



Pete Postlethwaite plays Scaramouche Jones at Church Stretton School

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STRETTON FOCUS

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This month's cover

Our own Pete Postlethwaite brings his one-man stage show *Scaramouche Jones* to Church Stretton prior to a National and International tour. He will be performing in the new auditorium of Church Stretton School on Friday 8th and Saturday 9th March. In *Scaramouche Jones*, Pete plays the ageing circus clown who sits backstage doing a crossword and reflecting upon the extraordinary experiences which have made him who and what he is, his life on the road, and the father he never knew.

Pete Postlethwaite was born in 1945 in Warrington and has lived in Minton for the past 13 years. He studied drama and PE at college, taught for a couple of years and studied at the Old Vic in Bristol. This was followed by a long stint at the Everyman in Liverpool and five years with the RSC.

He is best known for his film rôles including Giuseppe Conion in *In The Name of the Father* for which he was nominated for an Oscar; Kobayashi in *The Usual Suspects*, Roland Tembo in *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* and in some 50 other cine and TV films.

His recent television rôle of Len Green in *The Sins* was an outstanding success as were his parts in *Lost for Words* and *Martin Chuzzlewit*.



Display at Church Stretton Library

As part of the National Adult Learners Week from 11 to 17 May, Church Stretton Library is organising a display about local clubs and societies. The aim is to make people more aware of the clubs, societies and open learning opportunities available to them locally. People will be able to see the display during library opening hours.

Any Church Stretton based club or society interested in having a display can contact Frances Yeats at Church Stretton Library on 01694 722535.

There is no charge to participate but please book early as space is limited.

Arts Festival

After a Christmas break, this column is back with further details of the 2002 Festival. The date for your diaries is July 20th-August 3rd.

Rushbury is the venue for our opening event, with something not too serious or heavy, THE BAKELITE BOYS, a trio performing 100 songs from 100 years in 100 minutes. Great musicianship, great humour.

The first of our celebrity events will be a recital of songs by the outstanding British tenor, ANTHONY ROLFE JOHNSON, to be performed at Concord College. He is one of our leading singers and has appeared in the world's greatest opera houses. Next comes ROGER LLEWELLYN, playing the part of Sherlock Holmes, who tells the story of his collaboration with Dr. Watson, in a fascinating performance.

THE FOCHMANN STRING QUARTET have performed in many countries and have a strong commitment to music education with workshops and masterclasses. Their programme will be announced next month. Now for a real blockbuster – on Saturday July 27th the DIVA OPERA COMPANY will perform CARMEN, probably the world's most popular opera. Concord college has kindly given us permission for a Glyndebourne-type event, with picnics on the lawn beforehand.

Attractions in the second week include two West End and film actresses in A WOMAN'S VOICE. An evening of poetry, written by women from Elizabethan times to the 20th century. This will be followed by TONY HOLLINGWORTH'S audio-visual entertainment, entitled A PASTORAL PROGRESS,

Next comes a New Generation performer, DAVID QUIGLEY and not wishing to wait another 18 years, we have invited GABRIEL WOOLF for an evening based on the wonderful writing and extraordinary life of Dylan Thomas – ONCE BELOW A TIME.

Festival 2002 will be rounded off in considerable style with DAZZLING DIGITS, a whistle-stop tour around the world and through the ages by BEVERLEY (Bev) DAVIDSON and HELEN CRAYFORD, on violin and keyboard, ranging from Bach and Vivaldi to Hungarian gypsy music and from Blues and Ragtime to Wild West Hoedowns.

Membership of The Friends of the Festival guarantees priority bookings, with reserved seats at some performances - £5 for an individual or £7.50 for a family. Details from Gerald Bolton 723807. Details and booking requests to Jenny Repath 731350. Any other information or offers of help to George Roby 722159. Please visit our web site on WWW.STRETTONFESTIVAL.ORG.UK



A Place Like No Other

'Be more controversial' he said wiping the dregs of morning coffee off the side of his mouth. This was the first time I had asked for advice. The hot air from the bottom of the fridge felt good against my legs, but everything else ached. My cold has set me back physically, and the emails from home have brought me down emotionally. Every night this week I have successfully found something much more urgent to do (except the ironing of course) than sit in front of the computer. I don't really feel like writing anything, much less suggest a topic of controversy.

'Where has my enthusiasm gone?', I thought as the red numbers on the digital clock slowly moved from 2:30 – 3:30am. My sniffles will subside, and despite some bad news from my family, there are things to rejoice about. So why am I so pathetic? Why am I down? And this is when I realised I can be controversial after all. *I don't like Spring!* That's right. I do not like Spring. Some will find this shocking, maybe even offensive. Everyone always seems to think the world is just grand when Spring arrives. Spring, in my opinion, is highly overrated.

Of course I will smile with the woman on the street corner and admire the daffodils. 'They are lovely', I will say as I stumble home with three inches of mud caked on the bottom of my wellies. Yes the grass is luscious and green...but unless you know how to swim, be warned of going through it. Spring is wet. Spring is muddy. Spring, more than anything, is unpredictable.

I don't want to stand in the utility room for 30 minutes arguing with the children about which coat to wear. 'No, it doesn't look like rain, but by the time we reach Scrippies, it could be pouring'. I want it cold or hot. Bring on the snow or turn up the heat. Hibernate or perspire. I enjoy building a nest of blankets by the fire with just enough space at the top to point the remote control at the TV. I enjoy sitting by the stream in the sun even if it means my legs will stick to the plastic chair and make that embarrassing suction noise when I have to dart after a child.

So forgive me if I have caused any offence. I don't mean to be a killjoy. Perhaps I am secretly jealous of those that can go to sleep knowing the kitchen floor is covered in muddy paw prints. Perhaps I need to pry myself away from the mop and appreciate the many signs of new life. Mud or not, I am stuck here. At the end of the day, even when I am grouchy, I still think - what better place to be than in...*a place like no other.*

J. Wyeth



George Roby

YOUR CHANCE TO HAVE YOUR SAY

This is your chance to comment on the policies put forward in the new version of the Local Plan which covers the period up to 2011.

It covers the whole of South Shropshire and will replace the current Local Plan that was produced in 1994.

It has been drawn up within the context provided by the deposit draft Joint Structure Plan 1996 - 2011 and the emerging Community Strategy for the District.



THE KEY ISSUES

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is that which meets the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

DESIGN



THE STRATEGY

The plan locates most of the new development in the 7 market towns and main villages. Elsewhere in the smaller villages only affordable housing will be permitted. This will:

- strengthen the role of market towns and main villages
- develop more sustainable communities
- provide a better balance between jobs, and housing and services
- Reduces the need to travel by car.

This is a radical change from the previous Local Plan where a much larger number of villages (63) were designated for development

Affordable Housing

The Plan is looking to provide over 1000 affordable dwellings over the plan period.

These will be through

- Schemes by registered social landlords in the market towns or main villages
- Large scale schemes in Church Stretton and Ludlow.
- All schemes elsewhere - where at least a 1/3 of the development should provide affordable housing
- Exception schemes in most villages

The plan aims to ensure that the new development respects the area's character.



WE NEED YOUR VIEWS!!

Have your say on the future of South Shropshire, it's countryside, villages and towns by commenting on the South Shropshire Local Plan 1996 - 2011. The Plan has been reviewed and rolled forward to the year 2011.

Copies are available to see at Local Libraries and the District Council offices from 1st March 2002.

The plan will be placed "on deposit" for six weeks. IF YOU HAVE ANY OBJECTIONS OR WISH TO MAKE A REPRESENTATION, YOU MUST PUT IT IN WRITING AND SEND IT TO:

**The Director of Environment and Development
South Shropshire District Council
Stone House
Corve Street
Ludlow
Shropshire SY8 1DG**

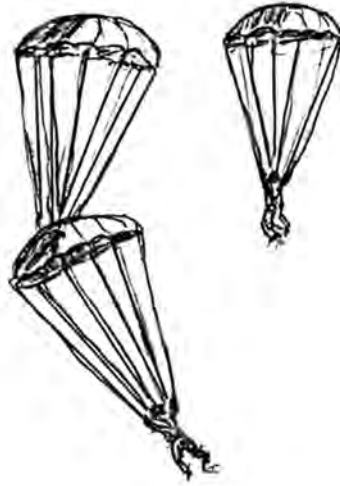
BY APRIL 12th 2002

your views are important

The Hitch Hiker

As I motored down from Shrewsbury
on the old A forty-nine
I was looking for a little Inn where I
could wine and dine.
When I saw a soldier thumbing for a lift
along the road
So I stepped upon the footbrake, in
compassion, I am told.
"Are you going to the Strettons, can you help
me on my way?"
Then he jumped up in beside me on
that grey
September day.
And he thanked me so profusely that I drove
as 'on parade'
While he spoke of life in the Army, his time in Para brigade.
Of the fear that he felt within, if he failed to jump on time
Though he knew he was not alone in having to toe the line.
He dreaded the thought of a jump from a static balloon on high
Compared to a plane full of Troopers who jump at the sergeant's cry
As he tapped them on the shoulder to call them in turn.
"So I copied all the others in the manner we did learn.
Then I felt I was in heaven as I floated in the wind
With the beauty of the fields below and of the great Long Mynd"
"If only time would stop" said he, "and if only I could be
Like a bird in the air or thistledown betwixt the sky and sea.
But the joy couldn't stay forever and the landing came at last
With a 'feet together. Laddie' as I hit the ground quite fast.
The shock of a heavy landing knocked all the breathe from me
As I slid to a sliding stop with mud all over my knees.
After packing my chute I ran straight to the rendezvous
While my mate was dragged by the wind and drenched in the morning
dew."
When I arrived at the Strettons his story came to an end,
So I stopped by the lights and said farewell to my friend.

Martin Plumtre



Weather - January

After a cold start with frosts
every day for a week, January
turned mild with
temperatures over the 50 mark for the
last 12 days of the month and 14 days
in all. On 22 days the temperature
was over 45. Snow lay for the first
four days but then disappeared but
that was the most snow we have had
since 1996.

The most memorable event was the
gales which struck on the weekend of
the 27th/28th though we didn't suffer
as badly as some areas. The gales
brought some heavy rain as well but
overall the total for the month 2.72
inches was still below the average of
3.04. Rain fell on 22 days a lot more
than last year but we had more days
of showers and drizzle which while
adding extra days didn't add much
extra to the precipitation total.

Two new records were set up in
January, the maximum temperature
reached a new high of 56.3 on the
27th and, because of the mild weather
we had fewer frosts than ever before
with only the eight I mentioned
above. Mean temperature at 42.34
was well above last year 38.04 but
still we are below the highest 46.5.

