

# Llanfair Times

incorporating Lloyney News

December 2020

## Welcome to our 19th edition.

We might have hoped to be less locked-down since the last edition but sadly, no. The Clubs and Societies' activities are still some way off in the distance but we do have a lot of great contributions for your perusal. A little bit of local history, recipes, lock-down photos, opinions and, of course, more local quizzing from Rob Gwilt. So make a cuppa and settle down for a good read.....**and above all have a great Christmas!**

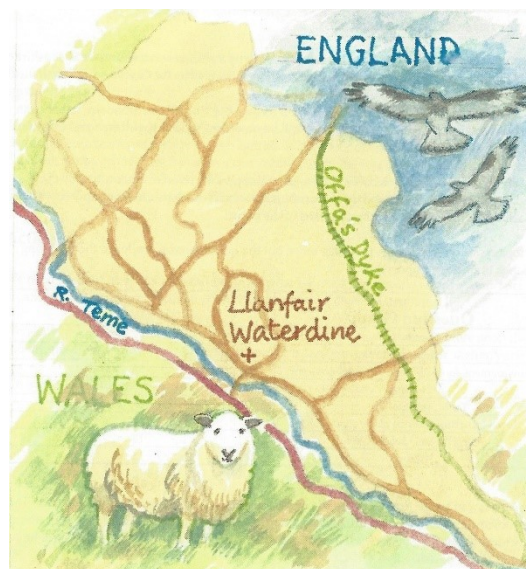
The copy deadline for March is February 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Llanfair Times Editorial team**

## A Virtual Christmas Auction



For many years our Christmas auction has been a popular event in the parish and a major fundraiser for St Mary's Church. The current restrictions prevent us from holding a live auction, but following our experience running a plant sale and a virtual produce stall we are sure it should be possible to have a Virtual Christmas Auction. The plant sale raised £302.90 and the produce stall £239.70, making a grand total of £542.60. Many thanks to all who bought plants and produce. We hope a Virtual Christmas Auction will add more to this total.



Any views expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and not Llanfair Waterdine Parish Council or the Editorial Team.

### Here is how the auction will work.

- 1) Through an e-mail people are invited to enter items into the auction. There would be a closing date and time for this process. People will be asked for a description of the item (up to 10 words long) with a "guide price". The guide price should be a reasonable estimate of the value of the item rounded up to the nearest pound. The guide price will not be treated as a reserve – all items will be sold without a reserve. The minimum guide price will be £1. Where we know e-mails are difficult, invitations to enter items will be sent out by post with a request to enter items by phone.
- 2) The items entered into the auction will be listed in categories (e.g. Food, Drink, Gifts, Books, etc.) and each item given a number.
- 3) A numbered list of items entered, along with the guide price, will be e-mailed (or posted) to all the people on the original list and bids invited. All bids must include the number of the item. There will be a closing date and time for bids, after which the bids will be scrutinised and the successful bidders informed by e-mail or telephone. They will be told how to pay and where they can access the item. Most will need to be collected, but delivery can be arranged. Payment will be by cash or cheque. Some items, such as baking, may be prepared after the bidding has closed and supplied to the successful bidder.....PTO
- 4) We anticipate receiving entries to auction during early December, with the auction

taking place over Christmas and the New Year. The opening and closing dates will be given in the e-mail.

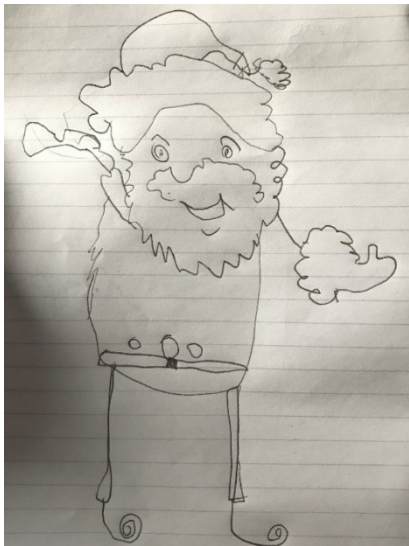
- 5) We reserve the right to turn down items offered for sale and unsold items will be either donated to charity or returned.

With good will and imagination we hope to organise a successful auction.

*Rob and Denise Taylor*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **We asked for your Lock Down pics of 2020**



**Erin got seasonally artistic.....**



**.....so did Kai**



**Lockdown babies. Emrys & Jude Thomas, were born on 2nd April to Jamie Thomas and Lucy Yates.....**



**....and Uncle Ludo had his own self- isolating pub –  
The Cuckoo's Nest.**



**Kathy at The Mill learned a skill with 'Mixy Mc. Mix Face'  
her new concrete mixer friend.....and achieved a perfectly  
flat garage floor....Wahoo!**





**Jane Thomas enjoyed  
a bit of restorative 'Forest bathing'**



**Gerard Chadwick snapped  
Llandishop after Lockdown ended in July**



**Rita & Mark Hughes carried on working with  
Zoom Wine Tastings.....**



**.....and devised a way to play cards with distant  
friends (call Rita for details)**

\*\*\*\*\*

## **In Conversation with..... Karen and Andy Wilding**

Karen and Andy live in Skyborry, one of Llanfair's hamlets, on the back road going to Knighton, and within walking distance of that great metropolis. They have lived at Brackenway for two years, with their lurcher, Blue, and their cat, Percy, a long-suffering moggie if ever there was one (who still needs to make clear, sometimes, that he was the household pet first, long before Blue was a twinkle in someone's eye).

We met via skype for me to find out a little more about their lives.

**RL:** How long have you been together and where did you meet?

**KW:** We met in 2005 and were married in 2008. I was working as a teacher. I had heard of this talented painter and decorator called Andy and asked him to do some work for me in my flat in Bridgnorth. I 'd been given his number by my brother-in-law's mum who worked for an estate agent and his was actually the last name on the list so I could easily have missed him!

**AW:** When the job was finished, I phoned Karen to drop the key off in person. She said that I could just pop it through the door but I was insistent that I must give it back to her in person!

**KW:** When Andy and I stood chatting in my kitchen we discovered that we had a shared love of the same books and in particular 'A Year in Provence'. However, I had a sabbatical planned and was going to travel to South America. This was only a month after we had met. I decided to keep to my plan and set off but not before Andy and I had discovered a mutual attraction! And it lasted: on my travels Andy came to meet me twice, once in Australia and once in Argentina, so things looked to be becoming fairly serious.

**RL:** Yes! So just fill me in on your careers. Your sabbatical was from teaching, Karen, wasn't it?

**KW:** Yes. I had taken a year out with the headteacher's blessing. However, jumping forward to after we were married in 2008, I became interested in developing my own business as a maths consultant.

**RL:** That's interesting to me, Karen, having, in the distant past, battled with sexism in maths teaching and maths learning. Were you brilliant at maths at school?

**KW:** No. I hated maths at school and failed my exams. The teaching was purely procedural and I wanted to understand it. I now know I wasn't taught actual maths, only rules and algorithms.

**RL:** Yes, that is sometimes a teacher's confidence issue, isn't it. I am sure things have changed now, but going back years, girls were less confident at maths and science but when encouraged were, of course,

just as good as boys. I guess that maths teaching is far better in general now?

**KW:** It's better but there's still a huge amount to do. Teachers are happier to seek support and there is more attention paid to teaching children how the maths works and the many ways we apply it in our lives. There's also an improvement in the expectation that both boys and girls can learn maths equally well. Have you seen 'Hidden Figures'?

**RL:** No, I haven't.

**KW:** It is an inspiring film about the three black American women who were responsible for the launching of the first spaceship. Very few people know their story or the fact that there were so many women achieving at such a high level in mathematics. There are still challenges with attitudes to gender today. The "I'm rubbish at maths, go and ask your Dad" is still too commonly heard by children, creating a belief that women are less able to learn maths, and it can even sound like something we're proud of. People joke about being 'useless' at maths. We wouldn't declare a lack of being able to read as a joke in front of our children, so why do it with maths?

**RL:** Yes, absolutely. So turning to you, Andy, what took you into painting and decorating?

**AW:** I had a brilliant dad, who taught me so many skills. I was lucky with that. Originally, I went to catering college and became a chef, working with my parents in Bridgnorth where they had a hotel. With Dad's help I acquired the skills that I needed and never looked back. I am doing a lot to the house. We've been working with a local builder to create an extension to the ground floor. Our nephew, Toby, is severely disabled, and is a wheelchair user, so it has been designed with him in mind, making it easier for my sister and brother-in-law to bring him to stay with us. I have also begun painting the 'terracotta' exterior of the house in an off-white, which feels more in-keeping with our neighbours' homes.

