajgladman@btinternet.com

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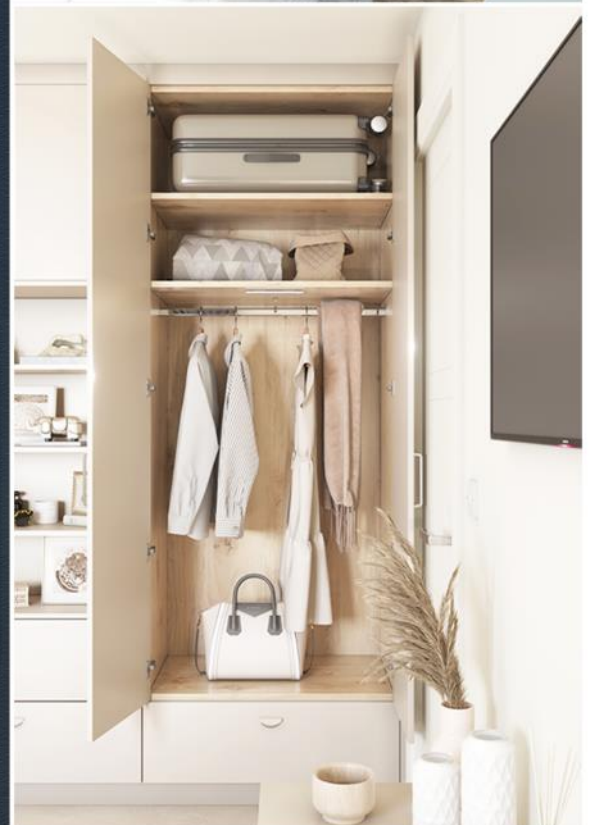
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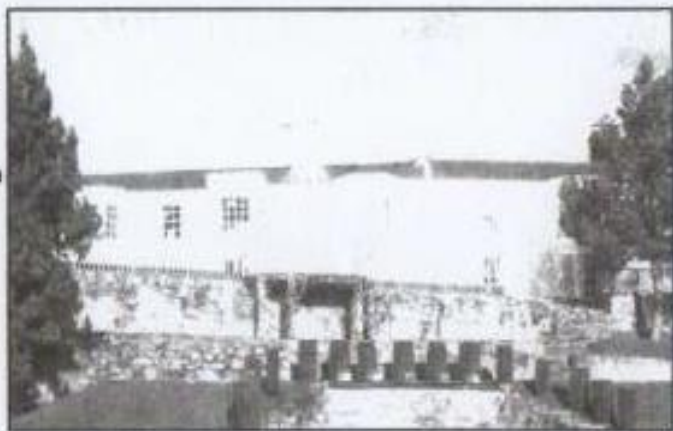
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Sofa Club

We continue this month looking at how dementia affects the senses.



With meals, dementia changes the whole relationship with food. Food can be a very social activity with time taken to enjoy the preparation, the smells, the love given and received when sharing a meal. As the journey moves on for someone living with dementia, they may find attending meals where other people are present difficult, conversations that crisscross the table become confusing to follow. Instead of joining in they just listen without contribution or find the metallic clanging of cutlery on the plate leaving them feeling isolated and unsure. Similarly with colour: white plates become a problem; if you serve a plate of food to someone with dementia and filling it with pale mashed potatoes or flat thin pieces of fish, they might not even realize there is any food on the plate at all. Eyes may need time to contrast and distinguish whether the food is on the plate or not before hunger is felt. One idea may be to change the colour of a plate, also the type of plate. Something like a pasta bowl is good – the rim might just be enough to stop the food from escaping. Mugs are much easier than a cup and saucer. Lastly cutlery: we've all been there chasing peas around with a fork and which way up to hold it. Well, for someone living with dementia it may be best to give the choice of a spoon. As churches we need to become much more aware of how small changes can make such a difference. As I repeat in every article, no two people are the same: what works for one may not for someone else.



Our next meeting is 20th March, all the meetings begin at 2:45pm and end at 4.00pm and are held at Pant Memorial Hall.

If you would like more information , please contact Lizzie (Churchwarden Morton) 07713083002.

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Another Month, Another Hole!

Making use of the weather interval- i.e. no high wind, snow, rain, ice etc., Ray decided to dig out the stump of yet another conifer which he felled last year! We don't have many left now and yes, for the sake of the planet we are replacing them all with smaller prettier trees. So, yet another hole appeared in the garden, giving my husband a new lease of life and a huge grin



(and me with a design solution to make it all look nice in the end). No pressure at all!



More excitement has now arrived in the invite from Hill Walk Helen to a planning meeting – yes it's already that time again. This year it is all a bit different though as of course Helen is loosening her ties - (if she can do it!) to the elected younger ones! Everyone is behind you and your team Julie and Dominic Cole!! So everyone watch this space and if you'd like to be part of the new era team, please don't be shy and remember all your ideas are welcome.

The Trefonen Arty Group has reconvened and we are well into lots of exciting projects although some of our other halves seem to think we attend Adult Play Group! HMM! I honestly think they must be totally jealous of our capacity to enjoy 'fiddling and sticking' and having a great morning trying new skills we didn't know we possessed! AND, sometimes we produce something that is nothing short of brilliant! Not to mention the camaraderie and coffee...