R.Smart

Local School Wins Award

St Lawrence C E Primary School, Church Stretton, recognised for Excellence in Sport

At the recent Awards Presenta-
tion evening held in the
Council Chamber, Shirehall,
and organised by the South Shrop-
shire Sports Association, the St Law-
rence C E Primary School Tag Rugby
Team received the Furrows Award.

It is only the second time that this
award for sporting achievement has
been given to a primary school and
is a tribute to the commitment and
enthusiasm of the children.

The school held a presentation
evening on Friday, 22 February to
present this award to the players.

Other awards to be presented on that
evening include:

- West Midlands Tag Rugby Cham-
pions
- South Shropshire Tag Rugby win-
ners
- St Lawrence C E Primary School
Tag Rugby Tournament winners

- Shropshire Under 10 Girls Football
champions
- St Lawrence Primary School Foot-
ball Tournament Under 11 Girls win-
ners

We look forward to the evening, not
only to celebrate our achievements,
but also to recognise the participation
of large numbers of children in the
tag rugby and football programmes.

R Davies, P E Coordinator

Focus on Health Important Changes to Out of Hours Healthcare Arrangements

From 7th January 2002 access to out of hours primary health care has become easier. There is now only one number to access urgent healthcare when the surgery is closed - 08450 20 21 31. Calls are charged at local rate.

Patients who normally contacted Shropdoc for urgent medical attention out of surgery hours will be put straight through to highly trained nurses who will assess your medical needs over the phone. This is because the GP out of hours co-operative (Shropdoc) is integrating with the NHS Direct Nurse Advice Service to streamline patient access to out of hours care within Shropshire and Mid-Wales.

This is in line with the Government's aim under the NHS plan that by the year 2004 all out of hours healthcare will be accessed through one number to NHS Direct.

This new service will mean that:

1. The nurse will be able to give you advice if you need it.
2. If a further doctor consultation is required the nurse will arrange for a doctor to contact you.
3. If required the nurse will arrange for you to be contacted to attend a local primary care centre where you will be seen by a doctor. These are currently, for this area, Ludlow Hospital and Radbrook Green Surgery in Shrewsbury.
4. In certain cases the nurse can arrange for you to be contacted to receive a home visit by the doctor, such as where the patient is very elderly and bed-bound, terminally ill, and those where a move might make their condition worse.

This is to ensure that patients receive high quality treatment according to their individual needs.

Patient Questions

Will I be able to see a doctor from Church Stretton Medical Practice?

All the doctors from Church Stretton work a rota arrangement, therefore this cannot be guaranteed. However one of the doctors may be working at the primary care centre or making home visits as part of their rota commitments.

Will a doctor visit me at home?

Highly trained nurses will assess your medical needs and if he or she considers it appropriate the doctor will visit your home.

I am not sure if the symptoms are serious or not?

The nurses at NHS Direct are happy to give medical advice and through their training will be able to identify whether the medical problem is serious or not.

I think need to speak to a doctor rather than a nurse?

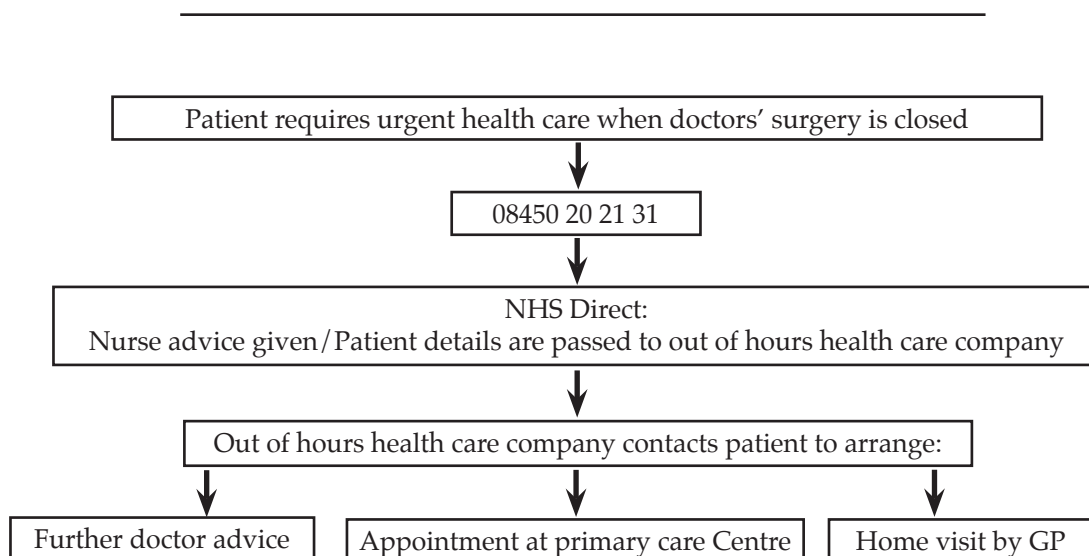
Nurse assessment is the first step. If consultation with a doctor is required then the nurse will arrange for you to be contacted.



Some people may already have experience of NHS Direct as it offers a 24-hour nurse-led helpline providing general health information and advice. To access this service please contact 0845 46 47.

Further information can be accessed from the following links

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
www.shropdoc.co.uk
www.churchstrettondoctors.co.uk



Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

(Referring to item in Town Council Minutes reported in February issue)

On Tuesday 27th November, the partners and staff of the Medical Practice had a study day on the Department of Health's 'National Service Framework for Older People', which is of particular relevance to the Church Stretton community.

The surgery was open from 8.30am to 6.00pm and manned by two experienced locum general practitioners (who had worked for the practice on previous occasions) and a senior receptionist of 16 years experience. There was also a nurse available should she have been needed. A surgery manager came into the surgery 3 times during the day to make sure that things were running smoothly. A tape was put on our main telephone line and stated: "The staff are training today, if you need to see a doctor today or need an urgent prescription please ring 722129 (our 2nd line into the surgery)." At no point other than before 8.30am and after 6.00pm was a tape on suggesting that the patient telephone Shropshire Doctors Co-operative.

The receptionist dealt with many telephone calls that day and the doctors saw 20 patients, carried out 4 home visits, 8 telephone consultations and also dealt with casualties from a road traffic accident in the town. As you can see the practice was certainly not closed. I would however, like to extend my sincere apologies to any of our patients if we in any way inconvenienced them.

Cheryl Evans, Practice Manager

Dear Editor

Ifeel like that bloke from 'One Foot in the Grave' – I keep exclaiming 'I don't believe it'. It is great when we see dog owners use plastic bags to clean up their dog mess – something all us dog owners try to be constant in doing. What completely amazes me is the sight of plastic bags containing the mess thrown into the bushes or even dangling from trees. The cut-through between Cardingmill Valley and Longhills Road, with a climb-over stile, is a particular black spot. On one day this week, along the woody walk at the end of Madeira Walk, I collected twelve such bags, two actually hanging from branches from trees. Dog mess is a nuisance but at least it eventually bio-degrades, something which plastic bags do not. The decent mentality of clearing up the mess in the first place does not tie in with the mentality of someone who would then throw the bag away into the countryside – 'I just don't believe it'. Please take the bags home, or leave them at my gate at The Lodge, Madeira Walk so that I don't have to go climbing through the undergrowth to collect them.

Carol Overs

Dear Editor

Here are a few thoughts which might contribute, in a small way, to Christian unity. Two of our three children have joined the Church of England. Apparently, they did not like the Catholic University chaplain, their future husband and wife disliked Catholics and the arrogant attitude of the pre-Vatican II Catholic Church had alienated them.

Their defection, which upset me at the time, turned out to be a blessing in disguise. When we visit them, we visit the parish church services, listen to the sermons and mix with the congregation. As we discover what we have in common, we get a clearer picture of what it is to be a Christian.

The Good News Jesus came to bring is not clearly defined in the Gospel. I suppose everyone interprets it differently, according to his temperament and upbringing. To me, it is encapsulated in that remark of St. John's – "As long as we love one another God lives in us" – to guide protect, comfort and forgive us.

The second Vatican Council, which ended in 1963, has effectively reversed the teaching of the Council of Trent in 1563. The latter, in its attempts to staunch the wound inflicted by Protestantism, insisted on blind obedience to the Catholic church and forbade the faithful to think. That rigid attitude was qualified by Vatican II, which allowed Catholics to read and discuss the Bible and to mix freely with non-Catholics.

History reveals mistakes on both sides. The Kings of Northern Europe used Luther's criticism of the church to annex church property. Rome should have heeded Luther's warnings, which were totally justified. The church's wealth, power and complacency fostered corruption and superstition. Vatican II, short of making an abject apology, has vindicated Luther.

In the fight between rival theologians, the main casualties have been Christian virtues. Humility, chastity and detachment from money, possessions and worldly ambitions have been routed by the media, who uphold opposite values – although no one seems to be aware of it.

I see the Catholic church as my family. I love it and obey its rules; I see other Churches as family friends, whom I visit occasionally.

Simone Crawley

Stretton Focus AGM

The AGM of Stretton Focus will be held in the Parish Centre at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 26th March. We welcome any readers who would like to attend as well as the voting Board Members

Stretton Branch of the Wildlife Trust

The British native Hazel Dormouse was introduced to the audience at the Stretton Branch of Shropshire Wildlife Trust at a lecture in the Information Centre, Church Stretton, by Cathy Turtle. She has been surveying dormice in Shropshire on behalf of the Trust's plan to help them to thrive and spread from their Reserve in the Hope Valley.

It is ancient woodland they need most with tangles of vegetation and plenty of brambles, old ivy thickets – and hazel trees. However, Mrs Turtle had found dormice thriving in an ancient Conifer Woodland in Warwickshire – amazed that they survived.

Even if they are living in a wood we visit often, we may never be aware of them for they are nocturnal – and need their big black eyes and extra long whiskers. Hazel nuts

are very important to them – often the only proof we have of them are the uniquely nibbled edges of nut shells; eating also flowers of hawthorn, bramble, sycamore and horse chestnut, and fruits of blackberry and ash keys.

The Hazel Dormouse hibernates in a nest on the ground in winter among shrubby tangles of honeysuckle, brambles and ivies so tidying up old patches of woodland undergrowth is no help to our dormice. Their breeding nests are often holes in trees well above the ground – that is why they use our nest boxes freely – such a good substitute.

The March lecture is to be at the Information Centre, Church Street, Church Stretton on 22nd March 2002 at 7.30 pm, entitled *Hay Meadows* by Sarah Whild. Everybody welcome

Margot Daniels 01588 650658

Stretton Traidcraft Arrangements during Mayfair Redevelopment

Stretton Traidcraft continues to function almost normally, thanks to the help given to us by the Mayfair management in making space available at the Social Club, Essex Road. Our stall is there every Thursday between 10.30am and 1pm and located just inside the entrance of the Club. We have all the usual Traidcraft foods and paper goods on the stall but no crafts are on display. They are still available by asking at the stall or contacting Don & Maureen Clow on 722000.