**KW:** We absolutely love living at Brackenway, with surely the best view in Llanfair, no, in Shropshire! And we have eight acres of land on the hillside, which we hope to re-wild.

**RL:** Sounds great. Could I just ask you about hobbies, or is your work also your hobby?





**KW:** I love cooking and reading but I originally did an art degree. I don't pursue art anymore. I would like to get back to that.

**RL:** And you Andy?

**AW:** I would love to take up golf again but where's the time? I love being outside and there are so many jobs for me to do here. Then, of course, there is taking care of my lovely wife.

**RL:** On that happy note I will bring our conversation to an end and thank you, on behalf of Llanfair Times, for allowing us to get to know you both a little more.

**KW and AW:** Thank you!

*Richard Lewis*

\*\*\*\*\*



## The History of Book Club

In 2006 I was attending a Parish Coffee morning and chatting to Marilyn Tippet who lived at Lloyney Mill, when the conversation turned to Book Clubs. Marilyn at the time was a joint editor with David Tollman of the "Llink Newsletter" (Llanfair and Lloyney News Information and Knowledge) the predecessor of the Llanfair Times. By the end of our conversation we had

agreed to run a Llink Book Club and set about recruiting members. Not that that was difficult with all our interested neighbours and we soon had a nucleus for our first meeting in February 2007.

Marilyn and I attended a seminar designed by Shrewsbury Libraries to help people run book clubs and we did acquire some useful ideas, not all of them put into effect. We borrow books on a monthly basis from the Shrewsbury Libraries and collect and return them to Bishop's Castle Library. Initially there was not a charge for this service, but in 2014 we were asked for £36.00 which between all our members was a very small fee to pay. It has since increased to the very moderate sum of £45.00.

We do not have a permanent venue for our meetings but take it in turn to host the meeting in our own homes. And we always have tea and cake! As well as discussing the current book we run a Charity Box, into which any unwanted books we have are put, and if anyone wishes to take one home the charge is £1.00 for a nominated charity which is democratically chosen yearly.

When the opportunity arises, we go to talks by authors, which have been held either in Ludlow or Bishop's Castle Libraries. We heard Phil Rickman speak of his spooky books; recently we listened to Kate London, (who lives in Shropshire, and is an ex police woman) read from her latest crime novel and answer questions. At Ludlow we listened to a new author, Jo Jackson, speak of her route to her first novel "Too Loud a Silence" and heard of her personal experiences of living in Cairo. We invited Nicola Beauman, founder of Persephone Books, to the Everest Hall to speak of her publishing venture on the publication of her 100<sup>th</sup> title and she arrived in fine style in her 1957 blue Morris Minor. Last year we invited Ali Ford to speak to us about the book she had just published "What Remains at the End" and to celebrate Christmas with us.

On a slightly different note we participated in a West Midlands Readers Network scheme; an author came to visit us and listened to us speaking about ourselves, then he went away and wrote a short story for a competition. We are not sure if it was his writing or our talking, but the story sank without trace!

We normally celebrate Christmas with a lunch, taking with us our favourite Christmas reading and enjoying listening to all the other readings with a glass of wine in our hands. For the November meeting we would normally choose a reading for Remembrance Day.

Book Club has been a vehicle for connecting with our neighbours and making friendships; as everyone has a say in the titles we choose, we read a very varied range of literature. Some books we have all enjoyed to our surprise, some have bored us, others have taken us to a higher plain of literature and thought. We have greatly enjoyed each other's hospitality, and appreciated the wide range and expertise of culinary skills, which are always eaten with gusto.

As to the future of the Book Club so much depends on how we climb out of the current situation.

**Helen Henchoz**

\*\*\*\*\*

## So, that's Farming?

As always, the sheep have been keeping us very busy at Upper Tregodfa—which some days feels like a blessing and other days in this challenging year, overwhelming. Especially as we have nearly doubled our flock since pre-Covid times! Our orphan lambs, Rabbit and Olive, are characterful as ever—and much bigger than they were back in May—along with the rest of this year's lambs. We've had a few sheep-related setbacks—scary brushes with *Pasteurella* in three of the lambs (who have, thankfully, miraculously in one case, recovered) and what seems a near-constant battle to get the ewes back in shape after a spring flu outbreak. But we're making progress, doing our best to care for these wonderful creatures, and learning along the way. Even years from now, when we feel like sheep experts (if we ever feel like sheep experts), we'll still have a lot to learn.

But I'm not the only one learning. I've taught the smallest lamb, Gladys, to jump up for treats like a dog (something I may come to regret as she gets bigger). And Byron is even working on teaching Rabbit to walk on a dog lead. So, as you can see, 2020 has taken a psychological toll on both of us. We've both gone sheep mad! But the lead-training will be useful

whenever we manage to get ourselves milking. Which—because of those terrible weeks in spring when Byron suffered with Covid—we missed this year. And which we'll be missing again next year, too, it turns out.

While those who keep sheep will have already introduced their tups to their ewes, we're giving our girls a year off. We've partly made the decision because our girls aren't as fat this year as we'd like them to be. But there's also another, happier reason we're skipping lambing in the spring.



We'll be bringing a different kind of new life into the world at lambing time. If you haven't seen me waddling around the Coop lately, I'm very excited to share that a little boy will be joining us at Upper Tregodfa come March/April time. With the health risks to pregnant women getting involved in lambing, and that spring baby timing, we thought it best to give all of the inhabitants of our little bit of Llanfair a break. Not that there'll really be a break for Byron and me. I'm already imagining the sleepless nights, the late-night feeds, cries for milk and cuddles. It all sounds very familiar... At least we got a lot of practice in with those orphan lambs living in our kitchen this spring. I certainly got a sense of what a great, patient, and loving dad Byron will be, if his sheep-parenting is any guide.

It feels good, if not strange, to have something to look forward to in these difficult times. All three of us (and

the sheep) wish you a peaceful, love and family-filled holiday season, in whatever form that may take this year. We're also sending wishes that we all have joyful things to look forward to on the other side of winter. New life. Good health. Long sunny days. And the opportunity to see each other again—and introduce you to this kiddo when he arrives.

**Ali Ford**

\*\*\*\*\*



We were hoping to be able to announce that Flicks would be restarting with a Christmas special showing of *The Sound of Music* but, unfortunately, we are still unable to let you know when Flicks may return to the Everest Hall.

However, just to remind you, as our regular audiences know, refreshments at Llanfair Flicks are always home-made and delicious and much appreciated, sometimes in keeping with the film when possible. We could have made Potato Peel Pie to accompany *The Guernsey Literary* and Potato Peel Pie but declined. We did however include Marmalade Sandwiches in our afternoon tea menu which was appropriate for *Paddington 2*, and Lasagne which complemented *The Italian Job*.

Our greatest success however were the Cornish Pasties made by Kathy and Don Szmidt for Fisherman's Friends, which outsold the delicious Fish Pies, all made by our wonderful team. Kathy's recipe is from *The Hairy Bikers' Cookbook*. See Recipes.

**Judith Tollman**



**Everest Hall**

The Trustees continue to run the lottery according to requirements and really appreciate your support. For the fortunate winners here are the latest results of the 100 Club Lottery.

The winners are as follows

- September No.66 (£20) No.62 (£10)
- October No. 72 (£20) No. 55 (£10)
- November No.146 (£20) No. 32 (£10)

If you have any queries please contact either Ann (01547 528477) or Mary (01547 510285) or any of the Everest Hall Trustees.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Notices

- The birth Of Maisie Simpson born October 26th in Knighton Hospital, sister to Henry and daughter to Jamie and Jamie.
- Alfie Hoyle, a former pupil of Beguildy Primary School, has qualified to study Law at Oxford Brooks University.
- Sam Hoyle has been selected for the Royal Navy National Football squad and will be competing in the Inter-Forces Tournament which is shown live on TV.
- Evelyn Taylor has qualified to study Veterinary Science at Keele University. Believed to be a first for Llanfair!

