

The Cleobury Clarion

A LOW CRIME AREA?

This is a low crime area. I know such a claim will get a hysterical reception from those who can remember a burglary years ago, but by national standards we have little to complain about. Until I was driving home from my lady love's place one Saturday morning last month and waited for two police cars coming from Kidderminster with a full display of blue flashing lights and sirens.

Turned off the High Street for home and there was a parade of the same colours parked up Love Lane. I counted seven, including a dog van, but my son counted nine with two of them moving around. Armed police in Cleobury? Blimey!

Little has been heard, but I gather a shotgun was removed from a flat in Steeple Close and a man with a record arrested. There was a report in 'Private Eye' at this time about a man escaping from prison in Suffolk

and being searched for. Was this the man? I wish I knew.



A rare sight. A fleet of police cars assembled in pursuit of a local fugitive. They got him.

Almost a week later there was a minor scare when a couple went into the Co-op store for a supply of alcohol and couldn't pay. They were asked to leave, to put it politely.

Out on the Ludlow Road they got a bus to stop and the lady got on board but couldn't pay, nor could her companion. He became noisy and threatening, but the driver would not move until the police arrived and took the couple into custody. Did I say this was a low crime area? Maybe.

OUR FAVOURITE - GOOD NEWS

Let's give you something worth your attention in the coming weeks and months. Like the return of the 'Festival at the Edge' to Hopton Court over the weekend of July 19-20th.

It's all about speech, spoken or sung in a variety of ways and with all sorts of musical instruments to accompany the sound and expression. A great weekend to look forward to. More details on Page 48.

More immediate is the town's D-Day commemoration on June 6th, the 80th anniversary of the landing in Europe and the drive towards victory in Europe. It will be a day of memories and respect for those who gave.

And on June 22nd we have the Cleobury Festival, when the town will buzz from 12.00 noon until the licensed premises close. Activities centred around the sports field and the Sports and Social Club. Enjoy!



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Ladies who share energy for a good cause, Kathie and Bev. See Page 9.



Happy Birthday Cleobury Wash House 10 years old! See Page 29.



Bill's Quality Engineering. He's learned a lot in 50 plus years. See Page 57.

And On Other Pages....

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CLOWS TOP GARDEN CLUB

We have two events in May. On the 10th we will be holding our annual Plant Sale and Coffee Morning. Held as usual in Clows Top Victory Hall at 10 am - 12 Noon. Come along and find a bargain! Also on offer will be tea, coffee and home made cake.

Our first garden visit of the season takes place this month. This will be to Coddington Vineyard Garden, near Ledbury. We will meet on May 22nd at 6pm in the Hall car park to share cars. As well as a vineyard (tours and tasting are available separately) Coddington has a garden worth visiting. There are terraces, wildflowers and a woodland walk. Also on offer is a large pond with a stream and associated planting. No garden visit is complete without tea and cakes, and this one is no exception. The price for entry +tea is £12.

Elva will be pleased to answer any questions and book you on the visit. Call her 01299 832288.

Judith Lawson

THE BREAKFAST CLUB

Dr Tim Blackburn, a consultant in Facial Reconstruction and Cosmetic Surgery at Manchester Royal Infirmary, was our speaker for the April meeting. He has been practicing medicine for thirty years specialising in facial surgery.

He outlined the progress made in this area since his

junior days when measurements were taken using a plastic ruler! Now computers are used to calculate precise measurements and generate images to aid the surgeons.

He illustrated his talk with video interviews and graphic photographs (with the express consent of the patients it should be said) and explained the detailed and precise work to reconstruct or even 'manufacture' bones and produce prostheses benefitting patients affected by congenital conditions, cancer surgery, and trauma. He also described other methods for rebuilding skin and flesh.

Today, emphasis is very much geared to the outcome the patient wishes to prioritise rather than assume what's best for them. For instance, one young woman with a rare condition wasn't concerned with her appearance as she was blind but wanted more than anything to be able to kiss her boyfriend and drink a cup of coffee! Also, greater emphasis is placed on inter-disciplinary co-operation and consultation. For instance, departments such as oncology, dentistry, psychiatry are frequently involved in treatment planning.

It was a fascinating and humbling talk and all members were in awe of and very appreciative of his work for the NHS.

For details of the Breakfast Club please contact Angela Drennan on 01299 270636.

Diane Waddington

HOPTON WAFERS QUIZ NIGHT

Hopton Wafers Village Hall have a Quiz Night booked for Friday May 17th. The doors open at 6.30 and the quiz will start at 7.00. Teams of four with the cost at £10.00 apiece that includes a Chilli Con Carne baked potato supper or there will be a vegetarian option if you prefer - let them know if you want that.

Bring your own drinks, so you won't be disappointed at the choice. Booking is essential, by email to Maria at hoptonwaferevents@gmail.co or call 07970 910 348

There will be a collection of packaged or tinned food for the Cleobury Food Bank. No fresh food, thank you.

VICTORY HALL, CLOWS TOP

Our recent barn dance and quiz night were a fantastic success. 10 teams for the quiz night and 50 people for the barn dance means we have already planned duplicate events for later in the year. 3 new enthusiastic committee members means that the work load has been shared.

Our next event is a quiz night on Friday 17th; 7.15pm start £2.50 per person and teams up to 6. Ring Steve on 07738014884 for tickets. That will be followed by an equine table top event on Saturday the 15th, 10.30am to 1.30pm. 10 pounds per table; one pound entrance. For tables ring Julia on 07941899624.

Food and refreshments available at both events.

Steve Woodison



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CMFA AGM

A touch of privilege here, as I am an honorary life member of the Footpath Association and don't have to pay for membership. So the least I owe is to sit in at the Annual General Meeting and see that all's well. It is.

30 years old this year the membership is a healthy 79 and they organise walks locally and at distant locations once a year. The atmosphere at the Golf Club was friendly and most of the committee were re-elected, which means members are happy at the way things are done or they're all related to one another.

The exception on committee re-election was Susan Sharpe, who has been an outstanding worker for the walking cause. The chairman praised her work and asked the members to agree her election as a life member; passed with no dissent and a round of applause in appreciation of much work done.

30 minutes later more members arrived and a very fine dinner was served, to round off the evening in an atmosphere of friendship. 30 years on and still an example of a club well run and friendly.

Jim Reynolds

THE NEARLY DEAD POETS' SOCIETY

A modest gathering of poets in March, with a birthday party taking precedence in one case and illness in others. Winter's last swipe as she bid goodbye?

The response was a positive one, with members reading their own works plus favourites from Tennyson, and

Betty Hughes plus a selection of animal subjects. We are never short of ideas, including the choice of 'Fairies' as the subject for the April work. We meet at the library on Tuesday May 28th, accommodating the Spring Bank Holiday before hearing what we all have to offer.

Jim Reynolds

A SUMMER BALL

Cleobury Mortimer Rugby Football Club are running a fundraising Summer Ball for the town's club.

The Ball will be a 'formal dress' event with a DJ and a live five-piece swing band, prosecco reception, three course meal, with table service and a bar and dancing running well into the night.

This will take place at the Parish Hall at 7.00 on Saturday June 29th and will be a ticket only event. The price will be £65 per head and tickets are now available on a 'first come first served' basis to the public.

You have an opportunity to pull a table of friends and family together around a meal table to have a fabulous get together in the middle of this summer alongside other members of our community.

To apply for tickets please email CMRFC.secretary@gmail.com as soon as possible. You will then be sent an application form with payment details for tickets and have the opportunity to secure available places. Tickets will be sent once payment has been received and nearer to the event.

Mark Holbourn

Hon. Club Secretary.

CLEE HILL BIRD SURVEY

It's not too late to help with the Bird Survey. We found seven or eight pairs of Curlew last year, and hope they have all come back. We need to count the breeding population, and monitor the outcome of nesting attempts, to see if any young fledge. If you see or hear a Curlew, please tell us.