The period from October to Christmas seemed to have been more hectic than usual with the joint charities' Christmas cards selling very well indeed. Year after year we have increased our turnover and last year was our best so far. It will be difficult to maintain progress this year but with your continued support we can play our small part in helping many in Africa, Asia and Latin America work their way out of poverty by the use of their agricultural and craft skills.

Church Stretton & District Rail Users' Association

The Annual General Meeting of the above Association will be held in **The Parish Centre** on **Monday 25th March 2002**. Doors open at 7.00pm and the meeting starts at **7.30pm**

Chris Gibb (Managing Director of Wales & Border Trains) has accepted our invitation to attend and will address the meeting on matters of interest and concern.



Copies of the Anniversary booklet published by the Association will be on sale. The meeting is open to non-members but only members are entitled to vote.

Mike Scott, Hon.Sec.

Mayfair Centre

What IS happening at Mayfair Community Centre?

Come and find out
7p.m. Friday 12th April
at the Parish Centre.
Free cheese and wine

The New Mayfair will provide something for everyone including **YOU**

- Activities for children and young people
- After school meals
- Information Technology
- Computer Games
- Arts and Crafts for all
- 'Feel Good' Workshops
- Opportunities for Volunteering (our plans include a creche)
- Additional Complementary Therapies
- As well as all our usual services
- And lots more don't miss out come and find out for yourself.

When you are looking around for an Easter Gift, or something for Mothering Sunday, then don't forget the perfect present – **Mae Fayre & Family Favourite Recipes**. This little cookbook contains interesting recipes and is delightfully illustrated. You will find it in Burway Books, Newsworld or Mayfair.

Coffee Morning

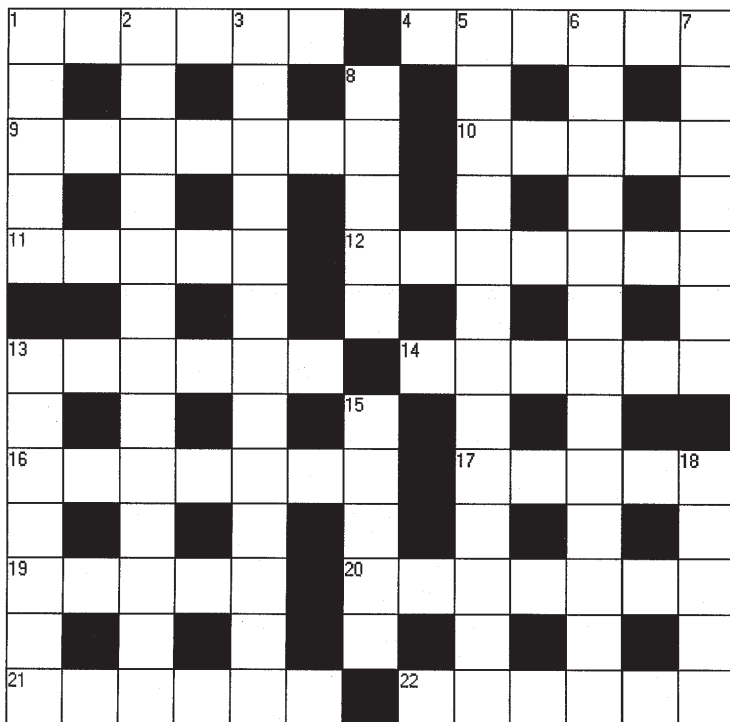
There will be a coffee morning on the 16th March (*date to be confirmed*) to be held in the Social Club, Easthope Road. With cake stall and bric-a-brac.

May Ball

Make a note in your diary that there will be a May Ball at Wistanstow Village Hall, on the 18th May, with supper and live music. Tickets will be available at the end of March.

Mayfair Community Centre at
44B Sandford Avenue.
Church Stretton 01694 722077

Crossword eleven Cryptic by Toucan



Solution on page 14

CLUES ACROSS

1. Have a second for midday meal and push off (6)
4. Coffers when sounded? (6)
9. Father plunged into river for French lady (7)
10. The cheek of the plainer vegetarian (5)
11. Labels found in a mess (5)
12. Fixed by Boney at Waterloo (7)
13. Job precedes charity following an afterthought (6)
14. Cash demand, sounds like a hold-up (6)
16. Fast as thine fancy (2,5)
17. Country short of currency (5)
19. The father of English literature? (5)
20. Fed, true; but quite upset and in the wrong (7)
21. Little Richard hesitates to bargain (6)
22. Lighter hum around the note (6)

DOWN

1. Umbrella dented, but holding under pressure (5)
2. Wreck puts me in yacht – not very amicable (13)
3. Seasonably spruce and lit up (9,4)
5. Unit of inductance on Bonfire Night – fit for a king! (5,3,5)
6. Cat's cradle for four players? (6,7)
7. A feminine pronoun and two articles put inside (7)
8. Tasteful pot-plants (5)
13. Pride MP used and got tidied up (7)
15. 'Exhausted ye war in turmoil' (Anon.) (5)
18. Police with a royal drink (5)

Comfort food! This month I would like to share with you my recipe for everyone's favourite – The Bread & Butter Pudding

Bread & Butter Delight

Ingredients:

- Small quantity of butter
- 6 slices of currant loaf (also very good using cinnamon loaf)
- 1 oz sultanas
- 2 eggs
- 1 oz sugar
- 15 fl.oz milk
- 1 level tablespoon of ground almonds



Pouring cream to serve

Method

Lightly butter each slice and cut diagonally twice. Layer the bread into a greased 1½ pint shallow ovenproof dish and then sprinkle over the sultanas. In a large bowl whisk together the eggs, sugar and two tablespoons of the milk. Heat the remaining milk until just below simmering point, stir in the ground almonds then pour into the egg mixture. Strain the warm egg and milk mixture over the bread, sprinkle with brown sugar and bake in the oven at 190C or 375F or Gas Mark 5 for 30 minutes. Serve hot with pouring cream.

Mmmmmmm.....it's good

Her Ladyship

Record Breakers!

Church Stretton & District Round Tablers

Church Stretton tablers with Father Christmas and his sleigh received a record breaking response on their tour of the district. Nearly £3,200 was raised for the Nightingale Nurses fund and other local charities.



Pictured at the presentation evening are L to R Eirlys Jones, Chairperson Nightingale Nursing Fund, Shaun Willocks, Chairman C. S. Round Table, and Margaret Johnson, District Nurse, Church Stretton

Words and names : Intruding 'n's

Although 'n' is one of the more frequently-occurring letters in English, we have never (at least since Norman-French and Old English became Middle English) made use of nasal sounds as some other languages do. In French, for example 'Un bon vin blanc' with its four different intonations presents considerable difficulty to the English tongue; and Portuguese even has a nasal short 'i', as in 'sim' ('yes'). Polish also has nasal letters (ę, ą,) for which the rules are complex, and Spanish, Portuguese and Catalan use a softer 'ny' sound (Señor, Senhor, Senyor); but in English we have tended to use the letter 'n' as a support, to make words easier to pronounce.

For example, in German the bird that sings sweetly all night is *die Nachtigall*, 'night-singer' – the last part of the word being related to 'yell' – but in English it has attracted a quite unjustified 'n'. It seems as if English tongues did not like to say 'nightigale', and this reluctance has extended to several other words. If you deliver a message you are a messenger (*messenger* in French, though Spanish and Portuguese have inserted an unwarranted 'n' in front of the 's': *mensajero*, *mensagemero*). There are no 'n's in the genealogy of the word, which comes from the Latin *mittere*, to send, via a Late Latin *missaticum*; but in English 'messenger' was in use by the 14th century and 'messenger', at first used in parallel, was obsolete by the end of the 17th. The surname *Messenger* / *Massinger* comes from the later version.

Passenger bears a similar relationship to the word *passage*, and again both forms existed side by side for a time before *passenger* took over. As a surname, *Passenger* refers to an itinerant workman or merchant. A *harbinger* is now usually thought of as an abstract sort of idea: 'a harbinger of doom / fate / spring', as if it meant a sort of omen. In fact, a *harbinger* was someone who went on ahead of troops or of the Court to find billets or lodgings, and the word was originally from the Germanic *heriberga*, 'shelter for an army', related to *harbour* and to the French *auberge*, an inn or hostel. The spelling went through many vicissitudes – including the medieval Latin *herebergiator* – before the 'n' version became normal around the end of the 17th century.

A *wharfinger* is a man who keeps or operates a wharf, and there is no evidence that he was ever called a *wharfager*, though *wharfage* itself goes back to the 13th century. Unlike the previous words this came later (the 16th century) and the 'n' was inserted immediately rather than as an optional version. *Scavage*, from the Old French *escauwage*, meaning 'show' or 'inspection' was in the 15th century a toll levied by London and other towns upon goods offered for sale within their precincts. It was collected by a *scavager*, part of whose duties was also the cleaning of the streets, and this sense still exists – though he has become a *scavenger*, with the inserted 'n'. Nowadays he would be a

dustman or a roadsweeper or an environmental recycling operative, and scavenging is usually the work of certain beetles; but the word was once used for the children who crawled under the spinning-frames to pick up loose pieces of wool, and in the 18th century it was even an office under the East India Company.

Popinjays are soon dealt with. In German a parrot is *Papagei*, and all the European languages at first had this form, believed to come from an imitation of the bird's cry; but from the 14th century onwards all the very many spellings of this word (*poppingay*, *popiniay*, etc.) contained the 'n'. *Farthingale*, a hooped skirt from the 16th century, comes originally from a Spanish word *verdugo* meaning a rod or stick – part of the framework which held the hoop. In Old French this was *verdugale*, but on taking it over English again added an 'n', perhaps by attraction to the less foreign-sounding *farthing* (which was in fact a 'fourthing').

Having just talked of farthingales in *The taming of the shrew* [Act IV, 3], Petruchio carries on to say that Kate's hat is like something 'moulded on a porringer' – a porridge-bowl. *Porridge* is something cooked in a *pot*, derived from an English mispronunciation of the French *potage* (which itself much later started to appear on English menus as a soup). Gardeners in recent decades have revived the *potager*, a development of the kitchen garden; and *potage* or *porridge* was not restricted to oatmeal, but included vegetables of any kind from the *potager*. It was for a short period served in a *porager*; but very soon this word also attracted the 'n' and became *porringer*, for which there is traditionally no rhyme in English. The surname *Pottinger* comes from *pottager*.