\*\*\*\*\*

## What's On



A recent lock down conversation with the lead singer from Darkside Andy Baker resulted in us setting a date for a return to Llanfair Hill for this Epic Pink Floyd tribute band . Many of you will have enjoyed the concert in 2012 , but we know a few were unable to attend, as it was arranged at relatively short notice . So for your Diaries please note **30th July 2022**. For now visit [www.darksidefloydshow.com](http://www.darksidefloydshow.com) and take a look at their new short film. **Andrew & Sharon Beavan**



## Take a moment



You hear a lot about Mindfulness these days. It is the practice of being in the 'here and now' and can be a very useful tool in difficult times. Its beauty is in its simplicity. By concentrating on your breath, leaving all thoughts aside, you stay in the present moment.

“ Breathing in I calm my body.”

“ Breathing out I smile.”

Thich Nhat Hanh

It is possible to be mindful in everyday tasks. When washing the dishes feel the hot, soapy water, look at the light on the water, the sparkle in the bubbles. Be glad you have hot water and dishes to wash and try not let your mind wander.

Or when walking in nature slow the pace right down. Look around at the detail and at the bigger picture but concentrate on what you are seeing, hearing and smelling. Stop. Take a deep breath. Be present. Let all other thoughts leave you.

It is completely normal for thoughts to pop up in your mind while trying to concentrate on your breath but instead of going with the thought try to observe it, like a passing train, and come back to your breath. The word practice is used because it does take practice to get the hang of it - like any skill- but once learnt it can be so calming.

There are many routes to Mindfulness: books such as 'The Power of Now' by Eckhart Tolle, 'The Art of Living' by Thich Nhat Hanh and 'Meditation and Mindfulness' by Andy Puddicombe. There are also online Apps like 'Headspace', 'Calm' and 'Insight Timer'. Yoga is a mindfulness practice. And there is Prayer.

So how about putting down the Llanfair Times. Close your eyes and breathe in ....1, 2, 3 .....and out 1, 2, 3 . Just for 3 minutes. Just for now.

*Jane Thomas*

\*\*\*\*\*

## The Stepping Stones Project... Have you heard of it?

Sounds like it could be an alcoholics' recovery group or a snappy name for a nursery school. To my shame, I had only vaguely heard of it and wasn't quite sure exactly what it was until recently.

Actually, it is neither of the above and is a wonderful example of what can be done when several different government bodies, charities and local communities work together and are all pointing in the same direction.

It is a local project, a conservation project, a restorative project, a project to promote thriving farms and high-quality food. All good stuff.

Under the umbrella of the National Trust, the idea is to join up two important landscapes we are all familiar with in the South Shropshire AONB: the Long Mynd and the Stiperstones. It is not some piddly little wildlife reserve—it is on a massive landscape scale and gloriously ambitious, but at the same time it's a very simple idea. It was even featured on BBC's Countryfile recently.

It is done with encouraging 'stepping stones' of different habitats, for example wildlife-rich hedgerows, broadleaved woodland, stream-side wetlands, high heathland and even roadside verges, all linking up with each other to form a huge wildlife corridor connecting the Stiperstones to the Long Mynd... a wildlife motorway.

It only works because everyone is on board—crucially, a group of farmers who call themselves the Upper Onny Farmers; the communities, including the Middle Marches Community Land Trust; the big guns, for example the NFU, DEFRA and Natural England and tons of local organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts and the Marches Meadows Group.

It is worth looking at the National Trust website, which explains a little more about this positive, proactive and very local project, which if successful will be used as a template nationally by future governments.



<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/carding-mill-valley-and-the-long-mynd/features/stepping-stones-project>

And for a cracking detailed talk on it (it lasts an hour and is given by local ecologist Peter Carty):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgWQ\\_lchWR4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgWQ_lchWR4)

Llanfair Waterdine is at the southernmost end of the AONB. What if we became a part of this project too, creating an even bigger 'stepping stone' in South Shropshire?

How good would that be?

*Janet Lewis*

\*\*\*\*\*

## A MEMORY OF ALAN JONES

Al lived at Cwm Collo for over 30 years and was a well known character in the area. He loved his particular valley and the countryside and the people of the Teme valley and was very happy in his country cottage attached to the farm of Cwm Collo.



Al originally came from near Stafford in the Black Country, where he developed a love of the countryside. He was brought up in a village near Stafford and remembered fondly the country around the Manifold Valley in the Peak district of Derbyshire. A landscape quite similar to the Teme and Clun Valley.

If Al put on his original accent and dialect, which he did from time to time, nobody around here would understand him.

As a young man Al joined The Royal Navy and served for 12 years. He started as a cadet and went on to become a petty officer. He really enjoyed the foreign travel. He sailed to the Far East, and to Australia and New Zealand. He was proud of his service to this country and received a small but valuable pension in his later years.

When he left the Navy, he returned to Stafford and worked in the motor trade as an engineer and fitter. During this time Al taught himself the guitar and started song writing and singing. Eventually he re-located to Oxford in the 1970's, and worked in a pub which belonged to Keith Moon of The Who. He remembers driving to London with Keith Moon in his Rolls Royce, where they handed out free champagne to the passers by in Oxford Street. It was the 1970's.

Whilst he was working at the pub, he was encouraged by the bass player of The Who to perform his songs in the clubs and pubs around Oxford. Once he went for an audition at a record company and found himself sitting next to a young David Bowie, who was also waiting for an audition. They both wished one another well, and Al was touched by Bowie's friendliness and generosity.

Some time in his middle age Al suffered a bad fall in an industrial accident and spent many months in hospital, and was for quite a long time in a wheelchair. This eventually led Al to seek a different way of life in the countryside, and he found himself living at Cwm Collo in the Teme Valley.

Al was a skilled carpenter and made many fixtures and fittings for customers. He was very proud of a fine porch he built at the house of J.R.R. Tolkien in Oxford. Al was a big fan of "Lord of The Rings", the books and the films. Al was a very talented person. He had a great singing voice, and could play the guitar very well. Also, he became an accomplished craftsman and joiner.

In his late middle age Al took to the trade of Picture Framing. He had his own workshop in the basement of Cwm Collo, and spent many happy years making frames, cutting mounts and glass for customers in and

around Knighton. He also continued to sing and perform in clubs and pubs in the area.

Al was a wonderful character, full of wit and warmth. He had a direct way of communicating with everybody. At one time Al was involved with the Samaritans, befriending by phone and was also a Quaker. He was also a very good, competitive Scrabble master.

When he became too disabled to manage the long staircase at Cwm Collo, Al moved to Keegan's Court residential home in Bishops Castle where he died recently.

**Bob Cunning**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Lockdown Pets

During Lockdown many people have found their companion animals a great source of comfort in this difficult time and really treasure the special relationship they have with their pets. I know I would have really struggled without mine.

Many people bought pets to help them and their children get through the three-month lockdown at the beginning of the year. Unfortunately, as lockdown has come to an end, they have found themselves unable to find the time and financial resources to continue to care for these pets. This has led to many animals being abandoned or given to shelters. Owners are finding themselves in the horrible position of suddenly losing their jobs and having to struggle to find money to keep their homes and feed themselves. Suddenly a bag of hay or dog food becomes a massive struggle, let alone a surprise vet's bill.

Rescue Centres are doing their best to cope with the number of animals coming to them, but a lot are having to shut their doors as they are just overwhelmed with the sheer numbers, at the same time as having to cope with a loss of donations as people struggle to cope financially. For example, my friend, who is involved in rescue, has found himself inundated with abandoned ferrets and parrots.

I have taken on a lot of animals this year: two rabbits, one of whom was pregnant so that turned into nine bunnies, four guinea pigs and a few pigeons and doves.



Two of the guinea pigs, Alice and Roselie, came from a lovely lady who had got them for her sons at the start of the first lockdown to try to keep everyone's spirits up. Once lockdown ended they no longer had the time or money to care properly for the animals, so I took them in to live with my piggies.

The two other guinea pigs I took in this year, Beast and Gambit, came to me in a horrible state, not wanted because of their colour. Black animals are the most abandoned and take the longest to rehome in rescue centres. Thankfully, both have fully recovered and are doing really well now and have learned how to popcorn. (When a guinea pig randomly jumps for joy while squeaking.)

A cheesy, but a goody:

"Saving one animal won't change the world but it will change the world for that animal."

**Katie Lane**

\*\*\*\*\*

## It's Recipe Time!

### Byron's Succulent Rosemary Squirrel

Give me a minute to sell you on squirrel...grey squirrel is a highly sustainable meat source, which is very low in fat and cholesterol and more importantly, is really delicious! We discovered just how delicious after one too many squirrels broke into the sheep feed, but if you're not confident shooting or trapping them



yourself, you can get squirrel cheaply from good online game suppliers.