We would also like to know if you see or hear any Lapwing, Kestrel or Cuckoo, or see evidence of breeding Red Kite, please. If you've seen or heard any of these species, please don't assume we know about them. Please report all your observations, especially any Curlew "the most important bird conservation priority in the UK"

Contact Chris Bargman on 01299 270514, or email: chcwg@shropscwgs.org.uk

Leo Smith

HOPTON WAFERS PARISH COUNCIL

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Saturday May 18th at 6.00pm in Doddington Village Hall.

All parishioners are invited to attend from 6pm when light refreshments will be served and there will be opportunities to meet your Councillors and other parishioners. This event will be attended by Cleobury First Responders, Christians Against Poverty and demonstrations on reporting highways issues such as potholes and Speed Watch. Come and meet the Parish Councillors who represent you.



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PURRING PARTNERS



Bev and Kathie, great friends you can meet at any town event as they raise funds for needy cats.

They say 'You can't choose your family, but you can choose your friends!' If you find 'true friends' they are like Angels - Treasure them!

In 2017, I met Bev and we hit it off straight away. Our biggest passion was our love of animals. We decided to become Volunteer Fundraisers for our wonderful, registered charity 'Newbridge Cat Rescue & Rehoming Centre' in Cleobury. Our missions were to raise as much money as possible for our charity; to make people smile; to promote loving all animals and

to promote our supportive local businesses

We phoned companies for donations and researched potential venues to go fundraising. We were delighted to be accepted by many local venues and we received great support from local shops and businesses. In 2019, we added 3 additional volunteers, our Kimi the Owl, Wiggy the Hen and Little Miss Daisy the Miniature Shetland Pony. They always make everybody smile!

In 2020, I suffered a massive brain seizure, lost my speech and my mobility. During such traumatic times in life, a 'friend' will vanish. A 'true friend' will stay beside you and help you through 'the new' version of your life. My 'Purr-fect Partner', my Bev became one of my carers. She takes me out in my wheelchair to continue to do what I love most, our fundraising!

Marion and Mike have worked so hard for 16yrs, caring for the cats in their care and have successfully rehomed 100s of cats.

As Fundraisers, for 2024 we are still evolving with new ideas and venues. It's lovely to be recognised by our supporters in our very friendly, local community! Please join our

Facebook page 'Fundraisers for Newbridge Cat Rescue'

To donate online, volunteer or rehome a cat visit www.ncrrhc.weebly.com

Kathie Rowbotham

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CHRISTIAN AID WEEK MAY 12th to 18th

COFFEE MORNING

A reminder that there's a coffee morning at 10.00 on Saturday the 25th at Shaunah Murrell's house, 8 Catherton Close.

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AN ICY EXPERIENCE

March 1st was not a nice day, with temperature low and low cloud threatening snow as Tina and I set out to deliver the Clarion. It was grim and I decided to head for home early and finish the job next day. Slightly better on the 2nd and we headed for Clee Hill to make one more delivery.

Tina, always keen to get the job done, was out of the car and taking an armful of magazines when she found ice and went down hard. Her cries for help made it clear she was in pain. The kind man from Clee Hill Stores helped me get her into the car and rather than wait for an ambulance we drove gently to Worcester Royal hospital. It took a long time to get help and a wheelchair to book her into A&E at about 4.00 and she was X-rayed at 11.00 to be told she'd fractured her hip. I drove home wondering how serious it was going to be for a working dancer and teacher.

She was operated on the next day - good old NHS - and her only problems were the aching hip and later the food. She was in there for almost two weeks as the hip got slowly better and the food didn't. The lady does know about diets and cooking and welcomed the offer of chips as a change from a variety of dishes she found inedible. The chips came swimming in gravy with two sachets to add to its appeal. It went back untouched.

I'm not trying to have a moan about hospital food in general, but Tina could see that in there the diet that made so many patients obese could be

addressed with simple but better food. All the other patients she spoke to agreed. If cheese and tomato rolls made by me were welcomed, it tells you a lot about the official grub.

I was amazed that after having an operation on Sunday she was walking gently on Tuesday. She progressed from there and on one visit to the loo she was striding out with a walking frame and the nurse was struggling to keep up.

When she was allowed home it took hours for the paperwork to be completed before I could drive her back to Cleobury, where an appointment had been made for a District Nurse to visit and check that all was well and the facilities up to the job of coping with an OAP. When the lady arrived, she sat and chatted to a friendly type she assumed was there to look after the OAP. The friendly lady was Tina, in her usual sociable mood and very pleased to be mistaken for a carer when she was the patient. Laughter and amazement all round.

She's not a good patient, more an impatient. When she was looking frustrated at not taking her weekly dance and fitness class, I suggested I take her down to the Market Hall to meet the ladies she teaches and chat to them. Silly me. She was greeted with warmth and put on eastern music to support her as she led them. Quite a female phenomenon.

What Tina would like to do is thank all the people who sent cards and flowers to hospital and then her home. Bless you all.

A little more about Tina and the work she does to help the mature amongst us to keep fit.

She teaches the Birth Dance, which has ancient traces as far back as pre-biblical times, an art form that has aided women in both pregnancy and childbirth. Is this dancing safe and beneficial? Nolan and Godwin's study of 2022 had two expert panels agreeing that the movements were safe.

Tina explains: "In contrast to other conventional dance and exercise forms, which impose movement upon the individual, this ancient dance forms an intrinsic power within one, which exposes self-expression, creativity and boosts energy levels.

The movements improve muscle tone, including core muscles and those supporting internal organs. They strengthen the pelvic floor, ease back pains and help to deal with a wide variety of physical problems. They are suitable for all, irrespective of age, size, health or fitness levels."

Tina pioneered this ancient dance in the UK in 1974 and has been described as the Mother of the Dance. She still teaches, her remarkable energy a testimony to how effective an ancient practice is today.

She leads dance classes in the Market Hall on Thursdays, from 7.30 until 8.00, and will provide gentle exercise classes for seniors at Saint Mary's Place community centre from 2.00 to 3.00 on Thursdays.

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LUDLOW DUCK RACE

From 11am on Bank Holiday Monday, 27 May, some 2,000 bright yellow plastic ducks will be launched from Dinham Bridge to race down the River Teme. This fun event is being arranged by Ludlow Rotary Club to raise funds for Ludlow Rotary Cares, the club's community grants scheme,

There will be four duck races. Everyone who sponsors a duck for £2, will have the chance of winning £100 if theirs is the first across the winning line.

There will be plenty of opportunity to cheer on the ducks from the banks of the river on the day. The races will also be filmed to watch afterwards on the Ludlow Rotary Club website.

Speaking about the event, Adrian Carter of Ludlow Rotary explained "Planning a duck race is no mean feat. The ducks have to be corralled into pens of 500 then into boxes of 100. Each box of 100 ducks is then put into numbered bags, to make sure each ticket we sell is allocated to a duck. When all sorted, they are stored in bags ready for the big day. We also have to ensure that all the ducks are collected at the end of each race. During this process we expect there to be a lot of cleaning of ducks, laughing and counting."

Ducks are available to sponsor on line at www.ludlowrotaryclub.org.uk, by using the QR code on the posters displayed around the town, or from the Rotary stall in the market place on Sunday 26 May.

Barry Forrester

IN PRAISE OF...

I would like to show appreciation for the swift attention recently from Lower Street Garage.

A week or so back my wife and I set out to Kidderminster when a red light appeared on the dashboard accompanied by a "beeping" sound. As all car drivers know, the average car dashboard bears a strong resemblance to the control panel of the Starship Enterprise from Star trek.

"What shall we do now?" was our first thought and after about two seconds debate we turned round, pulled up on the front of Lower Street Garage, went to reception and asked if it would be possible for someone to please take a look?