In early texts, *pottingary* appears for *apothecary*; and *Portingale* for Portugal, the form which appears in Chaucer. According to Dean Cranage in his great work on Shropshire churches the lych-gate steps at Clun were known as the *scalenge*, a word which appears in no dictionary that I know; and I think it must derive from the Latin *scalaria*, a flight of steps, perhaps via some form such as *scalage*, plus the intrusive 'n'.

Colin Balmforth

Nightingales
Passengers
Wharfingers
Farthingales
Porridge

Solutions to Crossword

Across : 1. Launch 4. Chests 9. Desirée 10. Nerve
11. Names 12. Bayonet 13. Psalms 14. Cheque
16. In haste 17. Franc 19. Pater 20. Refuted
21. Ducked 22. Whiter

Down : 1. Laden 2. Unsympathetic 3. Christmas tree
5. Henry the fifth 6. String quartet 7. Sheathe
8. Herbs 13. Primped 15. Weary 18. Cider



National Trust

There are changes planned for next summer at

Attingham Park. There will be new facilities for families, visitor reception and car parking and further restoration of the Park's Repton landscape.

Families will be able to discover the new Secret Garden play area which will make use of the secluded setting of the former walled garden. Inside the house there will be an increased number of hands-on activities in a new children's activity room. Families will also find it easier to visit Home Farm with better car parking and joint ticketing later this year.

There will be a new programme of guided tours and introductory tours and a sculpture trail through the woods.

Programme for March

10th March. Ladies Day – Regency flower arranging demonstrations in the outer library. Special tea 1 - 4pm

31st March and 1st April. Easter Egg Trail 12 - 4pm.
Telephone 01743 708162 for details.

Long Mynd

Schoolchildren and families visiting the Long Mynd will be able to take a closer look at its wonderful plant and animal life thanks to two new education rooms. The new facilities include nineteen microscopes and the National Trust will open up these new education facilities for family visitors as well as school pupils. An educational website is being developed and when the project is complete it will mean that any school in the country can access Carding Mill Valley's study materials.

Programme for March

24th March. Return to Purple. Talk on the growth of heather and other flora on the Long Mynd. 1.30 - 4pm. £2 (Children free).
Telephone 01694 723068 for details.



Vision Aid Overseas

Last year we collected 499 pairs of spectacles and so

far this year we have 404. Children's spectacles are particularly useful. The spectacles go to Vision Aid Overseas and then are sent to a prison where the prisoners determine their prescription and sort and label them. They are then packed and shipped overseas, currently to Sierra Leone, Ghana, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, the Gambia and India.

In the receiving country Vision Aid Overseas trains people so that the spectacles are put to good use. The trained staff are formed into teams who travel for two weeks at a time holding eye clinics and dispensing spectacles as required. As a result of this collection and re-distribution someone with visual impairment is able to make more of their life than they otherwise would have been able. If you have any unwanted specs, please take them into Rowlands Chemist shop or Opticians Andrew Stevenson, both in Sandford Avenue

Blackpool in the Summer

Rotary is well advanced in publicising and arranging a holiday for those needing a week's break in Blackpool from 27th June to 4th July at a cost of £114 per person sharing a room or £134 for a single room. This includes collection and return by car from home to and from a coach pick-up point

in Church Stretton, the coach to and from Blackpool, en-suite facilities in the hotel, full English breakfast and dinner, early morning tea and bedtime drinks. The week also includes a coach trip into the Pennines and some other organised entertainment.

Details and booking form from Darroll Harrison on 720177 or John Luntz on 01584 861445.

"Trick or Treat"

Inner Wheel huge success

Over 160 people enjoyed an evening of entertainment at this event.

The Inner Wheel Club of Church Stretton are grateful to everyone who helped, supported and provided the entertainment. The evening raised £815 which is being presented to two charities – Hope House Children's Hospice and Cancer Research.



Margaret Luntz & Carrol George prepare refreshments
photo: Charlie MacIntyre

Household Rubbish Collection Arrangements Easter 2002

There will be no collection of domestic rubbish on Good Friday and Easter Monday. From **Friday 29th March to Friday 5th April** all refuse collections will be made **one day later than usual**. Friday collections will be made on Saturday.

Please put out your rubbish by **7a.m.** on collection day and no earlier than the previous evening. Newspaper kerbside collections, in applicable areas, will be made on the revised day. If in doubt, please phone 01584 813397.

Church Stretton Town Council

EXTRACT FROM DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING
HELD 14TH January 2002.

Questions from Public: *Railway Station*

Cllr.Lloyd attended a Heart of Wales Forum and spoke to officials about the problems at Church Stretton Station. They asked for photographs to take the matter forward. He also asked why there were no litter bins on the station and was told they were removed for security reasons.

PLANNING MATTERS

District Decisions – Approved

- Demolition of buildings to allow residential development former Caradoc Motors & former Dennis Price & Son, off High Street, Church Stretton.
- Erection of residential accommodation comprising 18 dwellings and alterations to existing vehicular and pedestrian accesses, Lion Court, off High Street, Church Stretton. This Approval has five conditions attached.
- Erection of 3 dwellings, construction of estate roads and alterations to vehicular access, land opposite 12 Ludlow Road, Church Stretton.
- Approval of reserved matters (outline planning permission) for residential redevelopment and ancillary works, Crossways, Church Stretton. This Approval has ten conditions attached.
- Variation to condition No.2 of Planning Permission to allow retention of timber mast, Hazler Hill Transmitting Station.
- Erection of a dwelling and formation of vehicular and pedestrian access, land adjacent to Windlehill, Hazler Road, Church Stretton. This approval has 5 conditions attached.
- Erection of a dwelling and alterations to vehicular access, Plot 6 land at Ludlow Road, Little Stretton. This Approval has 4 conditions attached
- Alteration to dwelling, Cloverly, Farm Lane, All Stretton. This has 1 condition attached.
- Erection of extension to dwelling, Robin Hill, Longhills Road, Church Stretton. This has 1 condition attached.
- Erection of ancillary domestic outbuilding, Queens Batch Mill, Marshbrook, Church Stretton.
- Erection of extension to dwelling, The Paddock, Sandford Avenue, Church Stretton. This has 1 condition attached.
- Installation of a Dormer Window, Chapel End Row, All Stretton, Church Stretton.

Decisions Noted: Concern was expressed that three of these decisions were against Town Council recommendations and a tally would be kept of how District Decisions matched Town Council recommendations.

Town Council Recommendations – Approval

- Change of use of workshop to repair, MOT, Sale and Servicing of motorcycles, Crossways Industrial Estate, Church Stretton.
- Change of use of part dwelling to Office and erection of extension to incorporate staircase, Brambledene, Crossways, Church Stretton.

- Display of an advertisement, Crossways, Church Stretton.
- Erection of 8 Care Accommodation Units, adjoining Sandford Nursing Home, Watling Street South, Church Stretton.

Church Stretton Railway Station

It was reported that the local Police are liaising with BT police and the Comprehensive School in order to arrange a visit to the school. It was agreed to ask Wales and Borders to also be involved in this visit to the school. Concern over lack of litter bins and cleaning was reiterated and would also be investigated further.

Swimming at Church Stretton Pool

Progress is being made – two people are being trained as Lifeguards (taking the total to 4).

Joint Policing Plan 2001/2

Several points were discussed including the favourable comparison of crime figures for this area compared to the national figure; the proposal for 100 new officers for the region and the concern that a high % of the annual budget was spent on pensions.

SHROPSHIRE HEALTH AUTHORITY

There was a report on the proposals to disband the Shropshire Health Authority and implement a new strategic authority, probably to be called West Midlands North Health Authority. A new body called the Shropshire County Primary Care Trust will have the operational responsibilities to make sure that the County gets the services it requires.

Dental Health Care – Concern was also expressed over the fact that it is now impossible to register locally for dental care under the NHS. In some areas the private lists are closed. This was felt to be unacceptable.

Ambulance Service – The proposed amalgamation of the Shropshire Ambulance Service with Staffordshire was also discussed and was felt to be a retrograde step for this area.

Shrop Doc – The recent local problems were also highlighted and felt to be unacceptable. In view of all the foregoing serious concerns it was agreed to ask for an Officer of the Health Authority to talk to this Council about the proposals and current situation with a view to action on improving the services offered.

HIGHWAY MATTERS

Parking by School – It was agreed to ask the SCC and the Police to look at the parking problems and to ask the Headmaster if he could introduce an incentive scheme to encourage parents not to use their cars.

B4370 to Little Stretton – Plans are being drawn up to join the pavement between Little Stretton and Church Stretton.

Millennium Path – Work should now be going out to tender in order to commence before 31/3 otherwise the funding could be lost.

EVENTS DIARY: what's on in March

EVERY WEEK

Mondays	Scottish Dancing at All Stretton Village Hall 7.30
Tuesdays	Carpet Bowls Club. £1 per session : slippers please. At the Methodist Hall 2.00 to 4.00
Wednesdays	Disability and Benefits information and advice. At the Social Club, Essex Road 10.00 to 12.00
Thursdays	Citizens Advice Bureau. At Mayfair rooms, behind solicitor's, 44B Sandford Ave 10.00 to 12.00
	Traidcraft fairly traded goods. At the Social Club, Essex Road 10.30 to 1.00
	Choral Society. Rehearsals at the United Reformed Church Hall 7.30
	Chess Club. At the Social Club, Essex Road 7.30
Thur & Fri	Good Neighbours' Bereavement & Loss Befriender. At Social Club, Essex Road. 10.00 to 12.00
Fridays	WI Market (restarts on 15 th). At the Social Club, Essex Road 9.00 to 10.30

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

WEEK ONE

Fri	1	Prayers for Peace. (Suggestions: URC) Drop in at Emmaus Chapel, St Laurence 10.00 to 4.00
		Women's World Day of Prayer at the Methodist Church 10.30
Mon	4	Monday Ladies Group. Mr.Mervyn Williams. At the United Reformed Church 2.30
		Shropshire Literary Society. "The Country Parson: Fact or Fiction". Talk by Rev Philip Harratt. At Information Centre 7.30
Tue	5	All Stretton Fellowship. Revd Jon Hutchinson, "Fish, fun and fellowship". Church Vestry. 2.30
		Flower Club. Nigel Whyles, "The Magic of Clarice Cliff". (Table: an arrangement in a cup and saucer). At the Silvester Horne Institute 7.30
Wed	6	Women's Network. Revd Bernard Nixon. Methodist Hall 2.30
		Camera Club. Competition number 4, "Architecture". Library Information Centre 7.30
Thu	7	Holy Communion at the Social Club, Essex Road. Town ministers preside in turn 1.30 to 2.00
Fri	8	Senior Citizens. Bob Wellings, "Pern and the Andes" (Talk/slides) Silvester Horne Inst 2.30
		R. N. L. I. Fish and Chip Supper. Tickets at £5 by phoning 722912, 772805 or 724371. 7.30
Fri/Sat	8, 9	Scaramouche Jones with Pete Postlethwaite. At Church Stretton School. 7.30
Sat	9	Cancer Research UK. Coffee Morning at the Silvester Horne Institute 10.00 to 12.00
		Wistanstow Coffee morning for expenses of Sponsored Walk on May 6. (half proceeds of the walk for capital equipment for Craven Arms and Church Stretton medical centres). See posters for details. At The Gables, Wistanstow 10.30