### Ingredients

- 1 squirrel per person
- Chicken stock (enough to cover the squirrel in the pan, usually about 2 pints)
- Small glass of red wine (keep the rest of the bottle for drinking while cooking)
- 2 sprigs of rosemary
- 2 garlic cloves
- 20g butter
- Salt and pepper

### Method

1. First, prepare the squirrel. If you have sourced your own, it will need skinning and dressing (YouTube is a big help with this if you need tips) – if you have bought your squirrel from a shop, this is typically already done for you.
2. Portion the squirrel by cutting the front quarters off just under the front ‘armpit’ and the hindquarters just in front of the back legs. Split both down the middle, so you have 4 individual leg portions. Half the mid-section where the ribs end, and then split the 2 mid-section portions down the middle. This will leave you with 8 small portions.
3. Add the squirrel portions to a slow-cooker or cast-iron pan with lid (if you are using an Aga or similar).
4. Add chicken stock, 1 sprig of rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper. Also add the wine if so inclined (we are!). Ensure the squirrel is covered by the liquid.
5. Cook in the slow-cooker or simmering oven in an Aga for 1.5 hours (this will make the squirrel super tender).
6. Remove the squirrel from the pan with a slotted spoon and save the remaining cooking liquid for gravy.
7. Heat a frying pan on a high heat with butter and rosemary and add the squirrel portions.
8. Fry for a couple of minutes until lightly browned (this adds a really great flavour).
9. Remove from the heat and serve with roasted vegetables as you would chicken, with gravy made from the slow-cooker pan juices.

The recipe can also be done with sage in place of rosemary.

**Byron Ford**

## Peg’s Celebration Trifle

Mother was known as ‘Peg’ in the family and Roland, her elder brother, called this ‘Peg’s Don’t-Drive-After Pudd.’ and that was before the drink-drive law came in. It only occurred to me years later that not having that restriction enabled mother to measure the alcohol by the mug.

- 1 packet of trifle sponges (mother made a fatless sponge, I seem to remember)
- $\frac{3}{4}$  jar of raspberry jam
- $\frac{3}{4}$  mug of cream sherry. I use the Co-op’s own brand which comes in litre bottles. Buy Cream, not Pale Cream)
- $\frac{1}{4}$  mug of brandy
- 2 tins of raspberries or use frozen raspberries
- 1 pint of home-made custard or please see below
- $\frac{1}{2}$  pint of whipping cream
- 1 packet of ratafia or amaretti biscuits (available on the internet or in the Co-op near Christmas, or from the deli. in Presteigne or from Ludlow)
- 1 dessert spoonful of icing sugar
- 1 tablespoonful of flaked almonds (optional)

Halve the trifle sponges lengthways.

Liberally spread one half with raspberry jam and sandwich together.

Cut the sponges into three crossways and put in a large trifle bowl.

Mix the sherry and brandy in a jug.

Sprinkle the sherry-brandy mixture over the sponges. Push about 12 ratafia or amaretti biscuits in between the sponges.

Push the whole lot down with the back of a tablespoon to ensure that the sponges and biscuits begin to soak up every bit of alcohol.

Drain the two tins of raspberries or frozen raspberries and spread evenly on the sodden sponges.

Make the home-made custard or buy a carton of Madagascan vanilla custard from M & S if you are doing a special shop in Hereford or Shrewsbury. Put the custard onto the raspberries.

Put in the fridge for a couple of hours to allow custard to semi-set.

Whip the cream until stiff enough to stand in peaks, then add a dessert-spoonful of icing sugar and briefly whip again.

When custard is firmer and cold put the cream onto it. Spread the cream evenly so that no custard beneath can be seen.

Decorate the cream with ratafia or amaretti biscuits, working from the outside in, in circles and leaving no spaces.

'Fry' the flaked almonds in a dry pan for a minute or two until golden – but watch out because they can easily burn - and let them cool before sprinkling them on the biscuits.

Serve. Don't drive after.

*Richard Lewis*

## HAIRY BIKER CORNISH PASTIES

### For the Cornish pasty filling

450g potato, finely diced  
150g swede, finely diced  
150g onion, finely chopped  
300g beef skirt, finely chopped  
1tbsp plain flour  
40g butter

### For the pastry

450g plain flour  
2tsp baking powder  
1tsp salt  
125g unsalted butter  
2 egg yolks  
125ml cold water  
1 egg, beaten

1. To make the pastry: place the flour, baking powder, salt, butter and egg yolks into a food processor and blitz until the mixture forms crumbs. Slowly add water until a ball of pastry miraculously appears - you may not need all the water. Wrap the pastry in cling film and leave it to chill in the fridge for an hour.
2. Preheat the oven to 180°C (gas mark 4). Roll out the pastry to the thickness you like but be careful not to tear it. Using a dinner plate as a template, cut out six discs of pastry.
3. To prepare the Cornish pasty filling: season the vegetables separately with salt and black pepper. Put the beef into a bowl and mix with the flour and some salt and pepper.
4. Place some potatoes, swede, onions and beef on one half of a pastry circle leaving a gap round the edge. Dot with butter. Brush around the perimeter

of the pastry circle with the beaten egg, then fold the pastry over the vegetables and meat and seal firmly. Starting at one side, crimp the edges over to form a sealed d-shaped pasty. Brush the whole pasty with beaten egg, then make a steam hole in the centre with a sharp knife.

5. Repeat to make the other pasties. Put the pasties in the oven and cook for 50 mins until they are crispy and golden. Leave them to rest for 5-10 mins before eating.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Poets' Corner



## The Flat Pack Cupboard

My wife has bought a flat pack cupboard.  
It's standing in the hall,  
"When I come back from shopping" she said  
"I expect it to be on the wall!"

The package was enormous,  
She didn't mention that.  
I searched for the instructions  
But there were none inside the pack!

I began to get quite nervous  
Whatever could I do?  
I have no skills in woodwork,  
I didn't have a clue!

With screws and nails and plenty of glue  
I stuck the cupboard on the wall.  
But after I put the china in,



The cupboard began to fall!

Surrounded by the wreckage,  
I really needed a plan,  
So I found the Yellow Pages  
And found a carpentry man.

I told him of my trouble,  
And asked what he could do.  
“Don’t you worry sir” he said  
“I’ll soon fix that for you!”

The man that came was very quick,  
And soon the cupboard was on the wall.  
“I fixed it to the wall so well,”  
“That cupboard will never fall!”

“That cupboard” he said “will never move”  
As he handed me his bill.  
With shaking hands I opened it  
It made me feel quite ill!”

My wife came home from shopping,  
And was not best pleased at all,  
“You are a stupid man” she said,  
“You have put it on the wrong wall!”

“But never mind, with all your skills,  
You’re really on the ball  
You can quickly move it,  
It won’t take long at all”!!!

*Bob Bailey*

## Urban Quotidian

(A Brighton Carol)

To this once royal, ancient city  
there came a girl one winter’s night.  
Cold it was and hard her coming  
late the hour and fading light.  
Her journey made small recompense:  
her fare paid with her innocence.  
In Dulce Jubilo

No welcome hearth, no food to eat;  
at each retreat a closed door.  
Cheap clothing frail against the chill,  
her bed a dark, shop door-way floor.  
Her “Small change” mantra met with “No,”  
(she begged for food but craved for snow.)  
In Excelcis Deo

Now let us all our homage show  
In Dulce Jubilo

Snow - born not of childhood memories -  
they for her had long since ceased.  
The snow she craved came to her hand  
borne not by wind from out the east.  
Mixed with her blood, spread to her brain  
(calmed her troubled mind and eased her pain.)  
Venite Adoremus

Now let us all our homage show  
In Dulce Jubilo

Low in spirit, weak with hunger  
she faced the world alone and sad.  
Save for the unborn child she carried:  
in all the world, ‘twas all she had.  
In need of rest, she made her way;  
(next morning would be Christmas Day.)  
Veni, Emmanuel.

Now let us all our homage show  
In Dulce Jubilo

They found them in a car park - top floor,  
as close to heaven as she could aspire.  
Grim penthouse, this, to lay her baby:  
no caring hands - no warm attire.  
A broken glass to cut the cord;  
(a pizza box his cradle board.)  
Lully, Lully, Lully, Lullay.

Now let us all our homage pay  
In Dulce Jubilo.

In Dulce Jubilo.