Sarah, the receptionist (apologies if I got your name wrong) said "I'll see if anyone's free" and shouted down to the workshop; within five minutes, Kieran accompanied by a young lady whose name I didn't catch came up and carried out a diagnostic check and a test drive. The reason for the red light and "beeping" was that the handbrake was on the first notch and had not been fully released. Two very embarrassed 70 somethings; "Never mind, your handbrake actually does need adjusting, I'll do it now" said Kieran

10 minutes later, with the handbrake adjusted, two slightly less embarrassed customers asked for the bill: £12:76.(I kid you not!!) Can you imagine the response if we had gone to a "mainstream" garage? "Well first of all, you will need to apply online and arrange an

appointment which at the present time I have to tell you, there is a waiting time of around two months."

We are so lucky in Cleobury to have a brilliant garage with old-fashioned customer values. I know that as usual I have rambled on and used 10 words when one would have sufficed but if you could summarise what I have written perhaps you might include our appreciation of Lower Street garage in the Clarion.

Phil Westwood

Hmmm. It's a brave man who will admit to a panic over a handbrake warning. Lower Street Garage are both aware of such minor matters and the habit of customer panic. JR

CHURCH BEER FESTIVAL

Save the date! XII Holy Ales Beer Festival returns on 27 - 28 September in St Mary's Church.

Once again we will have a selection of beers and ciders available but we need your help too. We aim to source as much as possible locally and are very grateful for the help of Hobsons Brewery organising our drinks but we are open to suggestions for food vendors, if you run a food van or similar please contact us.

We are also hoping that local businesses once more will want to sponsor our beers and ciders, this year the cost is £125 per barrel and you get a logo on the barrel and by the beer in the programme plus a short text advert.

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Sarah Lupton



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18 May 6.30pm - (note early start) Oppenheimer

This is the story of how America's Prometheus was cast out by the Gods for giving mankind an unthinkable gift: power unlike any other, the power to destroy the world; the power of Olympus. J. Robert Oppenheimer, the creator of The Atomic Bomb, is put on trial for his supposed communist ties in the past, all the while coming to terms with what it meant to change the history of the world for the sake of winning World War Two. Oppenheimer had found himself tasked with performing a miracle in outdoing the Germans in the race to develop an atomic bomb. However, nothing could prepare the world for the outcome of the greatest scientific gamble in history: a closely guarded, multibillion-dollar military programme to end all war. After all, no one can be trusted with such a devastating weapon of mass destruction-- not even geniuses.

Starring Cillian Murphy, Emily Blunt, Robert Downey, Jr, Matt Damon, Florence Pugh, Josh Hartnett, Casey Affleck, Rami Malek and Kenneth Branagh

Tickets £5 - Bar, tea, coffee, cake



Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of Cleobury Mortimer Parish Hall, a registered charity, number 522495, will be held in the Parish Hall

on Monday 20 May at 7.30pm. All are welcome.

Come and hear what the Trustees have done over the last year and their plans for the future



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THANK YOU

Two months ago you kindly published details of grants available through the **Ludlow Rotary Cares Scheme**. I know several organisations in the Cleobury Country area have made applications and we are grateful for your help. The closing date for applications has passed and all applications will be assessed soon. The successful organisations will be announced next month.

The Club raises funds not only to distribute to local organisations through the **Ludlow Rotary Cares Scheme** but also to help other needy causes, e.g. by sending Shelterboxes (each containing a large tent, handy tools, stoves, cooking utensils, blankets etc) to people rendered homeless after a natural disaster such as an earthquake.

The main fund-raising event is Dog Day which has been held for the past few years at Stokesay Court and which you have publicised in past Clarions. Dog Day this year will be held on Sunday July 28th and the web site for this, ludlowdogday.org.uk has just gone live. Further details regarding Dog Day 2024 will

be available later for the June and July Clarions.

Barry Treves

MELVILLE CHURCH

Melville Church Building will close from May for restoration work to begin. While it is closed Melville congregation will still meet at various local venues on the Sundays. For more details of places we will meet at, please contact any of the members.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to the Project following our Gift Day. Our next fund raising events are:

8th May. Joint Soup Lunch with Hopton Chapel at Hopton Bank Chapel 12.30 to 2.00

11th May Preloved Fashion Show 7.00-9.30p.m at Farlow and Oretton Village Hall. Tickets £7-50 to include a raffle ticket and finger buffet.

Mon 27th May 2.00 to 5.00pm Garden Party in aid of Melville restoration and CEVIC school, Uganda, details from Linda 01584 89022

Ruth Downes

NEW NOTE SINGERS CONCERT

The Singers will be in fine voice again at Clee Hill Village Hall on Saturday, June 15th, starting at 7.30. This time

they'll be raising funds for Dementia UK. Tickets are £8.00 and that includes tea or coffee and cakes - great value. Pay on the door or make sure of a seat by booking early on 07801 924 035.

The remarkable Jackie Handy will comper the evening, after a busy May month when she'll be doing the Three Peaks Challenge on the 2nd and then flying out to Portugal to walk the 170 miles shorter version of the Camino de Santiago.

POLICE NEWS

We have a new man heading our Safer Neighbouring Team. Inspector Damien Kelly grew up in this area before joining the Royal Air Force and later moved on a career in the police. He points out that the area he now oversees is a few square miles less than the Greater Manchester Police area. They many more people and we have 83 parish councils. I used to live up there but I think Mr Kelly and I know which is the Nic er area.

I wish him well. He timed his arrival right, as one wanted criminal had been arrested just before his announcement arrived in the Clarion office.

Jim Reynolds

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**Also from the parish churches in: Cleobury Mortimer, Bayton, Doddington,
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CHURCH BEER FESTIVAL

Save the date! XII Holy Ales Beer Festival returns on 27 - 28 September in St Mary's Church.

Once again we will have a selection of beers and ciders available but we need your help too. We aim to source as much as possible locally and are very grateful for the help of Hobsons Brewery organising our drinks but we are open to suggestions for food vendors, if you run a food van or similar please contact us.

We are also hoping that local businesses once more will want to sponsor our beers and ciders, this year the cost is £125 per barrel and you get a logo on the barrel and by the beer in the programme plus a short text advert.

For more information or to offer sponsorship please email Sarah

at sarah.lupton.church@gmail.com
Sarah Lupton

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? No.1

Talking to a friend recently, we were moaning about the way service has almost disappeared from the operation of companies. Like the one he quoted, of a letter sent by a large company in response to a letter a friend of his had sent. The reply stated: "We do not deal with letters."

Whoever worked out that you should send a letter explaining that you don't deal with letters? It's worthy of Spike Milligan.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? No.2

Another friend (I do have more than one) writes to explain that

his insurance company has sent a renewal agreement that he cannot download. So he wrote to them explaining his machine couldn't download their letter so would they please send it by post. A man of mature years, he knows how to open an envelope and read their letter.

Nothing came, so he phoned and explained his problem. The lady at the other end asked if he would give his full address so that she could make sure that they sent it to the correct email address. He explained again that their email did not work with his machine, so he wanted them to send a letter, please.

The young lady then explained that they didn't send letters, only communicated via email and whatever friends that system has. My friend has an appointment to visit the company in the hope of obtaining a copy of the letter in some legible form.

FLICKS IN THE STICKS 6.30 MAY 18 (note early start) OPPENHEIMER

Winner of seven Oscars, Oppenheimer tells the story of J Robert Oppenheimer, tasked with beating the Germans in the race to produce an atomic bomb towards the end of the Second World War. Nothing could prepare the world for the outcome of the greatest scientific gamble in history, a closely guarded multi-billion dollar military programme to end all war: after all, no-one could be trusted with such a devastating weapon of mass destruction – not even geniuses. The movie is the story of how America's

Prometheus was cast out by the gods for giving mankind an unthinkable gift: power unlike any other, the power to destroy the world; the power of Olympus. Oppenheimer, the creator of the atomic bomb, was put on trial for his supposed communist ties in the past, all the while coming to terms with what it meant to change the history of the world for the sake of winning World War Two.