So, on that note I will go away and rescue my washing from the line as yes – it is raining!!



Ann Hindley

A meeting will be held of the Tanat to Perry Community Wildlife Group on Wednesday 12th March, 7.30pm at Morda Social Club, Weston Road, Morda, SY10 9NS, to present the results of the work of in previous years, and consider plans for 2025.

All welcome!!!

For more information, please see the Tanat to Perry pages on the Community Wildlife Groups website <https://www.shropscwgs.org.uk/tanat-to-perry-wildlife-group/>

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Time for Frogs!

March is the month for frog hunting – they can be seen and heard in ponds around the country with the male frogs the first to move to ponds to wait for the females to arrive. The males call to attract them and once the females have arrived the male will cling onto the female, wrapping around her with his fore limbs, using special ‘nuptial pads’ for extra grip. The female lays her spawn into the pond, the eggs of which are then immediately fertilised by the male. In March a glance into a pond may reward you with views of male and female frogs as well as developing frogspawn.



What has this got to do with churchyards and cemeteries? Very few burial grounds have ponds and they are rarely suitable places to install one, apart perhaps from a mini-pond in a Belfast sink or similar. They are however important places for amphibians generally, including frogs. Frogs move to ponds to spawn in the spring but spend much of the rest of their time on land and burial grounds provide excellent habitat for them. They can travel up to 500m away from a pond and will live terrestrially, feeding on slugs, snails and worms as well as catching flies or small moths with their sticky tongues. Frogs will hunt for food in grassland, garden areas, woodland and amongst grass tussocks and scrub. Many burial grounds contain some or all of these habitats in close proximity to each other, a mosaic of different places providing food and shelter depending on the time of year and the weather. Frogs have damp permeable skin and so cannot tolerate many of the chemicals that are used in gardens and farmland. Churchyards and cemeteries tend to be chemical free which also means they can be full of delicious invertebrates. The colour of frogs can be affected by their surroundings and you might find red or even yellow frogs in some places.

So, you will not find frogs in your local churchyard or cemetery in March, but look in garden ponds surrounding a burial ground and you may find a great many who come to the pond to breed then return for most of the year. Churchyards and cemeteries contain lots of frog-sized spaces, cracks and crevices in the ground, monuments such as chest tombs with gaps and holes or spaces beneath the roots of old trees. Many of these will be used by frogs for overwintering, as are churchyard walls, particularly drystone ones. You can help frogs, as well as other amphibians, by making more habitat for them. How about having some areas of summer meadow or tussocky, rough places round the back and out of sight. Could you pile up some deadwood in a shaded area? A compost heap is also a favourite. Both of these will gently rot down providing excellent shelter with a larder attached!

Harriet Carty

Diocesan Churchyard Environmental Advisor, harriet@cfga.org.uk,

www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

(individuals and groups in the diocese receive 20% members discount on all CfGA materials. Use the discount code **diomem22**)



The Church Bell at All Saints Trefonen

Over a decade ago, members of the church congregation began to wonder if the church bell would ever ring again. The problem then was it could only be rung by pulling on a long cord from within the entrance lobby, but this was connected to the bell's headstock which was clearly suffering from neglect and age (it dated from the 1820s, when the bell was hung in the Bell Cote at the time the original Welsh chapel was built).

Initial Investigations showed that the original headstock from which the bell was hung needed to be replaced and the bell cote possibly rebuilt, but this was from observing everything from ground level. To accurately determine the work required, access to the Bell Cote via scaffolding or a mobile tower would be necessary.

The initial opportunity arose shortly after the Pandemic, following a survey which required various repairs to the external stonework. In addition, the west wall in the upper room required replastering, and the large west window needed to be refixed. A mobile tower was hired by the contractors to do the work, which enabled church



members to take close up photographs and get a clear view of the Bell Cote itself. That inspection confirmed that the headstock holding the bell, and the stonework, did need some serious work if we wanted to hear the bell again and ensure its long-term future. Detailed quotes were obtained from the few specialist bell engineers in the country. Obtaining quotes was the easy bit as we found out, then finding stone masons was the hard bit and in fact it

took two years to find someone, who happened to live almost opposite the church. Initially, he was occupied with other work, including repairs to the church at Llanyblodwel. What was then needed was funds – unfortunately All Saints is not a listed building which makes securing any external funds very difficult. We were very lucky to receive a substantial bequest from the family of a previous Vicar of the church.

Last autumn, we finally received approval from the Diocese to proceed with the work. We had the bell company ready, an electrician (as the bell would be rung electronically since it was deemed not be suitable to ring the bell as originally done due to potential stresses on the Bell Cote), and our stonemason and scaffolders. The scaffolding was erected at the beginning of November and the bell company removed the bell on the 19th November. They confirmed that the bell was sound, originally cast at the main bell foundry then in England at Whitechapel London in

1819 prior to the chapel being completed. It went to Bridport in Dorset for refurbishment and mounting in a specialist stainless steel frame. After the bell was removed, the stonemason took nearly a month to repair significant stonework damage caused by the existing wrought-iron fixings of the headstock. Using some of the existing stonework and new stones with lime mortar as well as modern specialist adhesives, it was ready for the bell to be rehung and commissioned on the 20th December, in time to ring for the Christmas services.