*Dee Palmer*

## The Dog and the Duck

The black velvet weight across my feet  
Growls deep in his throat, dream hunting,  
The morning embarrassment forgotten.  
In the garden he had seen a duck  
On the fishpond; bobbing in the breeze.  
Expecting to jolt it into flight, he barked sharply,  
But it continued to bob, happily oblivious  
To the black menacing monster and his noise.  
Perplexed, Dan stood on the edge of the water  
Trying to paw the duck, but the net  
Prevented him and the bird bobbed away.  
Rushing to the other side of the pond  
The dog breathed deeply above the creature  
But received no scent.  
He sat down puzzled, watching the bird,  
No scent, no noise, no flapping wings.

In a desperate ploy he bounded to the fence  
Letting the duck know he was unconcerned,  
Then sneaked back to take it by surprise.  
No reaction. He sat and glared,  
Then found some other occupation.  
I had no heart to tell Dan it was a plastic decoy duck  
And hoped that his dreams were filled  
With quacking, splashing, wing-flapping birds  
And that their scent was deliciously smelling  
Honest to goodness duck.

*Helen Henchoz*



### A plug.....

In a previous edition of the LT there was an ad for our online conference for the [South Shropshire Climate Action Group](https://shropshireclimateaction.co.uk/). One hell of a mouth full, but it is what it says on the tin.

We held the conference online in September which was all recorded. Our website is an ongoing project being updated all the time with more sources of information and ideas added as we come across them. It looks pretty swanky but hopefully it will also be practical.... a go to place for inspiration. It is divided into our 3 broad themes of Transport, Energy and Buildings and Land and Bio-diversity.

<https://shropshireclimateaction.co.uk/> Please have a look. We are working towards coming up with a practical and very local plan for what needs to be done here in the Ludlow constituency if we have any hope of mitigating the effects of climate change and help make our communities more resilient. We obviously want to involve as many individuals, Parish councils and organisations as possible. Our MP Philip Dunne has been behind this from the beginning and, as the chair of the Environmental audit committee, plans to 'take it' to COP26 at the end of 2021. Indeed, this all arose from the mass lobby of Parliament back in March 2019 with a large input from all the Wildlife trusts and the Women's Institutes across Britain.

By concentrating on just our constituency it means we can concentrate on very local, specific issues. There is a very similarly named and indeed parallel group we

work with called the Shropshire Climate Action Partnership looking at the county as a whole.

<https://zerocarbonshropshire.org/>

*Janet Lewis*

\*\*\*\*\*

## St Mary's Church



The final paragraphs of the Church report for the last Llanfair Times talked of the visit to St Mary's of the Bishop of Hereford and the preparations for a music and flower festival in the church, with produce stalls in the churchyard. We are pleased to say that the Bishop and his wife did, indeed, lead a service on August 29<sup>th</sup> as part of his pilgrimage. However, another change in Government rules meant that all the work that had gone into the preparation of the fund-raising weekend came to nothing, when plans had to be abandoned due to the numbers allowed to meet inside and outside the church. Luckily, it proved possible to sell much of the produce from a 'socially spaced' garden and £542.60 was raised for the church. Thanks are due to all those who put much effort into this venture, especially Denise and Rob Taylor, undertaken in line with the Bishop of Hereford's 'Giving Day'.

Regular lay-led weekly services continued until the end of November, including an enjoyable, well-attended Harvest Service, when many traditional Harvest hymns were led by a small choir, allowed to sing in accordance with the rules. Unfortunately, churches were closed again for everything except Private Prayer throughout November. The rules were relaxed for Remembrance Sunday and our service was held outside. It was a most moving occasion, especially with the displays of poppies outside the church and the mist and slight drizzle adding to the atmosphere. Robert Taylor led the service and Richard Lewis played the organ, including the 'Last Post' after the silence. Robert Gwilt recited the names of the fallen of the parish and Allan Henchoz read 'They shall grow not old' (actually verse 4 of 'For the Fallen')



by Laurence Binyon) and, later in the service, the Kohima Epitaph. Mark Hughes, Chairman of the Llanfair Waterdine Parish Council, read the Old Testament lesson, Micah 4: 1-5: “.....Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.....”. 24 people attended the service and a collection of £70.50 was taken, to be forwarded to the Royal British Legion via its Knighton branch.

‘Live’ Visitations (the Presentation and Admission of Church Wardens), due to be led in November by the Bishop of Hereford, were cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions and the service for our Benefice was moved to Bucknell. More changes in the rules meant that Rev. Annie finally led the ‘swearing in’ by ‘Zoom’ on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

Our November ‘Compline’ Service was held by ‘Zoom’ on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>.

We are working on the assumption that the church will open again in December. Services on the first three Sundays will be as normal and there will be a ‘Reflection’ in the church on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> at 6.00pm. We will hold a Carol Service on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> at 7.00pm., which will benefit the ‘Samaritans’ as usual, although we are unable to have refreshments in the church afterwards. We will, however, have a small choir to lead the singing and hopefully we may be able to sing outside at the end, depending on the weather. There will be a Morning Service with Communion, led by Rev. Annie, on Christmas Day at 10.30am. Children are very welcome on this day as it is not felt possible to hold the normal Christmas Eve Crib Service this year, due to the spacing and movement restrictions. There will be no Evensong on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup>. Details of all services can be found on the ‘A Church Near You’ website. ([www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)).

2020 has been a tremendously difficult year for everyone and all that we do, or attempt to do, is still governed by the battle to decrease the spread of the Covid 19 virus. Hearts have been lifted by the recent news of a possible vaccine, but care will need to be taken for many months to come. All involved in the church and in the parish have worked hard to support vulnerable, isolated, members of our community and, when allowed, church services have been held with much work being undertaken behind the scenes to

keep visitors safe for regular worship and for private prayer.

On behalf of Robert and me, our Deputy Wardens, Mary and Richard, Ruth, our PCC secretary, David, our treasurer, and the PCC, thank you for your presence and support during the year. St Mary’s has three new members of the PCC and the church Electoral Roll has grown substantially. Many Church in Wales members have attended our services during times of Welsh ‘lockdown’ and continue to come to the monthly ‘Compline’ and ‘Reflection’ services. Those who have joined the ‘Parish Giving Scheme’ have raised over £3000 this year by taking out a regular monthly direct debit. This money has given the church a regular income at a time when the doors have been shut. However, church income has been severely affected by the virus with no ‘Wakes’, ‘Coffee Morning’, ‘Duck Race’ or ‘live’ ‘Auction’. Please consider whether you could enrol in the ‘Parish Giving Scheme’ or give in any other way. £1 per month gives £12 per year. If 12 people did this £144 would be raised effortlessly. If 12 people gave £5 per month, this would result in £720 per annum. Gift Aid can be added to these figures with the tick of a box. Please consider that the church is there for us all and most of us will use it at some time in our lives. Information and application forms for Parish Giving are in the church. We look forward to welcoming you to our varied range of services next year and wish you all a very Happy Advent, Happy Christmas, Season’s Greetings and a very safe and peaceful New Year.

*Graham Trew Churchwarden*

\*\*\*\*\*

# Llanfair Rounders



## **'IF IN DOUBT, NOT OUT!'**

Just over 40 years ago something very big was happening to the women in Radnorshire and its neighbouring communities over the border in Shropshire. We began playing rounders! Indeed, such was the impact on our lives of this humble sport that, at times, it came close to the sentiment always associated with the legendary Bill Shankly that it was not a matter of life or death; it was much more serious than that. So how did it all begin?

The actual start date has faded from memory but it would have been 1977 or 78. Powys-Radnor Women's Institute had decided to establish a countywide tournament, comprising two leagues covering each half of the county and culminating in a grand final between the winners of each half. It's quite possible that the aim was to attract younger members to the WI and to shake up the stereotypical impression of it being just for older and more sedate ladies. You certainly wouldn't have called the rounders teams that, especially when the occasional scuffed knee, plenty of sweat and wild excitement were involved. And so the Llanfair Waterdine Ladies' Rounders Team was established and it was great fun from the word go.

For those not in the know, the team comprised nine players and it is fair to say that we never had any shortage of willing participants. Sometimes family commitments or even injuries (yes, it's not just footballers who get these) prevented players from being able to take part as much as they would have liked, but we did manage to establish the core team seen in the photograph: Mervene Moss, Ann Evans, Dilys Waters, Beryl Evans, Marjorie Price, Marilyn Davies, Vi Dodd, Angie Davies and Suzanne Davies.