WEEK TWO

Mon	11	Stretton Cancer Care. Roger Wilson, "The Patient and the Professional". Parish Centre 2.30
Tue	12	CS Women's Institute. Cllr Judith Williams, "A life in year as Mayor". Competition, "Posh Hat". Silvester Horne Institute. 7.15
Wed	13	Women's Network. Maurice Coleman: Talk and slide on South Africa. Methodist Hall 2.30
Thur	14	Traidcraft fairly traded goods at 36 Watling Street South (every 2 nd Thursday). 10.30 to 12.30
Fri	15	Arthritis Care at the Social Club, Essex Road . Every third Friday of the month. 2.30
		Council for Protection of Rural England. Squadron Leader M Locke, 'Helicopters over South Shropshire'. Discussion of noise levels. [after short AGM] Methodist Hall 7.30

WEEK THREE

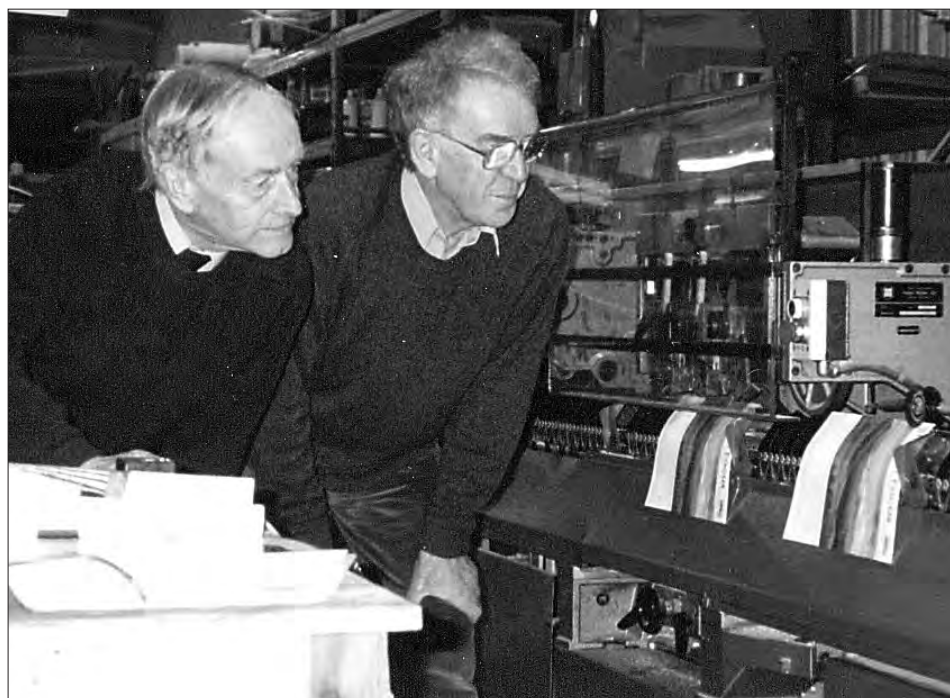
Mon	18	Good Neighbours AGM at the Parish Centre 2.30
		Shropshire Literary Society. "The Farmer - Fact or Fiction" 7.30
Tue	19	Countrywomen's Guild. "An update on Mayfair" by Meg Bacon. Parish Centre 2.15
		Hope Bowdler MU. A Meditation on Lent, led by Muriel Hill. At 36 Alison Road. 2.30
		All Stretton WI. Richard Morris, "The work of the Trading Standards Service" – with amusing case histories. (Competition: "My best bargain"). All Stretton Village Hall 7.30
Wed	20	Women's Network. Members' afternoon. Methodist Hall 2.30
		Camera Club. A.G.M. and Competition Award. All members. Library Information Centre 7.30
Fri	22	Senior Citizens. Mrs Christine Harvey, "The Parish Council". Silvester Horne Institute 2.30
		Shropshire Wildlife Trust. Sarah Whild, "Hay Meadows"(illustrated). Information Centre 7.30

Sat	23	Churches Together Lent Coffee Morning. Proceeds to "Harvest Help" water project and to The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital LINAC appeal. Parish Centre 10.30 to 12.00
		Church Stretton UNA. Paul Marsden MP, "Reforming the United Nations to deliver peace and security". In the Shirehall, Shrewsbury 2.00
Sun	24	National Trust. "Return to Purple" Carding Mill Valley NT Centre. 1.30 - 4.00

WEEK FOUR

Mon	25	Shropshire Ornithological Society. Brayton Holt, "On the edge of the Arctic". Non members £1.00 Coffee. Methodist Hall 7.30
		Church Stretton & District Rail User's Association. Parish Centre 7.30
Tue	26	Gardening Club. Martin Ford (Garden Broadcaster) "Shrubs for year round interest" £1.00. Silvester Horne Institute. Meeting starts with coffee/tea 7.00
		Stretton Focus AGM. Parish Centre 7.30
Wed	27	Women's Network. An Easter Meditation with the Revd Tony Hearle. Methodist Hall 2.30
		Camera Club. Finals Competition. Judge: Dr John Buckley. Library Information Centre. 7.30
Thur	28	Maundy Thursday United Communion Service at St Laurence's Church 7.30 Offering for the Lent 2002 Churches Together Charities
		Mass of The Lord's Supper at St Milburga's 7.30
Fri	29	GOOD FRIDAY SERVICES
		St Laurence's Good Friday Meditation (Church). All Age Service (Parish Centre). 10.30
		Methodist 10.45
		United Reformed 11.00
		United Service in The Square. Please process if you are able from the town side of the station and follow the Cross to The Square for a short Service, wet or fine. 11.45
		St Milburga's Solemn Liturgy of the Passion, Veneration of the Cross, Communion 3.00
		Hope Bowdler. Words and music for Good Friday at St Andrew's 7.30
		Methodist Circuit Service at Broad Street Church, Ludlow 7.30
		Stations of The Cross at St Walburga's RC, Plowden 7.30
Sat	30	Easter Vigil and First Mass of Easter at St Milburga's. 8.00pm
Sun	31	EASTER SUNDAY

Dates for April due by 12 noon on Fri 15 March to Focus Diary, 1 Central Av., CS. SY6 6EE Tel .724304



Producing last month's issue of *Focus* at the printer's in Welshpool. Left: inspecting output from the press. Right: collating and stapling each final copy.

CHURCH SERVICES in the Strettons



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

Sunday Services

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

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

Thursdays: Holy Communion 11.30 am.

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

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

The Parish Office is in the Parish Centre, Church St. (Tel: 724224). Open Monday - Wednesday 10.00 - 12.30 pm., Thursday 2.00 - 4.30 pm., Friday 9.30 - 4.30 pm
 Secretary: Nancy Cleaton. Email: parishoffice@onetel.net.uk



METHODIST CHURCH

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

Sunday Services

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

Weekday Activities

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

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



RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Clerk: Jamie Wrench (Tel: 723923)

Sundays: Meeting for worship in the Sylvester Horne Committee Room. Children welcome. 10.30 am.
 For details of home discussion groups which meet at 7.30 pm. please telephone the Clerk.



ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

St Milburga's, Church Stretton

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

St Walburga's, Plowden.

Sunday Mass 10.45 am.



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

Sunday Services

Week 1 Holy Communion (ASB) and Sunday School 11.00 am.
 Week 2 URC 3.00 pm.
 Week 3 Family Service 11.00 pm.
 Week 4 Holy Communion (BCP) 9.00 am,
 Week 5 Family Service 3.00 pm.



UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Minister : Rev. Norman Smith (Tel: 724903)

Sunday Services

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

Weekday Activities

Mondays (week 1) Ladies' Group. Men's Group 2.30 pm.
 Mondays (week 3) Church Meeting 7.30 pm.
 Mondays (week 5) Worship Group 7.30 pm.
 Wednesdays (week 1) Ladies' Link 8.00 pm.

Anglican Voice:



It was a Tea-Party last month, but it could be an outing, a lunch or a time of worship followed by a speaker. Whatever is scheduled on

the first Wednesday of the month, the Parish Centre becomes a hive of activity. Around 50 women from in and around the Strettons gather to meet with other Christians in an informal setting. Many of the women are between 50 and 90 years old. Some women may be on their own or can no longer get to church on a regular basis. The invitation, however, is open to all who would like an opportunity to worship God, have an interesting afternoon in the company of others and to feel valued as an individual.

The Women's Fellowship, with over 80 members, is now a highlight for many women in our community. It must be one of the largest groups that meet in the Parish Centre, but the group had its beginnings long before the Parish Centre was built. In the early 1970's there was no women's group at St. Laurence's as the local branch of the Mother's Union had been closed a few years earlier. Some of the women in the church started meeting in one another's homes for a time of worship and fellowship. When the Rev. Pat Ashe became rector, his wife, Marion, assumed responsibility for leading the meetings and it then became known as The Women's Fellowship. After the Ashes left, Rose Woodger helped to lead the meetings, but in 1985 under the direction of Gill Stedman, a committee was formed to help organise the monthly meetings.

The committee, now under the leadership of Sue Roberts, meets three times a year to plan the programme, organise teas and arrange transport for infirm members. Those that serve on the committee also take on a pastoral role. The membership is divided among the committee so that if they know someone is unwell or in trouble cards or flowers can be sent or a visit might be made. The committee also plans how to use the collection money which can be as much as £100 at a given meeting. The Fellowship has been pleased to give to missions or charities that a speaker might represent, the Parish Centre Fund, as tokens of thanks to speakers or to help pay for flowers given to sick members.

Sue Roberts would like to extend the welcome to other women in the area who might benefit from The Women's Fellowship. She hopes that The Fellowship will continue to grow and to fill a need for many in our society. According to Sue, the Fellowship has particularly flourished since a group of women began getting together before each meeting to pray through the list of members. In fact, the speaker in March will be the Rector who has planned a talk entitled, 'Too Busy Not To Pray'. Join them on Wednesday March 6th at 2:30pm.