The church bell now features many electronics, including a computer-controlled program. The bell is set to ring on the hour from 8am till 9pm each day. Also, there is a remote control that can be used to ring a calling bell for services and a tolling bell for funerals. Unfortunately, we don't have a ring for weddings, as this needs more than one bell, but we can adapt things if people want this.

After more than a decade, the bell in Trefonen is ringing once again. Now it operates with computer management instead of manual pulling, although human oversight is still required to ensure it functions properly. Hopefully, this means the bell will now be heard for at least another 100+ years.



We must thank the following: the Osman family for their generous bequest to enable the work to be done; Nicholson Engineering Ltd for the work to the bell; Steve Harris Stonemason; Noel Edwards Electrical Services; and Martin Scaffolding Services. Without any of these it would not have happened. Also thanks to our own Peter Woollam, as the Bell Adviser for Lichfield Diocese, in providing advice, helping with the works and guiding us through the church processes.

By the time you read this article, the scaffolding should have been removed, allowing you to both see and hear the bell.

Malcolm Kirk, Churchwarden

All Saints Church Electoral Roll

This year the All Saints church electoral roll must be completely renewed, so even if you are already on it you will need to complete a new form. These are available at the back of the church and should be returned there or to the electoral roll officer (Jean Reeves). The deadline for return is March 10th.

Thought for the Month

I wonder what the word 'March' conjures up in your mind. It's the name of the month, of course, which has its origin in 'Mars' – the Roman god of war. For the Romans, it was March rather than January which was the first month of the year. This gave rise to Sept, Oct, Nov and Dec as the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th months in their calendar.

Or maybe you have membership of a uniformed organisation somewhere in your past. On parade, you would march with your comrades as a means of getting from A to B, or sometimes just as a collective act of belonging and discipline.

And we live in the area sometimes called the Welsh Marches. This imprecisely defined border territory takes its name from the 13th century Middle English word *marche* (border region, frontier) which in turn comes from Old French – a reminder that French was for a long time the language of government following invasion by the Normans (1066 and all that). The Marches was a frontier society that existed for centuries. Hundreds of small castles were built by local Norman lords as assertions of power and defences against Welsh rebels. The area contains Britain's highest concentration of motte-and-bailey castles.

For Christians, March is a month that coincides with Lent. Another bit of etymology for you (that's *the study of the origins of words and how their meanings have changed over time*): Lent is an old English word meaning 'lengthen' and is observed in spring, when the days begin to get longer. It's a period when Christians remember that Jesus went into the desert for 40 days to fast and pray before beginning his work for God. We reflect on this by exercising personal self-discipline, often by giving something up.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday - 5th March this year. Some churches will hold a service where people will have ash smeared on their foreheads - the wearing of ashes was a sign of repentance in biblical times. The day before is Shrove Tuesday, *aka* Pancake Day, when traditionally any rich or fatty foods in the cupboard were eaten ahead of the ritual fasting of Lent.

So, what am I going to give up for Lent this year? To be honest, I don't attach much value to excluding chocolate or ice-cream from my diet. I'd much rather find something that could be of wider benefit. For a number of years recently, I've tried to give up getting angry. What do I mean by that? Perhaps you've occasionally had the experience of dialling a telephone helpline. You've waded through several tiers of automated menu choices – 'press 1 for X, press 2 for Y, etc, etc.' - and by the time you eventually hear a person's voice you're almost at boiling point. Or you're driving somewhere, another motorist 'cuts you up', and you're tempted to wave your fist at them (I hope you don't contemplate any other kind of hand gesture). Life throws no end of irritations at us, and so my personal challenge is always to remain calm under provocation.

If you don't like the sound of that, here's another suggestion. January 27th this year saw Holocaust Memorial Day fall on the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. There was a lot of TV coverage, and I was struck by one particular message that I heard from several speakers. The 'final solution' was reached after a period of years during which there were many small steps along the route to the death camps. Persecution increased bit-by-bit, and individual stages were often small enough to pass with little protest. A question for you: do you sometimes see, read or hear of behaviour that chips away at your sense of what's right or wrong, good or bad, decent or indecent, acceptable or unacceptable? It might be at home, in the street, on social media. How do you react? Have you ever thought that you could have said or done something to call it out but didn't? Are we at risk of letting things pass which, in a series of incremental changes, take our society to places where we feel uncomfortable?

The message I took from 27th January was that the opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference. The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.

There's a Bible story that gives us the expression 'passing by on the other side'. Does that apply to you? Why not try giving up indifference for Lent? After all, it's only for 40 days.

Peter Woollam

Worship leader at All Saints Trefonen

Border Benefice Lent Course

**An opportunity for people from our four parishes,
once a week during Lent, to reflect on
The Joy of the Gospel**



We shall reflect on Scripture together, share discussion and close with a short time of worship and prayer. You can attend either on a Monday at 7.00pm in Trefonen Church or on a Wednesday at 2.30 pm in Llanymynech Church Hall. Everyone is welcome; you don't have to be a regular church attender.

The course will start on Monday 10th March and Wednesday 12th March. With any queries, please ring 01691 679646.

St Philip & St James, Morton Lent Lunch

Morton will be holding their Lent lunch, on Thursday 27th March, at Pant Memorial Hall, at 12.15 pm. With a speaker who is yet to be confirmed, we will enjoy good company, soup and bread, cheese, biscuits and fruit.