We got into the habit of practising every week – Tuesday evenings I seem to remember – on fields belonging both to Teme Cottage and Lloyney House. We were lucky to have such good, flat places to play on and were fortunate that the hay harvest was either over or not being carried out that year when we needed to practise. The only impediment would be rain; even a small shower earlier in the day, making it too dangerous to run swiftly and at sharp angles around the bases, meant the dreaded phone call that the rounders was off. As well as total enthusiasm within the team we had another lethal weapon - the local boys, mostly teenagers, who liked coming down to play against us in the practices and who really helped us to hone our batting and fielding skills. Standing on first base, my position, could be pretty scary whenever a fired-up left-hander stepped into the batting square. It certainly made me brave!

The opposing teams were all very good and, you got the feeling, just as passionate about the game as we were. Naturally they were all rivals but also became firm friends as we frequently met up with them for the league matches either on their ground or at home for us in Lloyney. The competition was quite wide and included teams from Felindre, Knighton, Llangunllo, Gladestry, Llanbadarn, Llanbister, Llanddewi and Crossgates. (Apologies if there were others as well.) We also had 'friendly' matches with the teams who were close to home and managed to organise a few with others over the border including Chapel Lawn, Lydbury North and Bettws. There was always something unsettling about playing these because they were all very good and more of an unknown quantity.

All sports need good refs or, in the case of rounders, good umpires. Most of the ones we encountered were very good, but often had their own little quirks such

as the memorable mantra of one umpire: 'If in doubt, not out!'. Llanfair was lucky to have dependable umpires willing to give up their time to accompany us to the competitive matches. Bernard Dodd, who umpired the majority of our league matches, and at the sports we entered, always displayed nerves of steel, based on his deep understanding of the rules. Ann Harroway did her fair share of umpiring in the league games and always displayed a keen sense of fair play. They also demonstrated great patience when, as often happened, the rounders ball got lost in the hedge, holding up play. This was not a job for the faint-hearted because competition was fierce and was sometimes even fiercer between rival umpires! One such chap informed us that we were playing on his field and they were, therefore, his rules and that if we didn't like them we could leave. I have not dared quote what he actually said. Bern and Ann, always sure-footed with the rules, would have remained calm!

I do remember Llanfair winning many matches most years but our greatest triumph occurred in July, 1988 when we were crowned champions of Powys-Radnor having beaten the winners of the other league. We probably celebrated with a meal at the Lloyney Inn which is where we had our 'annual dinner' each year whether we won or not. At some point success went to our heads and we upgraded our plain red team t-shirts by adding a logo of our own design. We even had designer hoodies made, long before they became a symbol of aggression. Not content with just playing the league matches, we began entering many of the local summer sports where the rounders competition took on a life of its own. It certainly increased attendance numbers with whole families coming along to support their local village team. These events could take place not far from home, such as at Dolfor, Llanbadarn, Llanbister or Llanddewi, or at seemingly distant locations like Llidiartywaen in Montgomeryshire, not an area the Llanfair team was familiar with. The latter show and sports is particularly memorable because a crunch match against Llanbister was delayed when their star player, Iris, slipped off between matches to enter the 'Catch the Sheep' competition – usually won by men, but in which she swept all before her and brought the terrified sheep home to victory on her shoulders, probably before going on to slaughter the team who had been waiting patiently to play against her.

We couldn't have done so well, or had so much freedom to take part, if our families had not been supportive and, before too long, the time came for the men to join in the fun. Mixed rounders team competitions were introduced at the sports – don't worry, they never infiltrated the WI league matches – which took the game to the next level. The men were usually brilliant at batting and throwing and could often run at alarming speeds, but they were a bit shaky where the rules were concerned. One such event took place, possibly at the now famous Llidiartywaen. For some reason we were short of Llanfair women and men players that day and a few of us made up a team with Llangunllo. We needed men, so the obvious place to look was 'The Greyhound'! I know they weren't aware of what was about to happen, because we dragged them out of the pub, dressed naturally in their Saturday-afternoon-at-The Greyhound clothes, which included cuban-heeled boots and flares, and whisked them out of their comfort zone and up to the sports. An awful lot of rule-explaining had to take place THROUGHOUT each game, but it certainly worked because we won! I expect the celebrations continued at 'The Greyhound' long into the night. They may even have thought it was all a dream.

The link-up with Llangunllo went on to provide the opportunity for five of the Llanfair women players to take part in the Women's Institute 1986 Wales Inter-Federation Sports held on the university playing fields at Aberystwyth. Our team of Vi, Mervene, Ann (Moss), Marilyn and Beryl (from Llanfair) and Rosie Middleton, Claire Sharrock, Linda Hardwick and Gaynor Rees (from Llangunllo) went on to win this All-Wales tournament, beating Montgomeryshire champions, Berriew, in the final. It was a great match and a fine achievement.

We continued to play rounders well into the 1980s, probably until the competition ended at WI league level and when interest began to dwindle at the sports. It may have been a brief chapter in our lives but it remains both memorable and important as a time when new and lasting friendships were made and community spirit across the county became stronger. Above all, it was brilliant fun always.

*Beryl Evans*

\*\*\*\*\*



## Hedgehog Lovers Unite

I suppose that we all have a latent childhood fascination with hedgehogs, our only spiny mammal in the U K, whose closest relatives are the shrew and the mole. Sadly, hogs are now classified as 'vulnerable to extinction'.

Why is there a sudden interest in the spiky gardeners' friend? Is it because gardeners do not want to lose such a useful companion, which has been heard noisily making the most of a juicy nocturnal slug supper? The sad truth is that hedgehog numbers have declined by 50% in the last twenty years and Hugh Warwick, in his recent publication 'The Hedgehog Book', says that it is not unreasonable to suppose that hedgehogs have declined from 90 – 95% since World War Two. Apart from our not wanting to lose such an unusual, cute and indigenous little friend we need their help: their reduction in number must account in part for the enormous increase in slugs, at least in my garden!

We might think that the decline in hedgehog numbers is simply to do with road deaths. But when did you last see a dead hedgehog on the road? It used to be a sad but common sight but is now far less frequent. Road deaths are not the only reason for rare sightings, however. When I bought a puppy almost eight years ago I ensured that she could not get out of the garden, which necessitated putting wire netting on the gates all the way to the ground. Unfortunately, this meant that hedgehogs couldn't get in from the lane. (This was rectified.) Walls, fences and gates, therefore, contribute to hedgehogs being unable to find safety in gardens. In urban areas the hedgehog-conscious have made holes in their adjoining fences and walls so that hedgehogs, which can roam for over a mile each night, can move through the gardens freely. Nationally, the division of our landscape, the concreting of more and more of our gardens and our own needs for privacy have all made hedgehog survival more difficult.

Our own churchyard is being developed to become a hedgehog haven. A hedgehog shelter has recently been purchased and is in place. There are water bowls for the hogs and a supply of dog food will be available for cold autumn and spring nights. On the subject of hedgehog shelters, Emily, our 12 year old God-child

who lives in Knucklas, took on a hedgehog project over half-term, building a substantial and safe hedgehog house, which, like the one purchased for the churchyard, cannot be entered by foxes or badgers. I will hand over for her to explain how she went about the house's construction but before I do, I will give you details of the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, as it is fairly local to us. Being a member costs £7.50p per year and for that you receive all sorts of information and their brochure is full or interesting, inexpensive and unusual Christmas and birthday presents!

**British Hedgehog Preservation Society**  
**Hedgehog House, Dhustone, Ludlow SY8 3PL 01584 890 801**



**Hedgehog Shelter with swivel roof**

The Hedgehog Book, which I mentioned earlier, is available from Amazon.

Here is Emily.....

Just before lockdown, my dad and I decided that we were going to use our time to make a hedgehog house for our garden. We were able to get some unwanted timber from a local builders' merchants and we made the plans to fit the dimensions of the wood that we had. We looked up some plans and found out that the most important things are:

- a) Having a bedroom that is roughly 40cm square
- b) Having a hallway (entrance corridor) in order to stop predators entering and
- c) A waterproof lid.

My dad tweeted a place called 'The Hedgehog Cabin' to find out if there was anything that we'd missed out and they replied, saying that we needed to remember some holes for ventilation.