CLEOBURY W.I. GIFT PRESENTATION

At their April meeting, members were delighted to see treasurer Val Sniadowski present a cheque for £500 to Liz Vanessa of the Cleobury and District First Responders, the result of W.I. local fundraising for the past year.



More W.I. news on Page 44.

THE INTERNATIONAL CLARION?

Following a friendly approach from a local lady who corresponds with pen friends, it emerged that we have a reader in Finland. Fortunately she has a good command of English and is happy to exchange letters about life where we both live. We also have a friend in California, who has contributed. I must contact both ladies and arrange letters!

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Applicants **MUST** be available full time and more for June, July and August; hours are flexible outside of these months. Start date will be September 2024.

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For a detailed job specification and application instructions, please visit the Show website: **www.burwartonshow.co.uk**



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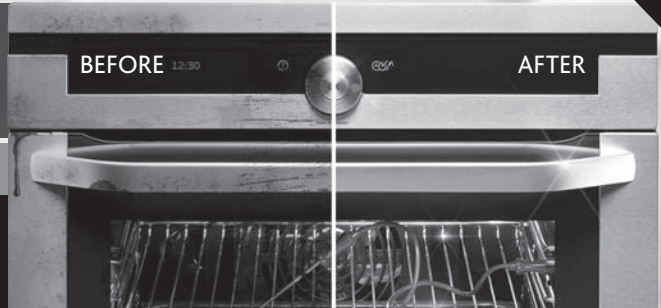
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This is the best month for dawn chorus walks, when you can hear a symphony of song from many different kinds of birds in woods, parks and gardens. On the May Day holiday (6th May this year) the sun will rise at 5.26 am – wait until the end of the month and it will be nearly half an hour earlier.

It is generally the male who sings, driven by the imperatives of the breeding season: to announce their territory, deter rival males, attract and keep a mate. The songs can be very complex and evidence suggests that birds will sing a basic song peculiar to their own species but listen to, and learn from, others of their kind and practice to produce a more sophisticated version with various embellishments. This can result in a 'local dialect' of song. I'm doing well if I can identify a handful of bird songs.



One of my favourites, which I'd noticed and listened to long before I knew the singer, is that of the Wren. This tiny bird packs a

punch with its loud song of repeated notes and rapid trills: an amazing sound to come from a miniscule body.

House Martins are newly arrived and will set to making their nests of mud under the eaves of houses and barns. Should the weather have turned dry, you can help them greatly by putting out trays of mud in a location safe from predators.

For many birds the breeding season is already well-advanced. You may come across a baby bird looking helpless and wonder how you can help, and indeed whether you should try. The advice of those who know, e.g. *Songbird Survival*, is that nestlings (with no or few feathers) can be returned to the nest but fledgelings (which have feathers and are ready to leave the nest) are best left alone as a parent bird is probably feeding them.

Also:

Keep any intervention to a minimum.

Keep surrounding areas free of potential predators, particularly cats - keep your cat indoors where possible during this vulnerable season for baby birds.

If you do need to handle a bird, wear gloves and maintain minimum contact to minimise stress for the bird

Don't try to feed and look after baby birds yourself – this needs specialist experience of a wildlife rehabilitator. Our nearest is Cuan Wildlife Rescue at Much Wenlock.

Linda Iles



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**Clebury Mortimer Benefice
Church services throughout the Benefice in May 2024**

St Mary's Clebury Mortimer

Sunday 5th May: 10.00am Family Eucharist
Sunday 12th May: 8.30am Said Eucharist
10.00am Parish Eucharist
Sunday 19th May: 10.00am Parish Eucharist
Sunday 26th May: 10.00am Parish Eucharist

Every Wednesday: 10.00am Eucharist
Every Thursday: 10.00am – 11.30am: Drop in at St Mary's. Drop in for a free cup of tea or coffee.

St Michael and All Angels', Hopton Wafers

Sunday 5th May: 9.30am Eucharist
Sunday 19th May: 9.30am Eucharist

St John the Baptist, Doddington

Sunday 5th May: 11.00am Eucharist
Sunday 19th May: 3.00pm Evening Prayer

All Saints', Neen Sollars

Sunday 5th May: 11.00am Village Worship
Sunday 12th May: 11.00am Village Worship
Sunday 19th May: 11.00am Village Worship
Sunday 26th May: 11.00am Village Eucharist

St George's, Milson

Sunday 5th May: 6.00pm Even Song
Sunday 19th May: 11.00am Parish Eucharist

St Mary's, Neen Savage

Sunday 5th May: 6.00pm - Evening Prayer (BCP)
Sunday 19th May: 9.00am – Parish Eucharist (BCP)

St John the Baptist, Kinlet

Sunday 12th May: 11.15am – Parish Eucharist (BCP)
Sunday 26th May: 6.00pm- Evening Prayer (BCP)

Leadership Team:

Rector: Reverend Prebendary Ashley Buck: 07477 165602
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Philip Dunne's Letter from Westminster

Last month, at the request of local farmers, I chaired a meeting at which West Mercia's Police and Crime Commissioner and Superintendent for Shropshire spoke to those concerned about a recent spate of burglary of farm machinery.

I engage regularly with farmers from around South Shropshire, in particular through the local National Farmers Union groups, so had been aware that thefts of agricultural machinery and vehicles had become a rapidly growing concern in our community. I had raised the issue previously with our Police and Crime Commissioner, John Campion.

At the meeting, he and other officers involved were able to provide insights into Op Gander – an eight-month investigation into serious and organised rural crime launched by West Mercia Police last summer, following a spate of agricultural crimes around Shropshire. So far, Op Gander has resulted in the arrests of eight men from across Shropshire, six of whom were charged for some 80 separate offences in Shropshire and Mid-Wales, mostly for the theft of high value vehicles, including tractors, 4x4 vehicles and ATVs.

This effort to crack down on rural crime has been helped by the fact West Mercia now has a record number of police officers, at 2,520, with more being allocated to South Shropshire to help improve local visibility and resourcing. This reflects the government delivering on its 2019 manifesto commitment to recruit 20,000 more police officers across the country.

Last year, the government also passed the Equipment Theft (Prevention) Act, which will help prevent theft by requiring immobilisers and forensic marking to be fitted as standard to new agricultural equipment.

But there are also steps we can all take to ensure vigilance in the community, such as joining West Mercia's Rural Watch programme.

By engaging Safer Neighbourhood teams directly with rural communities, Rural Watch aims to reduce local opportunities for

crime and vandalism; reinforce community spirit so that everyone can contribute towards the protection of their property; introduce early warning systems in the farming and countryside areas; and improve the intelligence flow between rural communities and police. More information can be found on West Mercia's website www.westmercia.police.uk.

Since 2010, crime excluding fraud has fallen by 55 per cent, and Shropshire has the lowest crime rate of all the county areas in West Mercia (of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Telford & Wrekin).

But I am also aware of wider concerns about retail crime such as shoplifting, so I welcome the government's plan, announced last month, to help crack down on this threat to our high streets.

Assaulting a retail worker is being made a standalone criminal offence, and the government is clamping down on offenders who repeatedly target the country's high streets, with serial offenders forced to wear tags to track their movements. Investment in facial recognition technology, alongside information sharing between the police and some of the largest retailers in the country, will help identify and catch criminals who repeatedly target shops.

On Thursday 2nd May, voters in South Shropshire and across West Mercia will go to the polls to vote for their Police & Crime Commissioner. Having worked with John Campion for the past eight years, and knowing his focus and success in getting more officers into Shropshire, I firmly believe he is the best candidate to oversee the performance of West Mercia Police.