'Lent gives us a time to examine our own lives, some strip away and sacrifice things whilst others commit to take something on.'

Are you doing any of these?

If you would like to attend, please contact Lizzie Lawrence (07713083002) or Jane Wood.

Wordsearch

In the grid there are 33 words, vertically and horizontally, left to right and right to left. All the words are included in this month's magazine - can you find them all? (Answers on p.50).

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G L B E L L Z X H O L E P T I
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Safeguarding in our community is everybody's responsibility

All Saints Church Trefonen's safeguarding officers are Jeanne Bradley and Victoria Gemmell and St Michael's Llanyblodwel's safeguarding officer is Abie Tudor. We are committed to ensuring that our community is a safe community. Like all of you we treasure our wonderful communities.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding includes safeguarding anyone who may be vulnerable and, as we are all potentially vulnerable at any one moment, this applies to us all. However the children of our community remain additionally vulnerable due to their reliance upon us as adults.

Safeguarding means protecting health, wellbeing and human rights; enabling us to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

The Church and Safeguarding

Churches should be safe places where you and your family can worship. We are horrified by some of the recent revelations of abuse within the Church of England and are therefore striving to build trusting and transparent relations within our communities.

You should be able to express your opinion about your faith, beliefs and lifestyle and feel comfortable to ask questions of leaders within our church. We want you to know that you can talk with us about anything, even if it feels awful or small. This might be about home, school or the Church of England community. We want to work with you to improve your trust and faith in our church.

There has been a lot of work going on in the background as safeguards become more stringent within the Church of England. At All Saints we have moved up to level two of three, making our church a safer place than it was one year ago, although we are aware this is an ongoing journey of improvement and understanding. We are glad to inform you that all the main leaders of the church have completed their safeguarding leadership training and many others in our church have completed safeguarding training to at least a foundation level. At St Michael's Llanyblodwel we are slightly behind: we have completed our foundation level training and are working towards leadership training which is to take place very soon.

The safeguarding handbook is available for anyone to read at the back of All Saints church in a big bright yellow folder or if you would prefer, we can forward you a copy electronically - just ask. *Promoting a Safer Environment and Culture at All Saints Trefonen* gives guidance on the following:

(continued on p.32)

- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the Church
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons
- Responding to those who may pose a present risk to others.

If you would like to know more or discuss any of the issues in this article, please contact us:

Jeanne Bradley (jeannemcarley@hotmail.co.uk),
 Victoria Gemmell (v.gemmell@hotmail.co.uk) at All Saints Trefonen;
 Abie Tudor (abie.tudor@gmail.com) at St Michael's Llanyblodwel

Flicks in the Sticks

On p.48, we have a table showing all the films that have been shown since January 2008. It's quite a list!

This month's film is *Scrapper* (2023), directed by Charlotte Regan and starring Harris Dickinson and Lola Campbell. This vibrant and inventive father-daughter comedy won a Grand Jury prize at the Sundance Festival. It follows Georgie, a resourceful 12-year-old girl who secretly lives alone in her flat on an East London estate following the death of her mother. Out of nowhere, her estranged father Jason arrives and demands to be part of her life.



Not surprisingly, Georgie is stubbornly resistant to Jason's efforts, and in the event, both Georgie and Jason find that they still have a lot of growing up to do.

Showing at Trefonen Village Hall

Saturday 22nd March

7.30pm

£5 at the door

If you want to see a trailer, visit the Arts Alive website and search for 'Trefonen'.

Prayer points for the Community



We pray

That as the season changes, open our eyes to the new life springing up all around us and give thanks

For the safe arrival of newborn babies – may they be welcomed with love and cherished by their parents and families

For mothers and those who care for us, and for those who feel rejected or unloved by others

Lord, accept these and all our prayers. *Amen*

Lord, give me the gift of wonder,
That rather than seek for more wonders,
I see the extraordinary
In that which is called the ordinary.
May I be aware of you in dwelling in all things
And your presence in everyone I meet.
Lord, be a light to my eyes, my mind, my heart,
That I may live in a wonder-full world,
And see and radiate your glory. *Amen*

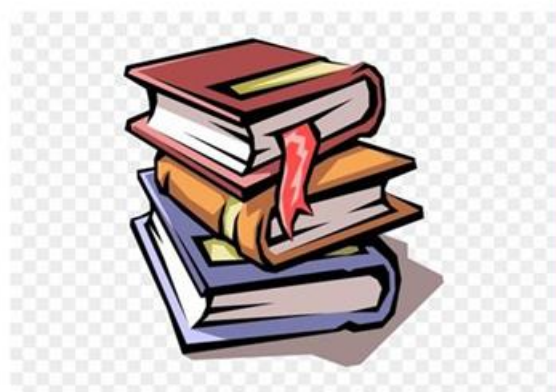
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Father to Son

The first in an occasional series on the life of the Revd. John Parker.

The Revd. John Parker, who rebuilt Llanyblodwel's parish church, St Michael the Archangel, lived in an age when eccentric individuality was not the drawback we see today. Parker had luck and good fortune on his side. His father, Thomas Netherton Parker, already a Worcestershire landowner, married Sarah Browne, heir of Sweeney Hall. Although John Parker was born in Shifnal, the family – an elder brother, Thomas, and two sisters, Mary and Elizabeth – moved to Sweeney in 1816, just at a time when the country faced economic crisis at the end of the Napoleonic Wars.