Emily at work



Completed house

We used wood that was 2cm thick, but 1.5cm would also be fine. We made a plan and my dad used a jig-saw to cut our 7 pieces of wood which we screwed together. We strengthened the corners using 4cm square posts which we cut out with a handsaw, as it was too thick for our jig-saw. The other things we needed were: a) hinges b) roofing felt and tacks c) Cuprinol paint (we used green) to protect the wood from the weather and d) a latch so that predators couldn't lift up the lid.

I was surprised how easy it was to design and I had loads of fun. I hope you decide to help hedgehogs by making houses. There are lots of designs on the internet if you don't want to plan it yourself. Buying a hedgehog house is quite expensive but making one is really cheap and great fun. *(Point taken, Em!! R.)*

**Emily Farrell and Richard Lewis**

\*\*\*\*\*

## MIGRANT MATTERS

It's more than a century since the great (if flawed) David Lloyd George laid the foundations of the modern welfare state with the establishment of the pension system. In those far off days, there were four people of working age in the UK for every pensioner. And if anyone doesn't know their twentieth century political history and is wondering why he was flawed, there was an infamous cash for honours scandal, as well as a chunk of gallivanting, otherwise known as womanising.

It should perhaps be mentioned, as an aside, that the cash for honours game, as well as the womanising come to that (and we all know who leads the pack in that particular field) happens twice yearly nowadays. That's when assorted carpetbaggers, oligarchs, private equity and hedge fund dingbats, together with various

party donors and close relatives, don the ermine for all sorts of reasons, usually financial, but sometimes for simple incompetence – hello Baroness Dumbo Harding of TalkTalk and other glorious triumphs: Test and Trace anyone?

Anyway, back to the main subject of this month's diatribe.

By 2000 the ratio of workers to pensioners had dropped to two to one which, in reality, meant there were but two options available: we either bring in working-age people from abroad to keep our economy going, or stop paying pensions. Which of those would you have chosen? After all, if option one hadn't been picked, we would be down to close on one for one around about this Christmas and, on top of everything else that's going on right now (make your own list) that would not make for a very happy state of the nation (not that it's in a particularly thrilling state anyway).

Some five years ago, during the first awful wave of migrants from the hellholes of – just to take a few examples – Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen and sub-Saharan Africa, the German government let a million Syrians settle in their country and although this act had a certain altruism embedded in it (thank you Ms. Merkel) there was also a great degree of pragmatism involved.

Why pragmatism? Well, Germany, just like us and despite automation binning many jobs, still needs an army of manual and semi-skilled labour. And most of those immigrants into Germany are now settled there – they have jobs (though many more would have if not for the pandemic) and those who have are paying taxes to support, amongst other things, German pensioners (see where this is heading? I bet you do).

Meanwhile, while Ms Merkel's vision was being implemented, back in this past summer in the mean old Ewkey, we had Priti Pathetic arranging for a bit of what remains of our navy (illegally by the way, but, then, legality doesn't bother this lot very much, if at all) to pick up and send back to France a few thousand sad souls who had spent months, sometimes years, not to mention the thousands of dollars to the smugglers, to get here. Some refugees, of course, never made it – remember the family, including three

children, who drowned off Dunkirk back in late October?

There were also (thank you, Philip Larkin) the spam faced stone-age creatures howling at dinghies, when the occupants of said craft were only (only!) trying to make landfall on the South Coast. And let's not forget the far right cretins bussed to an old army camp just outside Tenby to rant at the refugees who had been given some sort of temporary shelter there.

There is also the continuing disgrace of people banged up in detention centres and then pushed, often forced, effectively in chains, on to planes in the small hours for deportation, many being sent to countries they have never seen – or at least not since childhood.

And as for the lunatic, mind-boggling, suggestions – again from the supremely untalented Priti Useless – that we should set up immigrant processing centres on, you will not believe this children, Ascension Island and Papua New Guinea. Well Lawdy Lawdy Lawdy Miss Claudy.

Finally in this litany of tolerance and understanding, there is, of course, the outrageous shambles forever to be remembered as the Windrush Scandal.....

To cap all of the above, the icing on the cake even, at the Tory Party virtual conference back in October, Priti Thing had the nerve to announce that she was so, so proud that Britain had given refuge to more refugees than any other European country. Well, setting aside Germany – though why should we – this was simply a barefaced lie, since, for example, Belgium, Bulgaria and Denmark have all let in many more people than Britain.

It is submitted, then, m'lud, that one of the above policies, the German or the British, will help sustain and even build an economy, will help to clean the wards and pick the fruit, pack the veg and stack the shelves, in short will improve public services. The other one won't...

Here endeth the Christmas rant. And may all of next year's Marys and Josephs find safe harbour.

**Mike Lockey**



**Rob Gwilt just keeps on quizzing us....**

1. Name the 'local' who played cricket for England Schools c. 1965
2. Who is believed to be the only qualified football referee in the parish?
  - a. Andrew Lewis
  - b. Richard Lewis
  - c. Lewis Beavan
3. Name the local who played football for Powys c.1990s
4. The Lloyney Inn has, on more than one occasion, won through the local and regional rounds to qualify for the national Dominoes Final. Congratulations, but where were the Finals held?
  - a. Blackpool
  - b. Boston
  - c. Bridlington
5. Name the local farmer who played football for Wales c. 1990s
6. Which local farm hosted "The Champion of Champions" Schoolboy Moto-Cross in 1983? (featuring future names like Mark Banks, Alan Morrison and Stuart Coyle)
7. Name the local who played for Hereford FC and is a two-time Radnorshire Cup winner.
8. In which year did the Cycling Tour of Great Britain pass through the Teme Valley (featuring names like Mark Cavendish and Sir Bradley Wiggins.)
9. Name the local who played netball for Powys and trained with the Wales National team (Full Internationals).
10. Name the local who was Sussex County Swimming Champion c.1970.

\*\*\*\*\*



### Answers to Rob's last quiz;

1.The Graig Scrambles, 2.Andy Hoyle, 3.Tug O'War, 4.True, 5.John Gwilt, 6.False, 7.A Cross Country Run. Starting and finishing at the Lloyney Inn it attracted over 100 entries in its heyday during the late 80s/early 90s, 8.Rounders, 9. Jimmy Thomas, 10.RAC Rally of Great Britain.

### Answers to last edition's "Who are they"?;

1. Elsa, 2. Gary Wilson, 3. Sting, 4. Greta Garbo, 5. Guy Fawkes, 6. Tinky Winky, 7. Gary Oldman, 8. Errol Flynn & Olivia de Havilland, 9. Ex-President trump, 10. Ray Reardon, 11. Keanu Reeves, 12.Jessica Ennis-Hill, 13. Agatha Christie, 14. Captain Underpants, 15. Olivia Coleman, 16. Mervyn Davies, 17. Len Goodman, 18.Victoria Wood, 19. Angela Merkel, 20. Jacqueline Wilson, 21. Charli d'Amelio, 22. Edward Elgar, 23. Babe Ruth, 24. Anne Marie.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Circle Dancing

Llanfair Times asked for a seasonal recipe, this is a recipe for celebration, joy and love.

Our Christmas Circle Dance meeting is held in candlelight and begins with Shepherds Dance from Provence, each dancer holding a lighted candle, holding hands in a finger hold, simple steps as the shepherds would have taken as they made their way down the hillside to the stable in Bethlehem.

The meeting then travels from sacred to secular via favourite dances to Irish Tiddle which really needs no explanation and concludes with Nutcracker amidst much stamping of feet and changes in tempo.



It would be lovely to share it with you all.

Judith Tollman

## LLANFAIR SINGERS CHAIRMAN'S DIARY

### Choir rehearsals; Christmas Concerts;

### Carol Services and the Hokey Cokey!

What you might wonder has this headline to do with anything?

All will now be revealed: many of us will have fond memories of doing the Hokey Cokey - "You put your left arm in; your left arm out; in out; in out, shake it all about...." and these last few months have felt just like that. Whether lockdown (yes we're in..... no we're out; yes we're in....), choir rehearsals (yes we can ... if we can find somewhere big enough; no we can't... because there will be more than six); Carol Service and Concert - (yes we can ....if we can rehearse - no we can't... we can't rehearse) It's almost been as exhausting as the dance!