Sue Roberts and Jill Millard

March 6 th - The Rector	'Too Busy Not to Pray'
April 3 rd - Douglas Grounds	'The Rector Who Restored St. Laurence's'
May 1 st - Outing	Erddig
June 5 th - Norman Allan	'Reflections On My time in Africa'
July 3 rd - 12:30 for 1:00pm	Summer Lunch Party

MAYSI - Correction

In the February issue wrong information was given under this heading.

MAYSI (Mayfair Supporting Independence) has been formed to provide **care** services. Please contact Julie Fox on 01694 722077 or call in at 44b Sandford Avenue, Church Stretton if you want to find out more about this service.

Julie is available Wednesday through to Friday of each week.

Mayfair Lottery Result

For January:

No. 31 £100

No.332 £50

No.157 £20

No.274 £10

Methodist Voice: Facing the Challenge



In last month's issue of Focus, we looked at possible improvements to our church buildings to help us provide a more welcoming atmosphere and to prepare us for the challenges of the 21st century.

This is not, of course, a matter which concerns only our Methodist church here in Church Stretton, for there is a growing realisation that all our Churches, of whatever denomination, must work together to provide a Christian (as opposed to a denominational) vision in an increasingly agnostic world.



We, therefore, hope and pray for continuing progress in the ecumenical talks among the Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Churches, while also giving thanks for the Papal support for growing ecumenical togetherness.

Certainly, in any such talks, Methodism has much to offer. In our January issue, I referred to the importance of our annual Covenant Service as an opportunity for us to renew our mission to promote God's Kingdom. But we can also look with pride at the growing role that: (a) women and (b) members of our ethnic communities are playing in our Church leadership. Twice in the past five years, women have been elected as President of the Methodist Conference; many church members will recall, a few years ago, the election of Mr Leon Murray, of Telford, as our Vice-President, and then last year that of Rev. Inderjit Bhogal as our President. These appointments reveal our readiness to select to office the best candidates, irrespective of race, colour or sex, and that can only bring strength to our Christian witness.

Mission Requires Training & Preparation

Methodism can also be proud of the training facilities it offers at Cliff College in Sheffield. Indeed, our current President of Conference, Rev. Dr. Christina LeMoignan, has recently written:-

Cliff College has a proud record of keeping before the Methodist people, the gospel imperative 'Christ for All-All for Christ'. The imperative does not change, but ways of meeting it do.

This point is further developed by Rev. David Decks, who says: *Cliff College has an exciting future, in the service of the Methodist Church and the wider Christian community. With a focus on evangelism, Cliff will develop a broad range of learning opportunities, making it a major provider of training for ministry and mission in the 21st century.*

But, to enable it to fulfil these aims. Cliff College urgently needs to upgrade and improve its facilities, and this has been taken up through the Methodist Church Connexional Appeal for 2001-2002. If you would like further details of this appeal, please contact our minister, Rev. Bernard Nixon, or one of our Stewards.

Fairtrade Fortnight

The Fairtrade Foundation has been set up to ensure a better deal for Third World producers and we are particularly asked to consider, during the fortnight of the 10th to 17th March, how we can best support Fairtrade. Please use this prayer during Fairtrade Fortnight:-

*Tilt the scales,
O God of the mustard seed:
That the poor shall see justice.
Share the feast,
O God of Eden's abundant garden:
That each crop may fetch a fair price.
Upset the tables,
O God of the upside-down Kingdom:
That the least can benefit from their trade.
Open our eyes,
O God of life in all its fullness:
That we may learn to walk the way of your son
Tilting, sharing, upsetting this world
Not satisfied
Until the products we bring to our table
Give a better deal, to all who hunger for one.*



In His name, Amen.

Eric Stephenson

The Easter Story - part 1



The Easter Story - part 2





URC Voice

I thought I had followed the guidance of God, even tested it by seeking the counsel of others and now I find it has all gone “pear shaped”. I can hardly believe it, but it’s true. I keep going over and over the events in my head and

wonder why. I talk to God about it, and so far have not received a definitive answer.

On the one hand I go on being convinced that I did get it right, I was being obedient to God’s will, and there must be some explanation for my current circumstances. Other people may even say that God is with me in my turmoil, which I am sure he is, and one day I shall look back and realise the reason! On the other hand I think that in spite of all the pointers to the contrary, I must have got it wrong. God was not guiding me in this direction at that point in time, and he is wanting me to get back “on track”.

That kind of scenario relates to people in marriage, people in communities, people in work and people in church. Many people going through a difficult time, especially if they have tried to listen to God’s voice about past decisions, find it very hard to get satisfactory answers to their questions.

Whatever our predicament, it is vital to appreciate that God never leaves us, and God never lets us down. If we are upset, angry, hurt, bitter, resentful, he longs to help us cope with the here and now, and encourages us to forgive any who may have harmed us along life’s road.



During the season of Lent, and especially in Holy Week, we have opportunity to ponder again the cruel unjust suffering and horrendous death of Jesus on the cross. We remember how the religious leaders despised him, and how eventually even his closest friends abandoned him. As his situation deteriorated he wrestled in prayer in a garden outside the city, and faced the fact that what had happened, and what would happen, was in accordance with God’s will. His courage and steadfastness must have deeply affected those who saw it, especially when he prayed that those crucifying him might know God’s forgiveness. Even one of the soldiers responsible for carrying out the death sentence was moved to acknowledge his true identity.

May God help us, whatever our circumstances, to trust him, and even to go on forgiving those who have given us so much to be sad and sorrowful about.

Norman Smith



Roman Catholic Voice

A new commandment I give, that you love one another; even as I have loved you..... John 13 34-35

One day last September stands out as memorable. It was a beautiful late summer day in France, returning to England after a wonderful holiday. A visit to Bayeux was planned to see the famous tapestry, a depiction of events surrounding the battle of Hastings in 1066. It was a fascinating, beautiful work of art and worth the visit. The day was the Friday after the September 11th atrocity in New York. The next part of the day was a visit to the spectacular and beautiful cathedral in Bayeux for the three-minute silence. It was moving and sad, as a large, disparate group came together in unity of purpose, respect and love. This visit coloured the day and focussed thoughts.

Moving on after a pleasant lunch in the bustling, vibrant streets of this lovely old town, the journey continued towards the Normandy beaches, the destination being Arromanches, the site of the Mulberry harbour. This harbour was the idea of Churchill, who oversaw its design, building and assembly to provide an artificial harbour to support the war arena. The journey to the area was interspersed with war cemeteries, a testament to the staggering price paid during this conflict.

The visit proved interesting, illuminating and very moving as miles of startlingly beautiful beaches unfolded, along with the unbelievable statistics of this historic event. On reflection the day had centred around conflict, war, killing, atrocities and man’s hatred and intolerance of man, through events which occurred over hundreds of years, snapshots of three separate conflicts out of how many?

The quotation above from John’s gospel gives Christ’s exhortation that each human being must strive to love their fellow man. That love must be tolerant, respectful, accepting, equal and unselfish. The day described highlights man’s failure to follow this commandment, man’s belief in his superiority and his judging others and their beliefs as less valuable.

Christ exhorts man to love one another as He loved us. Is this possible? At this time of Lent Christians remember the love He showed for man, He gave the supreme sacrifice of suffering and submitting to brutal murder to offer new life in Him, this is how much man is loved. This love is unselfish and unconditional, total! It is offered to each individual, none more than others, all are equal in His eyes, created in His image, an equality scientifically verified now if there was ever any doubt. The human genome project, one of the greatest discoveries ever, shows man’s genetic makeup, and that all humans are

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Believe it or not!

*"I can't believe that", said Alice.
"Can't you?" the Queen said, in a
pitying tone. "Try again; Draw a
long breath and shut your eyes."*

Alice laughed: "There's no use trying", she said, "One can't believe impossible things". "I dare say you haven't had much practice", said the Queen. "When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast".

Lewis Carroll – *Through the Looking Glass*

My attitude to belief in relation to religion, and in particular, Christianity, has changed significantly over the years as I have reflected on my beliefs and doubts, and consciously stopped trying to believe things I don't believe, or things that I am ambivalent about! Many of us who were brought up as church members were told what to believe as children, and many of us I think have since chanted creeds, without considering whether we really believe or understand what we are saying, or have chanted them with tongue in cheek and reservations. Some of those dogmas I see now as totally unnecessary, and it doesn't matter if they are true or not! I don't study the work of a botanist and depend on his accuracy, to fully appreciate and enjoy the beauty of a flower, and personal religious belief does not depend on the accuracy of the theories of theologians. I know many people point to an infallible external authority in religious matters, but for me, authority in religious matters must involve an

inner positive response to a prompting, whether that prompting is from within myself, or from an external source.

This does not deprecate attempts to put religious beliefs into words, but should we not consider these attempts as being provisional, and in many cases, inadequate? I suspect that if individuals of many churches were questioned about their beliefs off the record then the answers would exhibit a healthy, questioning, agnosticism in relation to many aspects of the orthodoxy of their denomination; certainly this is the impression I get when talking with friends. Perhaps churches (including Quakers) should encourage members to write their own individual creeds (as far as they can be expressed in words; see below!), in order to stimulate thought, and to see what grassroots members really believe, and what they really believe, and what they really feel relevant to their own faith.

Quakers acknowledge the diversity of experience of members, and its influence on their own individual beliefs, and see faith as something much deeper than can be expressed in the words of a traditional creed:

"There will also be diversity of experience, of belief and of language. Friends maintain that expressions of faith must be related to personal experience. Some find traditional Christian language full of meaning; some do not The deeper realities of our faith are beyond precise verbal formulation and our way of worship based on silent waiting testifies to this."

L.D.

Women's World Day Of Prayer

The Women's World Day of Prayer Movement will celebrate its annual Day of Prayer on Friday, 1st March 2002. The theme of the Service will be *Challenged to Reconcile*. The Service comes from Romania, a country of contrasts – mountains, plateau, hills and plains, woods, meadows and a variety of flora and fauna. It is rich in natural resources and the River Danube flows through the Danube Delta into the Black Sea where there are resorts and health spas. These facts may appear to paint a picture of health, wealth and pleasure. This is not the reality, for many people still struggle after years of difficulty and oppression. However, the people are resilient and do not lose hope. This is evident in their faith and hope in God and their country. In learning more about their country, the culture from which they come and the difficulties many of them face, we cannot help but be 'Challenged to Reconcile'.

Through this day of prayer and in the days to come will we, as a nation and as individuals, take up the challenge of reconciliation? Will we respond with words and deeds spurred on by the courage and fortitude of our friends in Romania? People of all ages and from many differing backgrounds will be celebrating this Day of Prayer. May we invite you to join in the Service at the Church Stretton Methodist Church.