If you have particular concerns about criminality in your area, I would encourage you to engage with the officers in your Safer Neighbourhood Team, or email me at philip.dunne.mp@parliament.uk and I will pass on your concerns to West Mercia Police.

Philip Dunne

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ROCK PATHFINDERS

May's walks for this busy local club:

Thursday May 2nd, starting at 10.00 from the Hampstall Inn, Hampstall Lane, Ashley Burf, Stourport, DY13 0RY.

Thursday May 16th, starting at 10.00 from Astley Village Hall, Stourport DY13 0RF.

Further information at www.rockpathfinders.uk or call Alan on 01299 400304.

CMFA

Wet weather, muddy paths and waterlogged fields are a theme running through all the CMFA activities in April.

Eleven hardy people and a dog met on a very wet Sunday for the April Country walk. This was meant to be our annual daffodil walk but conditions beyond the lovely blooms on the track to Musbatch were extremely muddy or waterlogged. As an alternative the walk was based on CMFA Walk 14, A Walk in Three Parishes but in reverse. The rain intensified as we walked down Workhouse Bank to Broome Park where a shorter route along Common Lane was offered. As everyone was already rather wet the vote was to carry on. One of the party mentioned that his weather app was showing unbroken sun which added salt to the very wet wounds! The five mile walk held many interests but the highlight was to hear and see a curlew land in the field as we passed by. Enjoyed by all despite the weather.

The May 5th walk will start at 10am from Cleobury Golf Club car park. This walk, like last year, supports SustFest Wyre Forest. We hope to see an abundance of bluebells. There are some damp patches so please wear adequate clothing to suit weather conditions.

There is nothing to say about any work being carried out on the footpaths this month. The April work-party had to be postponed to May. The fields were so waterlogged that there was a great risk of the support vehicles becoming stuck! Hopefully we will be able to catch up with outstanding tasks as the drier weather comes.

The first Walking for Health in April was possibly the wettest I have ever seen! Despite the weather the group of walkers set out for a meander around Cleobury. Leaving the Market Hall we passed the playing fields, on to the skate park and then returning along Catherton Road, Tenbury Road and Eagle Lane. The rather bedraggled group defiantly deserved the hot drink and cake courtesy of the Coco volunteers.

The first Awayday of 2024 is on Wednesday May 8th at Clee Hill. Please meet at the Sports Centre car park where car share will be available to anyone needing a lift. Those who prefer to make their own way, there is free parking at Doddington Village Hall. Refreshments will be provided with a suggested donation of £3.00. Fingers

crossed for a dry day so we may enjoy the views while we walk.

During most of these pieces I mention the CMFA Walk leaflets. There are twenty four in the series covering walks of about five to six miles usually incorporating a shorter route. They all have a map, a detailed description and interesting historical tip bits. They are available at several places in Cleobury including Londis, Cleobury Country Centre/Library, Cleobury Mortimer Golf Club, The King's Arms and the Market Hall.

Veronica Hargreaves

JUST A REMINDER

If you just want to try one of the local walks to see if it suits you, you'll be made very welcome. Walking for Health on the 8th and 22nd this month is a good starting point, from the Market Hall with a gentle pace over local paths and nothing too demanding. Ends back at the Hall where you'll find the CoCo Coffee Morning in friendly progress.

If you want to progress to more ambitious outings, do wear sensible shoes or boots and be prepared to experience mud and the occasional hill. The walk leader will help and explain if you need advice. The combination of good company, great countryside and fresh air is a very worthwhile experience. The Footpath Association is 30 years old and is still attracting new members, so we must be doing something right.



<p>LIVE COMEDY Andy Parsons: Bafflingly Optimistic, Thu 2 May, 8pm</p>	<p>LIVE COMEDY Lee Lard is Peter Kay Sat 25 May, 7pm</p>	<p>LIVE MUSIC Musical Theatre Live Karaoke Night (come and sing with a grand piano!) Sun 2 Jun, 7pm</p>
<p>LIVE MUSIC The Manfreds: Hits & More in '24 Sat 4 May, 8pm</p>	<p>LIVE MUSIC The D-Day Darlings Thu 30 May, 7.30pm</p>	<p>LIVE MUSIC SENSATION ABBA TRIBUTE BAND ABBA Sensation Fri 7 Jun, 7.30pm</p>
<p>LIVE MUSIC The Midnight Soul Sisters Sat 11 May, 7pm</p>	<p>LIVE MUSIC A NIGHT AT THE OPERA, opera & musical theatre hits sung LIVE. Sat 1 Jun, 7.30pm</p>	<p>LIVE COMEDY Shazia Mirza Sat 8 Jun, 8pm</p>

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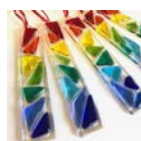
THE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP AND CAFE



Email thecwcafe@gmail.com to book

We are really happy to announce that we are adding to our **Men's Shed**. We now have workshops on a Tuesday and a Thursday 10.30 till 12.30 Last session of the year to be on 14th December.

We are looking for people to join our **Knit and Natter** afternoons on a Tuesday 1.30 till 4.00



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HAPPY BIRTHDAY CLEOBURY WASH HOUSE

It's a constantly busy place on the High Street. It opened 10 years ago on May 10th and at first you did wonder what all those machines were about. The lady who knew was Sharon Wakeman, who could see a business opportunity and she was also married to a very good electrician who could instal the machines and keep them working reliably.



The place is run by this team of smiling ladies. From the left they are part-timer Holly, Scarlet, manager Serena and Hayley. There's also van driver Miranda, who was far too busy to stand still for a photo. She's there just on Fridays, covering up to 100 miles collecting and delivering the laundry.

The range of machines reaches far beyond what most people would expect, like a washing machine specifically for pet bedding and coats, plus equestrian rug cleaning and they even have a sleeping bag washing service. Shirt washing and ironing? Step this way.

For a modest sized premises in a small country town, they stretch out across the county far beyond the local market. The thinking behind this small place is big; there's nothing wrong

with ambition and they prove that point very well.

Ask the staff what they think is good about the job and the answers are a clue to how they work. "I enjoy just helping people" and "The attention to detail". There's an air of pride in the work they do, with smiles along the way.

Ten years on, heaven knows how many people they've served and how many sheets, blankets, calf rugs (!) and just plain clothing items they've got through. It will be interesting to see how many birthday cards they get on the 10th, when they'll be cutting the cake and maybe sharing a Prosecco with customers.



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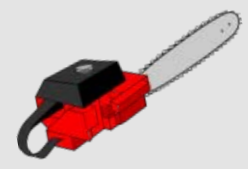


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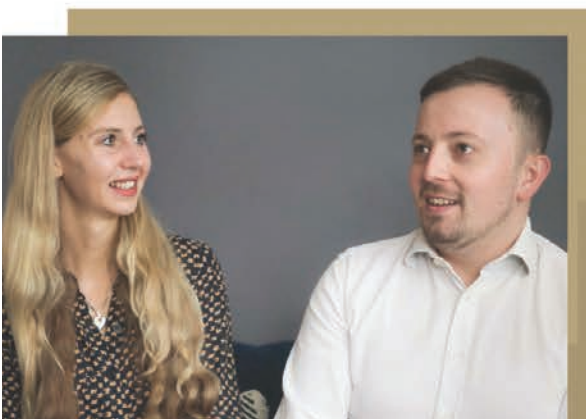
THE LATEST FROM CORAL & TOM...

April's housing market has continued its steady pace seen in the first quarter of the year with a consistent number of homeowners looking to make a move in 2024. In Q1 of the year, we saw 37 property listings across Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn, Bewdley and Cleobury Mortimer which is significantly up from 547 in 2023. Sales numbers were also up but at a lower uplift, with 70 this year compared to 407 in 2023. The number of properties on the market is currently giving plenty of choice to buyers looking to purchase.