There was real excitement at the Zoom Committee meeting when Becky and Peter Sherman kindly offered the choir the use of their barn for rehearsals (choir members are required to be 2m from any other singer in any direction - and the conductor must be 5m in front of the front row of the choir..... when you do the maths the space required has to be a barn.) The very next day the Government, which had clearly been eavesdropping on our meeting, changed the guidance and, yes, we could sing in the barn....but only if there were no more than six of us. We toyed with the idea of calling each rehearsal a church service which would have allowed there to be thirty of us present.... but that still left one-third of the choir adrift. We considered having a zoom sing along - where each of us sang in our own home but sang along to a pre-recorded accompaniment played to us by the conductor.... but who could tell if they were right or wrong when your singing drowns out the music? Let alone feeling very conspicuous and worrying about the neighbours ringing to ask if you are strangling a cat. So that idea died. We even contemplated having a shoot and using the occasional gun fire as percussion whilst singing - but thought better of it - not enough shot guns!

In October, a very small group of eight, including some members of the choir, (socially distanced and singing quietly - per guidelines) were able to sing at the Harvest Festival service at St Mary's. As for the rest of us? We wait.... and wait, knowing that, eventually, we will be back to singing once more. And the Christmas Concert and Carol Service with full choir? They will be back .....but not before 2021.

I have no intention of breaking the Llanfair Singers' tradition of ending each Christmas Concert with the heartfelt message: "We Wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year" ..... only this year, rather than song, it has to be in writing.

Have a wonderful Christmas and may 2021 bring to each of us all that our heart desires.

*Michael Symonds*

\*\*\*\*\*



## Seasonal Tips for the Gardener's Year

The Autumn leaf colour has been really brilliant this year. Now is the time to rake the leaves up and build a leafmould bin. Just four wooden stakes and some wire netting will do the job. Just cover the top to prevent the leaves becoming too wet.

Cut the top growth off dahlias that have been blackened by frost. Dig up the tubers and, after checking there are no slugs or worms attached, place them in a pot or tray in a frost-proof shed or greenhouse.

If you have potted up treated hyacinth bulbs to flower over Christmas and the New Year remember to check them regularly for moisture and take them out of their dark place when the flower bud is visible at about 8cm tall.

Put bubble wrap or sacking around pots which contain plants that will be staying out over winter. Stand the pots on feet or bricks to improve drainage.

Tidy flower borders and cut back dead growth which is not required for decoration or suitable for feeding birds or hibernating insects. This will allow bulbs to come through in the Spring and borders will be tidy for the winter.

Cut back tall growth on shrub roses to avoid wind rock and root damage. Final pruning can be done in early March.

If possible, cover brassicas, such as Brussel Sprouts, with net to keep pigeons from pecking and damaging them.

Bare root shrubs and trees can be planted between December and the end of February. Bare rooted plants are cheaper than those sold in pots. If you are unable to plant them immediately, heel them in the ground by digging a hole and covering the roots temporarily. Do not plant while the ground is frozen. Winter is also the time to move trees and shrubs that are in the wrong place.

Buy your flower and vegetable seeds for the coming year while there is a wide choice of varieties.

In January cut off old Hellebore leaves to allow the flower buds to be seen and to help prevent leaf spot diseases.

In February give wisteria a winter prune by cutting back long whippy stems.

Check your compost and turn if required. If it is ready to use it can be put on borders as a mulch or on the vegetable patch for planting through or digging in later in Spring.

Knock heavy snow off shrubs and trees to avoid branches being broken.

To force rhubarb for an early tender crop, cover the plants with a forcing jar or similar pot to exclude all light. Enjoy your garden.

*Di Bailey*

## Llanfair Waterdine Community Trust

It has become the norm in these reports to include an update on the progress being made with the construction of the Community Pavilion. In this issue of the Llanfair Times, the report will be slightly different because the Trustees are delighted (and a little bit proud) to announce that by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Community Pavilion should be completed! The plumbing and electrical work has been completed and is working—as is the ground source underfloor heating system, which has recently been commissioned and fully tested with excellent results. This means that the Community Pavilion now has working lights inside and out, is beautifully warm, and we have lashings of hot water.

The Trustees will have also completed and sent the final claim for the grant which has been provided by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, without which none of this could have been achieved.

The Trustees would like to thank each and every one of the many volunteers who have helped on this project. The Trustees are and always will be humbled by your response to our call for assistance. Volunteers have put in many hundreds of hours, quite often working in the dark with only the use of floodlights. During the winter months the Pavilion was bitterly cold until we had the luxury of doors and windows to keep the elements at bay. Your dedication and hard work will be enjoyed and appreciated by this and many future generations.

As the Pavilion was nearing completion, the Trustees gave consideration as to how it would be managed in the future. Trustees Robert Gwilt and Bob Bailey discussed this and proposed that Sharon Beavan should be invited to manage the day-to-day organisation of the Pavilion with the help of a small committee chosen by Sharon. Trustees feel that it is important for all to understand that at no time was Andrew Beavan involved in these discussions. The Trustees are delighted to announce that Sharon has agreed to take on this role on behalf of the Trustees and has been a whirl of energy in seeking out, getting quotes, and ordering things such as: curtains, tables

and chairs for the main hall, a microwave oven, and all the things that a kitchen needs to make it work.

**Bob Bailey, Andrew Beavan and Robert Gwilt - Trustees of Llanfair Waterdine Community Trust**

## The Pavilion

Having been approached by the Llanfair Waterdine Community Trust to manage the pavilion, I feel very honoured to have been asked, and am very pleased to be able to put the finishing touches to the building after everyone else has done all the hard work.

Thinking about it now, I probably have got the best job. With years of experience in our own business, I really enjoy interior design. Although it's a challenge, I am confident the trustees and community will be pleased with the result.

The pavilion has a warm modern welcoming feel, made extra special by the fact the community worked together to make this achievable. During the warmer weather outdoors, it has a nice area for children to run around playing while parents sit on the terrace sipping beverages and socialising with other families. It will always be warm in the winter months indoors with its ultra-modern heating source.

Part of my management role is to form a committee; I have asked Clare Bates and Sadie Jones, who have both said yes and are looking forward to helping me to keep the pavilion running effectively.

Our aim is to build a community hub for socialising on either daily/weekly or monthly occasions.

The Community Trust has applied for a premises licence, which involved a lot of form-filling and several calls to Shropshire Council to help answer the complicated questions. I am pleased to say we are advertising the application, which we hope will be supported and granted in due course.

Our other jobs are to organise events both for young and old, make a Facebook page to advertise these events and keep the Llanfair Times posted on up-and-coming dates. We look forward to welcoming you all.

**Sharon Beavan**



# PARISH COUNCIL

From the Chairman of the Parish Council,  
Mark Hughes

We welcome Darren Knipe onto the Council which means we have a full complement of seven parish councillors once more.

I would flag up that next May there will be local council elections and it would be great if eight or more parishioners stood for office so that we could have a vote rather than an uncontested election. Please think about it!

Since the last edition we have continued to suffer from the road closure and resultant increased through-traffic. At our council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November held on Zoom we welcomed Andy Wilde from Shropshire Council Highways Department and he fielded questions sent in from residents. A summary of this can be found on the website [www.llanfairparish.co.uk](http://www.llanfairparish.co.uk) under "Info/updates".

The council is actively working to try to resolve with the Highways Dept the terrible state of many of our roads.

The Shropshire Council website has a page where you can report potholes so please use it as we are advised that the more reports they receive, the more likely they are to do something about it.

Visit [www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk) and search "potholes" which will take you through to the correct page.

There's not much new to report on Rural Broadband but the latest update from Connecting Shropshire is also on [www.llanfairparish.co.uk](http://www.llanfairparish.co.uk). In addition, premises that don't already have access to a superfast broadband connection (30mbps) are in the planned coverage area of Airband Community Internet Limited. Connecting Shropshire has commissioned Airband to provide access to a 'Fibre to the Premises' broadband connection for around 70 premises in the parish. This work is due to be completed in summer 2021. To contact Airband, please call 01905 676121 or email: [customer.services@airband.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@airband.co.uk) to register your interest without obligation.



Many emergency services now accept 3 word addresses from 999 callers who would otherwise struggle to say exactly where they need help. what3words has helped find many people in need of emergency assistance quickly and easily. Llanfair Waterdine Parish Council urges you to download the app on to your smartphone.

## VACANCY FOR TRUSTEE

### Llanfair Waterdine Community Trust

The Parish Council is seeking applications for the position of

#### Trustee of Llanfair Waterdine Community Trust

Application forms are available from the Clerk to the Council:

[llanfairparishclerk@gmx.co.uk](mailto:llanfairparishclerk@gmx.co.uk) or 07398 222310.

*Candidates will be invited to interview at a suitable date/time once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.*