Berry's Coffee House would like to thank those who supported our sales of mulled wine and mince pies after the Carol Service in the Square on Christmas Eve.

We raised £150 which we are sharing between the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital LINAC (Cancer) Appeal and UNICEF for children affected by war.



continued from Roman Catholic Voice page 26

almost identical, all equal examples of God's creation, each of whom should be treated as such. Each person must accept this equality, then the love which man is commanded to show will come.

At this time of Lent each person could make a special effort to show love to others particularly those who seem less loveable and to remember man's equality in His eyes.

Home from Hospital Service a great success in Church Stretton

Age Concern's South Shropshire Home from Hospital Service has been in great demand since it expanded to include Church Stretton a year ago.

The Service, which is free of charge, provides non-medical support to older people following a hospital stay. Help can be of a practical nature, such as assistance with shopping or collecting prescriptions, or can take the form of emotional support, something that is often needed at this time.

Deputy Co-ordinator Jackie Humber says 'Adjusting from the caring environment of hospital to the greater level of independence needed when someone returns home can be difficult. Our volunteers can visit once or twice a week for up to four weeks following an older person's return home. Many older people live alone, and welcome the companionship as well as the practical help that our service can provide. We also offer support to

carers, who may welcome a short break.'

One consequence of the services success is the need to recruit more volunteers. 'We have some excellent volunteers working in this area, but due to the increased demand for our assistance, we need more. Volunteers are given initial and on-going training as needed, travel expenses are paid, and support is always available from the service Co-ordinators.'

'Volunteering for the Home from Hospital Service often suits those whose lives are already busy, but who would like to help others and take an active part in the local community. Times and dates of visits can be arranged between volunteer and client at a time that suits them both, and commitment is only for four weeks at a time.'

To learn more about the service or how to become a volunteer, contact Debby or Jackie on 01584 878046. They will be happy to hear from you.

South Shropshire Furniture Scheme

R Shop Now Open!

Remember to re-use, recycle, regenerate and to therefore reduce is the message coming from Jean Jarvis, Chief Officer of the South Shropshire Furniture Scheme. "Not long ago we put out a plea for a volunteer antiques expert to help sort out surplus china, bric-à-brac and other collectables for our shop. Our **R Shop** is now open in our Church Stretton premises at 11 Burway Road. The shop will be open from 8.30am-4.30pm Monday to Thursday.

We are inviting people to come and have a look at some of the more unusual items that have been donated to our scheme. We have anything from antique furniture, reams of paper, skeins of carpet and tapestry wool, to dinner services, candelabras and Yamaha organs! Items are priced very reasonably and all proceeds from the R Shop will go towards keeping our van on the road and our service operating.

Last year we made 750 collections and over 200 deliveries in this district. Based on last year's mileage, we anticipate this year's to be nearing 30,000 miles. It will cost our charity around £8,000 in fuel, maintenance and van related costs to carry out the unique service we provide and any funds raised through **R Shop** will go towards those costs.

For more information or to volunteer phone 724464.

Shropshire Literary Society

As some people will perhaps remember we felt it appropriate to postpone our literary analysis of the countryside in our last programme due to the foot and mouth disease epidemic, and now, like many, we are cautiously picking up the threads. Thus we have carried forward the following events.

The Country Parson: Fact and Fiction – A talk by Reverend Philip Harratt now to be held on Monday 4th March 2002 at 7.30 pm

The Farmer: Fact and Fiction – an evening co-ordinated by Thelma F Thompson now to be held on Monday 18th March at 7.30pm

Both will be held at the Information Centre Church Stretton and all are most welcome to attend at a cost of £2 to include coffee and biscuits. We shall also be going to Acton Scott Working Farm Museum sometime in April and hope to leave with some written reflections. We shall be continuing with some more countryside thoughts in our next programme, which will be published in August and available in the Library.

Thelma Thompson – 01694 722821

South Shropshire Voluntary Action

There will be Free Training courses commencing in March 2002, which have been selected to help voluntary and community groups within the South Shropshire area and are suitable for workers, volunteers and trustees. The course will include such matters as Minute-taking skills, Introduction to Health and Safety, Risk Assessment and Planning a Budget.

South Shropshire Voluntary Action are also looking for people to become Trustees and need people who have local knowledge, have concern for charities in the future and are able to attend about four meetings a year. Help us to help you. For an information pack contact Caroline Rollinson on 01584 877756.

Percy's Easter Message

At the time of writing it is 60 years since I was trapped in Singapore, together with many other British and Dominion military forces, plus civilians. The story of my own escape from the beleaguered island, and further trials and tribulations on the islands of Sumatra and Indonesia, before being rescued by a courageous Dutch sea captain, are only incidental to the message I wish to convey.

I was indeed fortunate. Many of my service friends were made prisoners, together with a number of civilians who suffered the same fate as those depicted in the film 'Tenko'. One of those brave ladies was Anna Powell from Pontesbury, whose ship was sunk on Black Friday 13th February 1942. Anna is now in her 90th Year, recovering in hospital from a fracture and still displaying the spirit manifested in those dreadful years of captivity, as explained in the true story, 'Women Behind the Wire'.

By good chance I was able to meet up with some of my service comrades who had endured captivity, torture and maltreatment by the Japanese. They were all reluctant to talk of their experiences but surprisingly, in most cases, was their absence of hate for their captors.

While on holiday last year, I got into conversation with two young

Japanese girls, waitresses in the hotel there to learn English. I questioned where they lived in Japan. One said Tokyo and the other said, rather quietly, Hiroshima. I told her that I had been a prisoner. She asked, somewhat sadly, "Do you hate the Japanese?" I took her small hand gently in mine and explained that I had hated only Hitler, Mussolini, Tojo and their evil regimes. "Therefore, I hope you are not going to put anything nasty in my coffee!" I said jokingly. She brightened up and said with a smile, "Just a little extra helping of cream".

What then is the object to my narrative. It is because we are now approaching Black Friday, the worst day surely in the whole of the Christian calendar, the day of Christ's betrayal, torture and death on the cross. At the end his tired lips were to utter those words which are still today the very bedrock of the Christian faith, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do". These words ring as true today as they did then. The events of September 11th 2001 are very clear in our memories and feeling still run high, but we must not confuse our feelings for justice to become clouded by those of revenge. "Revenge is mine, I will repay", saith the Lord.

Percy Edward Tarbuck

CPRE

These initials stand for the Council for the Protection of Rural England. So what does CPRE do that is different from other organizations? We campaign for the landscape in its own right for there are many pressures on the land. We believe in special protection for the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and for keeping the rest of Shropshire as a splendid place in which to live.

The quality of life in the countryside is part of our remit. We want flourishing schools, a better deal for village post offices and reasonable public transport. We campaign that more affordable housing is a must to keep young people in rural areas.

Main roads these days have heavy traffic and the skies are becoming busier. Part of Shropshire has been named as one of only four tranquil areas left in England. There is a threat to tranquillity in helicopter flights and training (pilots do have to be trained). On Friday March 15th CPRE is holding a meeting on helicopters, with a speaker from Shawbury plus a South Shropshire CPRE new member describing her increasing worry over noise levels.

This meeting is at the Methodist Hall, Church Stretton at 7.30 pm. All are invited to hear what is allowed, what is restricted. I think it is right to resist high noise levels but for public opinion to be a force it needs to be visible.

Claire Cox, Chairman South Shropshire Group



Housing Needs Survey

This survey – coming soon to our area – will collect information on housing needs of residents in South Shropshire. If your home is selected, make sure you take part and have the chance to win £100. The survey is being carried out by Fordham Research Ltd. on behalf of the South Shropshire District Council.

If you have any queries about the survey you can call David Francis on 01584 813337

Under Fives Storytime at Church Stretton Library

Would you like to be involved with a new regular storytime for young children? If so, we'd love to have your help, maybe to read stories or to help organise a rota. You don't need to have young children in your care.



Under five storytime sessions usually last about half an hour and are great fun. The reading is shared and we

have lots of brilliant storybooks in the library. Children come along with their parents/carer who stay with them during the session.

Please give your name and telephone number to one of the library staff if you think you may be able to help. As soon as we have enough names we will contact you to come along to a short meeting. Thank you



Quiz Night

We raised £270 at a Quiz Night at the Church Stretton & District Club on Friday 11th

January. We are very grateful to all those who were involved: the Club Committee and Staff for a generous donation and for help and refreshments; to Quizmaster Kim March; to other Rotarians; to R.N.L.I. members who helped; and above all to the 13 teams who competed. Thank you all very much.

The winners were the Longville Arms Select Six. The R.N.L.I. is promoting quizzes all over the country this year so the Longville Arms will now go on to the next round for Wales & West Mercia Region in May or June and with luck to a national final.

Two pubs in our branch area have arranged quizzes in this national competition. By the time you read this the Crown Inn, Wentnor will have held one (Friday 15th February); but there is time to take part in a quiz at the Boar's Head, Bishop's Castle on Wednesday 20th March. Why not speak to Mr. Perry the landlord 01588-638521.

Ah, we thought of that. The questions will be different from those we had in Church Stretton.

Fish & Chip Supper

Our next event is a Fish & Chip Supper to be held on **Friday 8th March** in the Silvester Horne Institute, starting at 7.30 p.m. Tickets £5. Telephone Mrs. Muriel Taylor 722805 or Mrs. Brenda Pogson 722912 or Jill & Richard Turner Jones 724371.

This is a popular event so book your ticket quickly.

Whitewater Rafting

The R.N.L.I. is running a rafting competition at the National Whitewater Rafting Centre at Bala on Sunday 16th June, for a third year. This will be an exciting and damp event for teams (crews?) of 4 to 7 people who should be aged 18 to 40. The R.N.L.I. provides boats, waterproof clothing and helmets. In return each team pays £50 to enter and must raise £100 per person in sponsorship. The teams have a practice run, a timed run and a third run for more fun and more wetting.

The Stretton Sharks, 7 bold local young men, will represent Church Stretton. Please support their fundraising events, a disco on 30th March and a bingo night and raffle on 27th April both at the Church Stretton & District Club.

The event on 16th June includes various amusements and is open to the public to support their local team and to enjoy a good family day out. Make a note in your diary. Support the Stretton Sharks.

Richard M. Turner Jones

Books Wanted

There will be a **Book Fair** at the Silvester Horne Institute on **Saturday 25th May** 10am-4pm to raise money for the **Shropshire and Mid-Wales Hospice**.

All books offered for sale will have been donated, so once again readers are asked that if they have any books in good condition that they would like to donate, please get in touch with Mr A J Crowe on 723292

Stretton Focus by subscription.