With the news that inflation has slowed to 3.2% in UK there is hope that mortgage rates will reduce this year, with the Bank of England's base rate currently at 5.25%. The average two-year fixed mortgage rate is just above 5.7% which is down significantly from the high of 6.86% in July last year but a long way off the ultra-low rates we saw in 2021. The next base rate review is on 9th May with most financial experts predicting no change until later in the year.

With a housing market with plenty of stock available, it is as important as ever while selling to stand out from the crowd in order to entice buyers to your home.


If you would like to talk about the market and how it affects your property value or about an impending move, please do not hesitate to contact us for a chat.

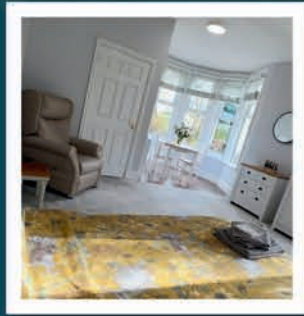


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We would like to welcome you and your family to Doddington Lodge, our newly renovated, privately owned residential and dementia care home in the historic, tranquil hamlet of Doddington, Nr Cleobury Mortimer. Located on the beautiful Worcestershire & Shropshire border, providing picturesque views from every aspect of our home.

With a modern bistro dining room and bar with a delicious daily menu created by our accomplished chef. Individually designed spacious double rooms, allowing couples to stay together or beautiful single rooms all with en-suites and stunning countryside views. Even a hairdressing salon for a little pampering to provide a place of well-being.

Doddington Lodge is a place where friendships are made and special moments are shared. We organise many fun activities that everyone can get involved with, whether that's a sing along, arts and crafts, collecting fresh veg from the allotment or just simply helping each other with a crossword in our daily newspaper. Each day is different, we certainly have many happy moments...

Our home is a loving community and family, where you can consider Doddington Lodge a home away from home. We will provide you with all the key information, guiding you through every step of the process, whether you are staying with us for a short or long stay.

Come along!
Coffee morning
on Friday 10th
May 2024



Join us for a warm cup of cheer and plenty of laughs at our monthly Doddington Lodge Coffee Mornings!

Every 2nd Friday of the month, come together with residents, family & friends over tea or coffee. Enjoy freshly baked cakes as well as the Doddington Lodge monthly raffle.

For only £2.50 per person – including your beverage and slice of cake – join us for our get-together on Friday, May 10th, 2024, from 10 am until midday.

We look forward to seeing you!

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Doddington Lodge, Residential Care Home, Doddington, Nr Cleobury Mortimer, Shropshire DY14 0HJ.



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THE DODDY DESTROYERS GEARED UP FOR THE ROUNDERS CHARITY EVENT IN SUPPORT OF DEMENTIA UK

It's been a fantastic month here at Doddington Lodge. We have had so many happy times and have all come together to make some special memories over the past weeks of getting together to celebrate birthdays, our monthly coffee meetups, and fun outings to places like the Severn Valley Railway Museum, Highley!

Our amazing team at Doddington Lodge geared up to take on 9 other teams in the Charity Rounders Tournament at Ludlow Rugby Club. It was such a fun and exciting day filled with friendly competition, laughter, great food from Pizza Girls, Beefy Boys, and Divine Doughnuts as well as a bouncy castle and lots of family and friends around cheering us on who all came to support such an amazing cause as we battled it out on the field to raise money for Dementia UK.

Thank you to the team for taking part and to everyone who helped support us on this eventful and exciting day!



★ ★ ★ Team Spotlight ★ ★ ★



We would like to introduce you to Gail, our wonderful Night Care Assistant. Here's what Gail has to say about her time here at Doddington Lodge...

"I have been working at Doddington Lodge for almost a year now, and I really enjoy my role as a Night Care Assistant. This is a new career for me, but I am a people person, and I love chatting with our residents and making them feel comfortable and happy in our wonderful home.

I have been living in this area for three years now, and I plan to retire here in this peaceful countryside. I was 60 years old in December, and I have two sons, Lee and Scott, two granddaughters, and one adorable grandson. We are expecting another little one in May, but we don't know if it's a boy or a girl yet. We are really excited to find out!

I have been happily married to Stephen for forty years, and we have two lovely little dogs named Molly and Jasper. I enjoy babysitting my beautiful grandchildren, reading, listening to music, gardening, walking the dogs, meeting up with friends, and socialising. We also love going to our static caravan in Ellesmere, Shropshire, and having drinks and a BBQ with our family and friends when the sun shines."

We are incredibly lucky to have Gail as part of our Doddington Lodge team. We are truly grateful for the kindness and dedication she brings to our community.

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Dear Monty Don – What Are You Keeping From Us?

In his enchanting and weed-free world of gardening, Monty Don paints a serene picture—one where the delicate art of horticulture is blissfully accompanied by a furry companion trotting along the flowerbeds.

Each week, Monty effortlessly shares the screen with a canine confidante by his side, inspiring the nation to grow bigger/better/prettier flowers (and prompting a few of us to wonder what the deal is with his collection of Liberty print scarves). The dog element of his brand is so strong that he's penned whole books that extoll the virtues of dogs in the garden. A quick nose through any of these tomes is enough to make you want to buy a French chore jacket, grab a trowel, and adopt a Labrador.

It's all very charming...

However, it's here that I must interject a reality check courtesy of my own excitable fox-red Labrador puppy, Maggie. Based on my hands-on, dirt-under-the-fingernails experience, I'm starting to suspect Monty might be glossing over a few gritty details. Gardening accompanied by a puppy—specifically Maggie—is a royal pain in the bum.

Exhibit A - Sowing

I love sowing. There's something very special about reaching the unique meditative state achieved when you combine packs of seeds, piles of finely tilled compost, a flask of coffee, and the gentle whisper of a radio—pure bliss. Hours can—and do—fly by in the Zen-like calm of placing tiny seeds into tray upon tray.

At least, that's how it *used* to be.

This year, Maggie has redefined 'gardening' with a chaos theory all her own. Let the record state that it's tricky to maintain inner peace while a puppy whirlwind upends trays and joyfully runs around with pilfered plastic pots.

Exhibit B - Garden Machinery

To try and sidestep these lively interruptions, I moved on from sowing to power washing my greenhouse. Regular readers might

question the wisdom of introducing loud equipment into the mix when the very same puppy 'has previous' for cowering at cars that pass 200 metres from our door. Bizarrely, however, Maggie would seem to love garden machinery - the more dangerous, the better. My chainsaw is her latest obsession, which is concerning not only from a health and safety perspective but also incredibly confusing when remembering this is the same dog who went into a five-day panic after I put up the rotating clothesline.

Exhibit C - Keeping the Place Shipshape

I'm not a particularly grumpy man.

And I'll confess to not being a particularly tidy man.

But after spending hours washing down the greenhouse, my patience was tested when Maggie started jumping gleefully at the glass with the muddiest of paws. This was followed almost immediately by her shaking herself so that tiny droplets of mud rained down on the few panes of glass that had escaped her paws. Jackson Pollock would have been proud.

And then, just as I start to run short of patience and sanity, she'll look at me with that stupid face of hers, and all is forgiven. *God, I love that dog.*

All sopiness aside, the question remains: What are you keeping from us, Monty? How do you manage the serene images of gardening with your dogs when I'm here strategising garden activities like a military operation to accommodate Maggie's boundless energy?

Perhaps dogs like Monty's wonderful Nigel (RIP) are a once-in-a-lifetime phenomenon. My guess is Maggie isn't that dog, so I'll continue to adapt my approach to gardening (more time chasing, less time relaxing) and reconcile myself to the fact that every day outside with Maggie is an adventure, and each muddy paw print is a reminder not to take this whole horticulture business too seriously.