John's father, also named Thomas, saw his role as a landowner as paternalistic, urging other landowners to take on, as he had done, extra labourers as a mechanism for poor relief. Thomas, who served as Mayor of Oswestry, was a polymath. He produced a number of publications, including, in a time before central heating, *Suggestions for Warming and Ventilating the Houses of Parliament with Hot Water in Cast Iron Pipes*. Another of his publications was *Plans, Specifications, Estimates and Remarks on Cottages... for Bettering the Conditions of the Poor*.

Thomas was also a magistrate. He left a series of handwritten records of cases heard in the Petty Sessions. His inclination was to encourage those in dispute to settle their cases privately, without resort to the legal process.

Thomas's eldest son, also Thomas, predeceased him so that when the father died in 1848, the Sweeney estate passed to our John Parker. It seems clear that John Parker did more than inherit the estate to give him the means over the next 12 years to make the changes St Michael's that we know today; he also inherited a set of values that put social responsibility and the common good to the forefront. We are, today, the beneficiaries of the philanthropy and of the values passed from father to son.

(continued on p.36)

Much of this information has been drawn from Edward Parry's excellent book on John Parker's travels in Wales, *The Glories and the Wildness of North Wales*. The book is available from Siop Cwlwm, 33 Bailey Street, Oswestry, or on Amazon.

Alec Gordon

Poetry Group

Our theme was Old and Young, and we looked at poems by Seamus Heaney, Matraca Berg, Philip Higson, Billy Collins, Robert Hayden, Shel Silverstein, Dylan Thomas, Jenny Joseph, R.S. Thomas and Anthony Thwaite. We chose the poem 'The Little Boy and the Old Man' by Shel to share with you.

The Little Boy and the Old Man

By Shel Silverstein

Said the little boy, "Sometimes I drop my spoon."

Said the old man, "I do that too."

The little boy whispered, "I wet my pants."

"I do that too," laughed the little old man.

Said the little boy, "I often cry."

The old man nodded, "So do I."

"But worst of all," said the boy, "it seems

Grown-ups don't pay attention to me."

And he felt the warmth of a wrinkled old hand.

"I know what you mean," said the little old man.

Our next meeting is on 11th March at 2.30pm, where the theme will be Journeys. For more information contact Eiluned Parry (eprobinshill@gmail.com)..

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We look forward to seeing you soon

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Wednesday	5am-10pm
Thursday	5pm-11pm
Friday	3pm-11pm
Saturday	12pm-11pm
Sunday	12pm-8pm

FOOD SERVED:

Monday	N/A
Tuesday	N/A
Wednesday	N/A
Thursday	5pm-9pm
Friday	5pm-9pm
Saturday (Day)	12pm-3pm
(Evening)	5pm-9pm
Sunday	12am-4pm

Trefonen Garden Club

The cold weather is not stopping the appearance of our Spring essentials, growing forth and brightening our lengthening days. Of course, by the time we get to March the weather could and hopefully will change, but it does mean snowdrops and daffodils last longer in bloom.

Towards the beginning of February, the Shropshire Organic Society hold their Potato Fest, where several hundred people go each year to buy their potatoes, along with other garden supplies. You can buy just one potato of any given variety from a choice this year of some 39, down on last year, mainly because of the weather. Only being able to get one of the varieties I was after, I had to rethink my options.

I go for different salad varieties, growing them in sacks. The upside of this is that they come out much cleaner and the grandchildren get great pleasure, along with some sibling rivalry in helping to find them all. It's a good way to engage children with growing things, especially when they can eat what they have helped to harvest and experience the different flavours. Cherry tomatoes are another great one; as we all know they taste so much better than the shop-bought.

For our March meeting Rachel Strivens from the Shropshire Organic Society will be introducing us to growing potatoes in sacks along with general vegetable growing, and for all those interested there will be the opportunity to try growing a single potato in a sack at home have never grown vegetables before this is a good way to give it a go.

Finally, a plug for our annual plant sale in May. Donations to the plant sale would be very welcome of surplus plants after lifting and dividing them, or if you have extra young flower or vegetable plants to spare.



*Potatoes growing in plastic sacks.
©Thompson & Morgan: <https://www.thompson-morgan.com/how-to-grow-potatoes-in-bags>*

Chris Kirk

TREFONEN INDOOR BOWLING CLUB

We are looking for new members to join our friendly club.

Would you be interested?

**We meet at Trefonen Village Hall on Wednesday evenings at 7.15 until 9.15,
starting on 6th September 2023**

For further details contact Kath Barclay on 01691 828587 or just come along.

First evening free.





Trefonen and District
Garden Club

Potatoes and Other Vegetables

7:30 p.m. Thursday 20th March, Trefonen Village Hall SY10 9DY

The Thursday 20th March meeting is somewhat different. We're organising a Potato Growing competition for Members, Friends of the Garden Club and really anyone who wants to join in, where they will get given a particular Main Crop potato and special growing bag. Add £2 for Guests, free to Members (your choice of compost and other additives!) and we'll see who has grown the most potatoes when the bags are opened at the September meeting. Prizes will be awarded!