If you live in Church Stretton and usually buy *Stretton Focus* through one of the retail outlets, why don't you take an annual subscription and have the magazine delivered to your door? For those living further afield, *Stretton Focus* can be posted to you.

For more details, contact David Jandrell on 724531.

March - at last!

Are you one of the February Fainthearts? Do you welcome the end of the darkest winter months? Do you change the clocks to summertime with a sense of relief and relaxation – a feeling that you have once again survived the worst month of the year - February.

The period after Christmas is surely the longest of the winter months. The approach of March at least holds the promise of a little more warmth, a little more brightness and a chance at last to relax the muscles that have spent the winter months tight and strained.

Step outside during the real winter months and there is a tendency to scrunch up to face the cold – and then stay that way for the rest of the day; only relaxing when snuggled under the duvet at night. Shoulders get hunched, the face gets a permanent frown and the family approach one carefully and with trepidation.

Now – welcome to March! Yes, there may well be dreary days to come, but shoulders can now be straightened, deep breaths can be taken and family life returns to calm. Frowns are dismissed and the lips stretch into smiles – February is finished!

Having survived another winter, life starts to return to the limbs – trees are not the only ones where the sap rises. There is a feeling abroad that perhaps it's not too early to get the walking boots out of the cupboard and clean off last year's mud and sort out some maps (yes, I am a fair-weather walker). Maybe it is also time to get rid of a few pounds that have accumulated round the hips during the winter. Now that March is here – if approached with a cheerful face, deep breaths and an upright stance, *anything* is possible.

Welcome March!

M.S

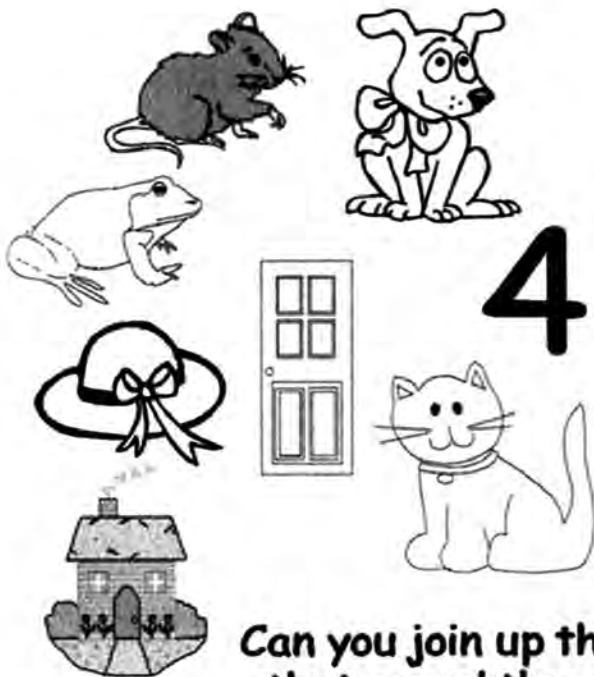
For Children of all Ages

1+4	2+2	5+1	3+3	1+1	2+3
2+3	1+4	4+2	1+5	2+2	4+1
1+4	2+1	3+3	2+4	1+2	2+2
5+1	4+2	3+3	2+4	5+1	6+0
2+5	1+3	4+2	5+1	3+0	3+1
1+1	2+2	3+3	3+3	4+4	5+5
2+1	1+3	5+1	4+2	4+1	7+1
2+2	3+2	6+0	5+1	1+4	3+1

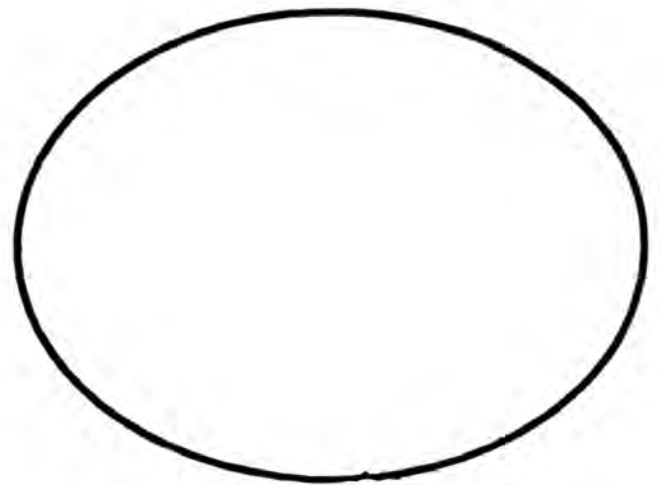
Add the numbers in each square and if they add up to 6, colour them in to find something to do with Easter.



Springtime Puzzles



Can you join up the ones that sound the same?



How do you think this egg should be decorated?

Can you sort these out to make some baby animals?
balm alof hickc flac legpit glinduck

Moriel Gidney



Help At Home

A new service

Help at Home is a new initiative funded by Shropshire County Council. Age Concern was successful in winning the contract to provide practical care to older people in the Shropshire area who are unable to have services from Social Services under the new eligibility criteria, which now excludes many service users who were receiving domestic help, shopping and collecting of pensions. The Help at Home team will have a holistic approach promoting dignity, privacy and independence in the services provided, as well as a choice about the task which is most beneficial and important to enable the older person to remain in their home.

Help at Home scheme will not be able to undertake any personal care. Funding is limited so we may not be able to help everyone. The service is subsidised but a small weekly charge of six pounds will be collected and an assessment of need will have to be carried out. The voluntary and/or paid Home Support Worker will provide an efficient, confidential and caring service for one to two hours per week for each household, at a regular time and day to suit the individual.

For more information about being a voluntary or paid Home Support Worker, or if you wish to receive its services, please contact Jenny Rowe, on (01743) 233788.

Vat On Water Supplies

Recently it has come to our attention that some older people have been charged VAT on their water supply. Please check your bills to make certain you are not paying VAT unnecessarily.

If you have problems contact your water supplier, if you have further problems ring Age Concern Advocacy Service (10743) 357748

www.churchstretton.co.uk

People often refer to www.churchstretton.co.uk as the Town Council's web site. It is not. It is managed by the Council, but it belongs to the people of Church Stretton. Its aim is to promote Church Stretton as a centre for tourism and local business, and to act as a comprehensive source of information for visitors and local residents. It has been immensely successful, and has received over 12,000 visitors since it started in June 2000. It continues to receive many favourable comments, such as these ones received in January: from Lisa Kilminster: "We are regular visitors to Church Stretton because we have relatives there. The website is really good and informative"; from Owen Roberts: "The site is excellent for the town, showing all people that live elsewhere to come and visit" and from DG of Church Stretton: "It's great to see a website with info for visitors and residents alike."

Information for local residents includes comprehensive details of organisations in Church Stretton,

such as the library, churches and medical centre, and contacts for 70 Sports, Social and Leisure clubs. There are also local events pages

listing forthcoming events in the town. Much of this information is currently scattered in different places, and some of it is unavailable from any other source. If your club or society has any local events coming up in the next six months, please send us details through the web site, or by letter, phone 01694 722113 or email to stretton@towncouncil.plus.com.



Almost 90 local businesses and owners of tourist accommodation are now advertising on the site. If your business is not already on the site please contact us through the web site or by phone or email as above. The rates are low compared with other forms of advertising, and businesses joining between now and 1st June will be able to do so at one quarter of the annual rate - as little as £5 for a basic advertisement.

Robin Jukes-Hughes



Why don't you come along to our Annual General Meeting 2.30 p.m. on Monday 18 March 2002 at the Parish Centre, Church Stretton? There is no commitment – just come and meet some of our volunteers over afternoon tea and hear something of what we do in and around the Strettons.

We are all volunteers, we are an independent charity and we are looking for a few more people to help our neighbours. We did over three thousand tasks last year and delivered thousands of meals on wheels. Our object? To help the elderly maintain their independence in our community. Do come.

Weather review – 2001

No, it wasn't the warmest year, in spite of the warm summer we had - it averaged out slightly less than 2000 at 50.33, compared with 50.78 but it did maintain the warmer trend of recent years. It was the third year in a row with a mean temperature of over 50, of which we have had five in the last seven years. 2001 was a lot drier and the previous year, the total rainfall coming out at 34.05 inches against 43.59 inches. **RAIN** Year 2000 was an all time high at 43.59 inches, but 2001 reverted to normal with 34.05 inches. The average for the 35 years from 1966 is 34.1. Rain fell on 154 days. Compared with 2000 the outlook for rain was bad at the start of the year, with all three months recording higher figures than the year before, but that was the tail end of that terribly wet winter 2000/2001 with all the attendant flooding we remember so clearly. After that, with the exception of August, most months were well down on the same period a year earlier.

TEMPERATURES The maximum was 87F in June and again in July. We had 61 air frosts, 10 of which were on consecutive days in January. The coldest day was 35.6F again in January. So there were no days when the temperature did not rise above freezing point. Snow fell on 19 days and lay for 13 days. April being the worst month for snow, with snow falling on 4 days. Fog was prevalent last year, 21 days compared with 8 the previous year. There was a lot more thunder too, 7 days, but on the whole we get off lightly on the thunderstorm side of things.

SUNSHINE We did very well in 2001 for sunshine. 284 days of it, compared with 253 days in 2000. This was brought about by the fine summer which started in May (which recorded its first ever temperature of 80) and went on until the end of August. The longest dry spell was, believe it or not, in January and the sunniest months were July and August, in spite of the August rain. 2001 has set a new record for sunshine, beating 1999.



WIND As we know, our weather comes predominately from the west and westerly winds blew on no less than 203 days, but what was unusual was the large number of calm days, days of no wind, no less than 90 days. This isn't a record but it does help to explain why the weather felt so good and it is interesting to note that the months with the most calm days were January, February, November and December. There isn't anything more cantankerous than the weather!

R.Smart

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B.A. HONS

Contact 01694 724749 - Mobile 0781 663475

WANTED

Young, altruistic people to join
the Board of Trustees.
Your chance to make a difference!
Please ring or write for an
application form and details.



Mayfair Community Centre,
c/o 44B Sandford Ave.
Church Stretton. SY6 6BH
01694 722077

Anthony's Hair Studio
wish to remind customers that the Salon
is not open on Mondays.

United Nations Association

The Church Stretton Branch UNA are hosting an important meeting at the Shire Hall, Shrewsbury, at which Paul Marsden, MP for Shrewsbury & Atcham, will be talking about 'Reforming the United Nations in the aftermath of the war in Afganistan'. The talk will take place in the Council Chamber at 2.30 pm on Saturday 23rd March. If anyone would like transport from Church Stretton, would they please contact Keith Maddison on 724327 or Susan Beale on 723679.

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