Simon Morton



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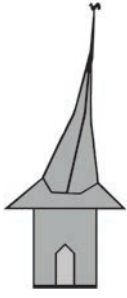
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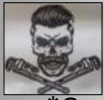
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Yet another sexually related scandal at the 'Mother of Parliaments'. This was caused by an MP receiving an unsolicited and somewhat suggestive message from 'Charlie' claiming acquaintance and asking for contact details of other like minded colleagues. The recipient complied and then found himself compromised. Boys, when are you going to start being driven by your brains and not by areas below the waist?. MPs are, wrongly it seems, given credit for a certain amount of intelligence and are a constant source of disappointment. No-one seems to have a clue as to 'Charlie's' identity other than to say that there is no suggestion that a foreign power was involved. So that's OK then as this just seems to be home grown stupidity....And as we go to press, another Tory MP is suspended due to alleged plundering of donations.

At last our masters have finally had enough of Thames Water's shenanigans and have refused their demand that customers should be even more comprehensively screwed via their water bills. This is to get TW out of the deep financial hole they have dug for themselves. Enormous borrowings which have to be serviced and huge dividend payments have resulted in debts of around £18 billion. They wanted to increase customers bills by 40% which they said was necessary to get shareholders to stump up yet more cash to get them out of trouble but Ofwat has finally shown some backbone and refused. Thames are not alone in this as Severn Trent are looking for a 37% hike so will they get the same answer?. This decision does surprise me as I thought ministers would want to keep industry sweet as they are likely to be looking for alternative employment after the General Election.

There is some slightly better news for water companies on the reservoir front as planning permission for new projects has started to loosen. For years new approvals have been refused on the grounds that losses through leaks of over 1.2 trillion litres in 2017 needed

addressing first. This figure has improved slightly to only(!) 1.06 in 2021 so it seems to be one small victory to set against all the other losses if you pardon the pun...

A sewer leak the other day resulted in sewage running into Pudding Brook. A Severn Trent team was quickly on the case and had it sorted within 3 hours. The cause? Wet wipes... So, well done ST for sorting it so quickly although it's a change to see them polluting our waterways by accident....

Slight 'egg on face' situation at Neighbourhood Watch which deluges us with E mails urging us not to fall for scams. It appears that there has been unauthorised access to members information on their system which has been addressed....

Dear old Shropshire Council is now consulting on whether to charge us for our green bins which already happens elsewhere. I think Wyre Forest charges about £60 per year for this. Coupled with the threat that either the Bridgnorth or Craven Arms recycling site might shut (but not Shrewsbury...) this would be a double blow. Apart from increasing emissions as people burned their green waste or traipsed around the County with it, I wonder how the scheme would be operated and policed. Any revenue raised would have to be offset by the cost of running the scheme, not to mention the cost of clearing up the inevitable fly tipping that would ensue. I recall that, many years ago, when parking meters were first introduced in London - they charged 6d (2.5p) per hour- a review after some months showed that operating costs accounted for 90% of the revenue raised...

Much Police activity in Cleobury the other day with some seven police vehicles near the school. Given how rarely we see even one, I am surprised that West Mercia have that many. Various wild rumours as to what it was all about but no doubt we will find out.

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THE NATIONAL GARDEN SCHEME

My name is Andy Chatting, County Organiser for the National Garden Scheme in Shropshire. I am reaching out to all parish magazines listed on the Council's Directory in 2024 with a view to looking at planning for 2025. I'm also trying to widen the appreciation of the work that we do as the National Garden Scheme.

Every year amazing gardens throughout Shropshire open for the National Gardens Scheme which raises money for cancer and caring charities including Macmillan, Hospice UK, Parkinson's and Marie Curie. The Shropshire branch raised over £82,000 in the 2023 season. This has already been passed to our beneficiaries.

Shropshire NGS volunteers are on the look-out for anyone who would like to offer help with publicity, refreshments, delivering booklets and welcoming our visitors. We are especially keen to find towns or villages who might consider coming together to make a garden trail.

We are keen to look to the future and recruit more gardens, gardens owned and run by young people, community gardens, gardens in villages or towns that would be suitable for designing a garden trail around.

Any of your readers who might consider opening their gardens or who would like to become part of our team and help raise funds for such good

causes would be more than welcome to contact me.

Andy Chatting, Shropshire County Organiser, 07546 560615

CLEOBURY W.I.

April marked the beginning of the new year for the WI and began with a much needed tidy up of the Centenary Garden leaving it spruced up ready for the Spring season. At the monthly meeting we enjoyed a captivating talk from Dr Rob Kennett on the Art of Communication, specifically focusing on the Psychology of Listening. Sue Kershaw (Vice-President standing in for President Judy Sant) chaired the meeting and introduced the Crazy Condiment Competition which has been set as a challenge by Team Member Viv Hollis. The idea is to have a non-craft competition for all members to find 'wacky' salt and pepper sets through charity shops, charity jumble or car boot sales. These charitable purchases will become a cheerful addition at WI Winter Warmer Soup Lunches.

The Patch work sessions continue under the watchful eye of Sarah Wilde. Participants are looking forward to putting together their sampler quilts having learnt many new patchwork techniques. Sue Kershaw showed two completed knitted/crocheted blankets ready for the Tiny Tots group. This project is ongoing if anyone can help.

The date for WI annual subscriptions has now passed and our membership continues to thrive. We are always welcoming new members throughout the year, so please contact Judy on 01299 270983 or email judysant10@gmail.com for further information. Check out the Cleobury Mortimer WI Facebook page!

Forthcoming dates:

Tuesday 14th May 7.30pm - Monthly Meeting with speaker Sue Brown (Chiropractor) 'Are you sitting Comfortably?'

20th May - Taster session at CM Bowling Club

3rd June 3pm - Afternoon Tea at the Fountain Inn

WOOD WORDS

The Bowls Club are back in action with the arrival of Spring, but Chris Smith is stuck for words after the team lost two games in the Sunday League.

But some good news is that a 'Taster Day' is scheduled for May 13th, when the curious amongst us can turn up and try for themselves. And a week later, on the 20th, they will be hosting Cleobury W.I. as they explain and experiment with the art of precision bowling.

There may be a separate report coming later this year, when the editor's younger brother and his beloved come visiting and he's been invited to bring his bowls and maybe try our green.

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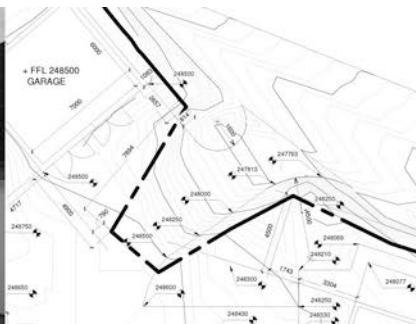


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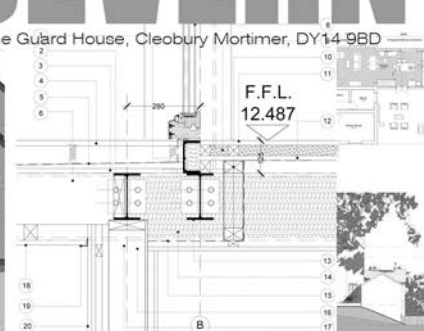
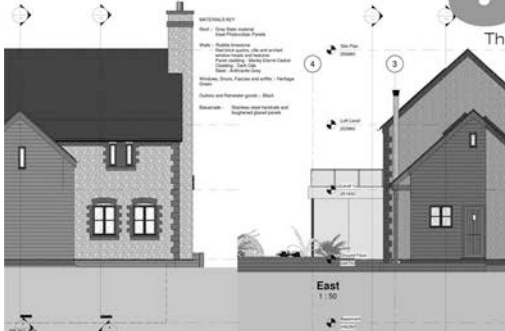
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*Len Cabral