Shropshire Organic Gardeners' Rachel Strivens will be offering advice at the March evening - an opportunity to hear some wisdom on growing vegetables generally. An interesting and enjoyable evening even if you don't enter the competition!

Normal Admission Charges £3 and £4 still apply. Call 01691 583 012 for further information.

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Let your light shine.” (Matthew 5:16)

Into the forest we go - Learning, Growth, and Connection



As we enter the season of Lent, a time of reflection, preparation, and renewal, our children at Bryn Offa have been embracing these very themes through their Forest School experiences. Come rain or shine, every class has been stepping into the great outdoors, developing essential life skills such as teamwork, perseverance, and resilience while



exploring and learning about our local environment. From den building to problem-solving challenges, each session has provided hands-on learning, adventure, and a deep sense of connection to the natural world.

Lent encourages us to reflect on our responsibilities—not only to one another but also to God’s creation. As stewards of our planet, we teach our children that caring



for the earth is an act of faith. Through Forest School, they are learning to respect and protect the environment, understanding that their actions today will shape the world of tomorrow. Whether it’s planting trees, exploring local wildlife, or considering how to reduce waste, these experiences remind us all of our duty to be custodians of this beautiful world.

It’s often said, “There’s no WiFi in the forest, but the connection you find there is even better.” Time spent in nature is not just about education—it’s about well-being. Studies show that being among trees and in green spaces can boost the immune system, lower stress, and improve focus and mood. At a time when life moves so quickly, stepping into the natural world offers us all a chance to slow down, breathe deeply, and reset.



As we prepare our hearts and minds for Easter, may we all take inspiration from the children at Bryn Offa—finding moments of stillness, appreciating the beauty of creation, and recommitting ourselves to the care of God’s world.

**Wishing you a blessed and reflective Lent,
Celine Keleher, Headteacher, Bryn Offa CE Primary School**

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Trefonen School News



March is always a busy half term as there is World Book Day and Science Week. We discuss our favourite books and book characters and we look into the types of experiments we can do for our Science Fair during Science Week. This year the theme is 'Change and Adapt'.

We have had a sports coach in to deliver two multi-skills after school sessions a week.

Our Value of the Month is: FRIENDSHIP

We will be thinking about: Loyalty, Faithfulness, Empathy, Kindness, Helpfulness, Caring, Appreciation and Sharing.

Thought for the month: 'I cannot even imagine where I would be today were it not for the handful of friends who have given me a heart full of joy. Let's face it, friends make life a lot more fun' – Charles R Swindoll

Robins have been retelling our class story through maps and role play. In science we have been looking at animals that use camouflage, and in maths pupils have been counting and ordering numbers.

Nightingales have been learning phonics and writing in their diaries. They have also been comparing amounts of money in maths and practising their gymnastics in PE.

Wrens have been looking at forces and magnets in science and how to do fair tests in science, and learning about volcanoes in our English text, Escape from Pompeii.

Puffins have been creating collages in art, researching climate change on our iPads, and starting to learn how to play tennis.

Hawks have been making circuits in science and understanding the meaning of net zero and the greenhouse effect in geography. In English pupils have been debating 'Should the suffragettes have used violence'?

March dates

Thursday 6 th Mar	World Book Day and RotaKids book sale
Monday 10 th Mar	National Science Week
Thursday 13 th Mar	Science Fair
Friday 14 th Mar	Non uniform Day for Mothering Sunday wrap donations
Monday 17 th Mar	St Patrick's Day
Friday 21 st Mar	Red Nose Day
Monday 24 th Mar	Start of Big Walk and Wheel Challenge Week
Friday 28 th Mar	FoTS Mothering Sunday Wrap

Friends of Trefonen School (FoTS)

If you would like to get involved please contact the school on 01691 652960 or email friendsoftrefonenschool@gmail.com

School email: - parentcontact@trefonen.shropshire.sch.uk

School website www.trefonenschool.co.uk

Ms Dunleavy - Headteacher

Garden Renovations: Wildlife pond at Fron Ucha

It is often said that the biggest change that you can make to any garden is to introduce a pond or water feature.

Here at Fron Ucha we had lots of space and the opportunity to connect the new pond with a variety of other habitats – bog garden, hedges, long grass, stone wall – to maximise the wildlife benefit as well as looking pretty.

Our ethos is to repurpose everything we can, so we carefully planned how we were going to use the mountain of materials that would come out of the ground! Some stones and subsoil would be used to rebuild an eroded ‘Shropshire Hedge’ bank on the nearby boundary. The topsoil would fill new raised beds on the veg plot, with turf paths in between. The bulk of the subsoil would create a downhill embankment to merge the pond into its setting, and the rocks would be stacked by size for building retaining walls.

In summer 2023 we marked out a 40ft x 20ft oval at the edge of the wildflower meadow, hired a turf cutter and moved the turves. Using a rotavator to loosen the topsoil, the raised beds were filled, with kind help from Chris next door.

Hoping to hit clay, we dug a test trench across the excavation, which revealed some large rocks and stones and a seam of beautiful golden sand! Looking at the map, I should have guessed – we are very close to Sandrock Lane! So, an EPDM pond liner was ordered (Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer or EPDM is a synthetic rubber).

We are grateful to David Lloyd for bringing his JCB to scrape the main hole and compact the spoil into the downhill embankment – otherwise I would still be digging now! One of the rocks was so large that it had to be lifted out with the JCB; it is now a ‘garden feature’ and remains exactly where it was randomly put!



The pond was dug into the hillside and had a fall

of about a metre. To reduce the height of the ‘soil wall’ behind it, a ring-beam of railway sleepers was used to raise the downhill edge of the pond (meaning less digging), with the spoil embankment banked up to that height.

Essentially a wildlife pond should be saucer-shaped for wildlife to climb out, and no more than a metre deep in the centre. The different depths allow for the greatest variety of water plants and creatures. Bonesy, another



neighbour, kindly lent me a laser level, so that as I refined the shape of the hole it would end up dead level. It then took hours of rotavating, and barrowing of soil and small stones, to get the pond internal profile right. Similarly, the embankment was raked and stone -picked to grade it into its surroundings.

Finally, it was time for the liner. First the hole was padded with a layer of old carpet (although this will eventually rot) and a dense geotextile fleece was placed on top to prevent stones puncturing the rubber liner from below. Then Chris helped to lay the EPDM liner, with the rubber 'sandwich' then completed with a second layer of geotextile fleece to prevent damage from above (by herons, animals or humans). At this stage it was easy to place the lily baskets too.



After filling the pond with 950 litres of rainwater from our butts, and topping up with tap water, the 'liner sandwich' was trimmed and weighed down for the winter with planks. We then moved the Marsh Marigold baskets and other marginal plants from their 'nursery' in our small pre-existing garden pond, and sowed the embankment with a native wildflower seed mix and extra yellow rattle.

Spring 2024 saw two bog gardens dug at either end of the pond, lined with off-cuts of pond liner and old compost sacks. They were planted with yellow flag iris and reed mace, both grown from seed two years ago. They are very vigorous and will quickly choke a small pond, hence the need to constrain them whilst still appearing to be part of the pond area. We also planted Devil's Bit Scabious, Ragged Robin, Meadowsweet, Astilbes, Hostas and other semi-ornamentals.

As we had hired a turf cutter to make a flower border elsewhere in the garden, the turves were re-laid to hold down the liner edges instead of the planks. To ensure the turf didn't actually touch the water-soaked fleece and 'wick' the pondwater in the summer, we back-folded the EDPM liner onto the top layer of fleece.



The pile of sandstone became a dry-stone retaining wall, holding back the 'soil wall' uphill of the pond. This has created important overwintering crevices for amphibians and mini-beasts, whilst the built-in tree trunk bench also provides a place to sit and observe the wildlife. You can see the finished pond on the back cover of the magazine.

{continued on p.46}

Ponds bring so much into the garden, and they establish so quickly that even in the first season we were delighted by the dragonflies, damselflies, diving beetles, water boatmen, whirligigs, pond-skaters, amphibians, bats and birds that appeared. Our ecosystem was supercharged by the 'nursery' baskets already containing larvae that were completing their 2 or 3-year lifecycles. New ecosystems nevertheless still have to find their own balance. We had a population explosion of beetle larvae which matured into four types of diving beetles. They devoured many of the tadpoles from the spawn that I had moved from our garden pond – I guess that's why frogs lay so much!

Highlights included watching a large Emperor Dragonfly emerging on a plant stem one morning; one night I watched a dragonfly larva catch a 3-inch newt! And one warm evening I sat on the bench with a torch and a bat-detector watching Pipistrelle bats skimming the water surface for midges – what joy! And it was lovely to share our garden with around 60 villagers in August as a fundraiser for MNDA, where the dragonflies, damselflies and Whirligigs obligingly put on a great display!

So, if you can find a corner of your garden for a pond, I really encourage you to do it. Although ours was a large garden project, almost anyone can have a small version, and the rewards are great. Please do get in touch if you need any free advice.

Barry Evans

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Thu 10 04 08	Grow Your Own
Sat 16 08 08	The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep
Thu 09 10 08	The Worlds Fastest Indian
Sat 15 11 08	The Edge of Love
Sun 14 12 08	Arthurs Dyke (NOT AVAILABLE)
Sat 10 01 09	Mamma Mia!
Sat 21 02 09	Kinky Boots
Sat 14 03 09	Two Men Went To War
Sat 25 04 09	Miss Pettigrew Lives For A Day
Sat 19 09 09	Young @ Heart
Sat 21 11 09	Morris: A Life With Bells On
Sun 13 12 09	Cancelled
Sat 30 01 10	Easy Virtue
Sat 27 02 10	The Boat That Rocked
Sat 13 03 10	Mrs Caldicot's Cabbage War
Sat 18 09 10	The Blind Side
Sat 27 11 10	Robin Hood
Sat 09 04 11	Made in Dagenham
Sat 14 05 11	The Kings Speech
Sat 11 06 11	A Bunch of Amateurs (2008)
Sat 08 10 11	True Grit (2010)
Sat 14 01 12	A Private Function
Sat 11 02 12	Senna
Sat 21 04 12	Whisky Galore! (1949)
Sat 19 05 12	Oranges & Sunshine
Sat 15 09 12	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel
Sat 10 11 12	The Baker (Not Available)
Sat 19 01 13	Salmon Fishing In The Yemen
Sat 16 02 13	Tortoise in Love
Sat 16 03 13	Outside Bet





Sat 22 06 13	Quartet
Sat 12 10 13	Hyde Park on Hudson
Sat 16 11 13	Song for Marion
Sat 11 01 14	Hunky Dory
Sat 22 03 14	Philomena
Sat 03 05 14	Undertaking Betty
Sat 14 06 14	The Railway Man
Sat 27 09 14	The Grand Budapest Hotel
Sat 18 10 14	Saving Grace (NOT AVAILABLE AT PRESENT)
Sat 17 01 15	Jersey Boys
Sat 14 02 15	Belle
Sat 14 03 15	Mr. Turner
Sat 25 04 15	The Imitation Game
Sat 19 09 15	The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel
Sat 17 10 15	A Royal Night Out
Sat 21 11 15	Dark Horse: The Incredible True Story Of Dream Alliance
Sat 16 01 16	Mr Holmes
Sat 12 03 16	Suffragette
Sat 16 04 16	The Lady in the Van
Sat 18 06 16	A Walk in the Woods
Sat 17 09 16	Eddie the Eagle
Sat 15 10 16	Golden Years - Grand Theft OAP
Sat 19 11 16	Florence Foster Jenkins
Sat 14 01 17	My Feral Heart
Sat 25 03 17	A Street Cat Named Bob
Sat 29 04 17	I, Daniel Blake
Sat 16 09 17	Their Finest
Sat 07 10 17	Long Forgotten Fields
Sat 11 11 17	Churchill
Sat 13 01 18	Lad A Yorkshire Story
Sat 10 02 18	Viceroy's House
Sat 10 03 18	Victoria and Abdul
Sat 14 04 18	Paddington 2 (ON HOLD)

Sat 09 06 18	Goodbye Christopher Robin
Sat 22 09 18	The Post
Sat 20 10 18	Journey's End
Sat 17 11 18	The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society
Sat 09 02 19	Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again
Sat 23 03 19	The Wife
Sat 15 06 19	Finding Your Feet
Sat 14 09 19	Fishermans Friends
Sat 12 10 19	The Keeper
Sat 11 01 20	Yesterday
Sat 22 02 20	The Favourite
Sat 14 03 20	Red Joan
Sat 18 09 21	Off The Rails
Sat 16 10 21	Military Wives
Sat 20 11 21	Nomadland
Sat 30 04 22	No Time to Die
Sat 03 09 22	Downton Abbey - A New Era
Sat 22 10 22	The Phantom of the Open
Sat 19 11 22	Elvis (2022)
Sat 14 01 23	Belfast
Sat 18 02 23	Where the Crawdads Sing
Sat 18 03 23	Fishermans Friends - One and All
Sat 29 04 23	Mrs Harris Goes to Paris (2022)
Sat 17 06 23	Operation Mincemeat
Sat 16 09 23	This Beautiful Fantastic
Sat 07 10 23	A Man Called Otto
Sat 20 01 24	The Great Escaper (2023)
Sat 17 02 24	The Old Oak
Sat 16 03 24	The Miracle Club
Sat 20 04 24	One Life (2023)
Sat 15 06 24	Swede Caroline
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Sat 16 11 24	The Way
Sat 18 01 25	Keeping Mum



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Mobile Library

Every other Thursday, 9.05-9.40am at the Barley Mow Inn. Visits in March: 6th and 20th.



Answers to wordsearch: AMOS, BAT, BELL, BELL COTE, BOG, CAFÉ, CLUB, CONCERT, CRISIS, ECONOMIC, ENGINEER, FALLS, FESTIVAL, FROG, HALL, HOLE, INVITE, JOHN, MICAH, NEWT, OWEN, POETRY, POND, PRAY, ROBIN, ROLL, SAFEGUARDING, SCAFFOLDING, SOFA, SOIL, SWEENEY, SYCAMORE, WILFRED.

Local contacts

Jubilee Club	Alwena Martin	652791
Jubilee Field	K Kimber	679646
Llanyblodwel Parish Clerk	Amy Jones	llanyblodwelpc@gmail.com 829571
Llanyblodwel & Porth-y-Waen Village Hall Sec.	Bethan Cross	829368
Oswestry Rural (Trefonen) Parish Clerk	Kathryn Lloyd	07534 687663 clerk@oswestryrural-pc.gov.uk
Pre-School: ring 07817 641528	or Shropshire Council	01743 254452
Trefonen Garden Club	Chris Kirk	688595
Trefonen Indoor Bowling Club	Kath Barkley	828587
Trefonen School	Cathy Dunleavy (Head Teacher)	652960
Trefonen Village Hall bookings	Val Smout	valsmout@btinternet.com 657011
Trefonen Village Hall Caretaker	Clive & Kath Roberts	671360
Trefonen Village website	www.trefonen.org	
Trefonen WI	Gill Buckeridge	653172

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National Rail enquiries	03457 484950	Samaritans	116 123
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Deadline for copy for the magazine is the 10th of each month.

This is important!

It allows time for the editorial team to compile the contents, followed by printing in time for publication at a weekend towards the end of the previous month. The magazine can also be viewed online, usually a few days earlier, via either the Trefonen Village website (www.trefonen.org) or the Benefice website (www.borderparishes.org.uk).

Out and About



Above: The 'Christmas Jingles' singing at the Trefonen Carol service in December.

Below: The wonderful wildlife pond at Fron Ucha