*Shonaleigh

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*Photo Credits: Len Cabral - Jim Hooper, Shonaleigh - Katherine Betteridge



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The Cleobury Clarion Social Calendar for May

- Wed. 1st. **GARDEN AND FOOD WASTE BINS EMPTIED TODAY**
 6.00 to 7.00. Late Night at the Food Bank in the Market Hall.
 7.30. Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall. Sonia Pearsall 01584 890874.
 10.00 Rock Pathfinders walk begins at the Hampstall Inn, DY13 0RY PAGE 27
- Sun. 5th. 10.00 CMFA Bluebell Walk starts from the Golf Club car park. PAGE 27
- Tue. 7th. 2.00 Carer Peer Support Group meet at St Mary's place Support Centre.
- Wed. 8th. 10.00 CMFA Awayday starts at the sports hall car park, at Doddington. PAGE 27
 10.00. Walking for Health starts from the Market Hall in Church Street. PAGE 27
 10.00. CoCo Coffee Morning offering very fine cake, tea and coffee.
 12.30. Joint Soup Lunch at Hopton Bank Chapel. PAGE 15
- Thu. 9th **GENERAL WASTE BINS EMPTIED TODAY**
- Fri. 10th. 10.00. Coffee Morning at Doddington Lodge PAGE 32
 10.00. Annual Plant Sale at Victory Hall, Clows Top PAGE 5
 8.00. Bingo Night at Doddington Village Hall.
- Sat. 11th. 10.00 Cleobury Gardeners Plant Sale, Market Hall, Church Street PAGE 59
 7.00 Preloved Fashion Show and Sale , Farlow and Oretton Village Hall. PAGE 15
- Sun.12th to Sat 18th: CHRISTIAN AID WEEK. PAGE 9
- Mon. 13th 7.00. Bowls 'Taster Day' at the town's Bowls Club. PAGE 44
- Wed. 15th. **GARDEN AND FOOD WASTE BINS EMPTIED TODAY**
 7.30 Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall.
- Thu. 16th. 10.00. Rock Pathfinders walk out from Ashley Village Hall, DY13 0RF PAGE 27
- Fri. 17th. 7.00 Quiz Night at Hopton Wafers Victory Hall. PAGE 5
 7.15 Quiz Night at Clows Top Victory Hall. PAGE 5
- Sat. 18th. 9.00. Cleobury Country Farmers Market, in and around the Parish Church.
 6.00. Hopton Wafers Annual Parish Meeting. At Doddington Village Hall! PAGE 7
- Mon. 20th. 7.00. Cleobury W.I. visit the Bowls Club to maybe learn the art. PSGE 44
- Wed. 22nd. **GENERAL WASTE BINS EMPTIED TODAY**
 10.00. Walking for Health starts from the Market Hall. PAGE 27
 10.00 CoCo Coffee Morning again. Do try the cake - you'll see why they're busy.
 6.00pm. Clows Top Garden Club visit Coddington Vineyard. PAGE 5
- Sat. 25th. 10.00 Coffee Morning at 8 Catherton Close, Shaunah Murrell's house. PAGE 9
- Mon. 27th. Duck Races on the River Teme in Ludlow, all for charity. PAGE 13
 2.00 Garden Party in aid of Melville Chapel and CEVIC School in Uganda. PAGE 15
- Tue. 28th. 7.30 The Nearly Dead Poets' Society meet at the library. PAGE 7
- Wed. 29th. 7.30 Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall.
- Thu. 30th. **GARDEN AND FOOD WASTE BINS EMPTIED TODAY**
- Fri. 31st. 8.00. Bingo Night at Doddington Village Hall

AND LOOKING AHEAD TO JUNE

- Wed. 5th. **GENERAL WASTE BINS EMPTIED TODAY**
 7.30. Whist Drive at Doddington Village Hall.8.00.

REGULAR EVENTS OF INTEREST

- Monday: 8.00. Bingo Night at the Market Hall, Church Street.
 Tuesday: 8.00 Friendship Club meet at the Parish Hall.
 Thursday morning: Saint Mary's Church coffee and chat session.
 7.30. Tina Hobin's Birth Dance and good health class meet at the Market Hall.

LET'S BEAT THE SCAMMERS

With April Fools day behind us, sadly there are those who would still try to fool us in a dozen different ways. This month we are going to look at Telephone fraud.

The number of "Nuisance" calls has risen in recent years from 21% to 40%, and according to OFGEN, nearly 40% of Scams start with a phone call.

These scams involve fraudsters trying to gain your personal and financial information, and are often referred to as "**Vishing**" – an amalgamation of "**Voice**" and "**Phishing**".

Very often the fraudster has disguised their call identity by using an apparently legitimate number so appearing genuine; this is known as "**Spoofing**". If you do receive a call from a company which is not expected then just hang up, wait for 10 minutes or so, or use another phone, and then call the real company back on a listed number from their website or letterhead.

Common Phone Call Scams

Technical Support scams - They may impersonate a company such as Microsoft or BT, and tell you there is a fault on your computer or Broadband. They then probably will ask you to download remote access software to gain access to your computer, or else install Malware on your computer.

Impersonation Scams - Typically these may claim to come from your "Bank Fraud Department" telling you that your account or bank cards have been compromised and you need to transfer money to another so-called Safe Account, from where it vanishes. Similarly, calls may come from fraudsters masquerading as a Police Officer, Utility Provider, HMRC or DVLA.

Prize Draw Scams – "You have won the Lottery or a Prize Draw!" Sounds good but is it? You may think you never entered the competition but they will convince you that you have, then ask for your bank details so you can "receive" the prize

Financial Scams – you are called with tempting offers for investing your money in funds, schemes or perhaps in Bitcoins with the promise of huge returns. Since 2019, it has been illegal to make cold calls to sell Pension schemes, so any calls about Pension Schemes will be scams. This scheme may be extended in the future to ban any unsolicited financial cold call.

How can you stay safe?

Never give out your financial information over the phone, and just hang up if you are unsure about the caller's identity Register for "TPS" - Telephone Preference Service - this prevents bona fide companies calling you so you will then know that any cold call is a fake. Scammers will often keep the phone line open after the call so even when you think you are calling a legitimate number you are still speaking to the fraudster. Wait for up to 15 minutes or make the call using a different phone line or mobile.

Take Five to Stop Fraud

STOP: Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.

CHALLENGE: Could it be fake? It's OK to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.

PROTECT: Contact your bank immediately if you think you've fallen for a scam and report it to Action Fraud

ALWAYS REMEMBER:

- Avoid disclosing security details
- Emails, Phone Calls and Texts may not be authentic
- Always make direct contact with any organisation by using a genuine phone number
- Stop and Challenge any unexpected requests
- Protect others by reporting Fraud and Scams

If you've fallen for a scam, report it to **Action Fraud** on **0300 123 2040** or via **actionfraud.police.uk**

Scam Text messages can be forwarded to **7726** to help phone providers take early action and block numbers that generate spam on their networks. Forward Fake Emails received to

report@phishing.gov.uk

If you think your bank account or personal banking details have been used fraudulently, as mentioned last month, then use the short phone number - **159** - to contact the Fraud Prevention Department of most major UK banks.

Finally, while the details above are methods of reporting, please be assured that anything AND everything reported IS logged.

IN BUSINESS - BILL'S QUALITY METALWORK

Bill Cleaver is a straight talking, down to earth chap with a lot of experience learned working with men who knew their trade. As a young man at Western Aggregates, part of the Readymix Concrete group, he put in the hours at a quarry under the eye of foreman Stan, who showed him how to operate a variety of machinery and how to mend it if it broke down. Which it did do, as you'd expect with the task of digging out stone to load in a crusher to produce aggregate.

The hours were long when demand was high. "Seven in the morning to six at night, five days a week, then we'd work at weekends if something needed mending." That could be as much as 70 hours a week.

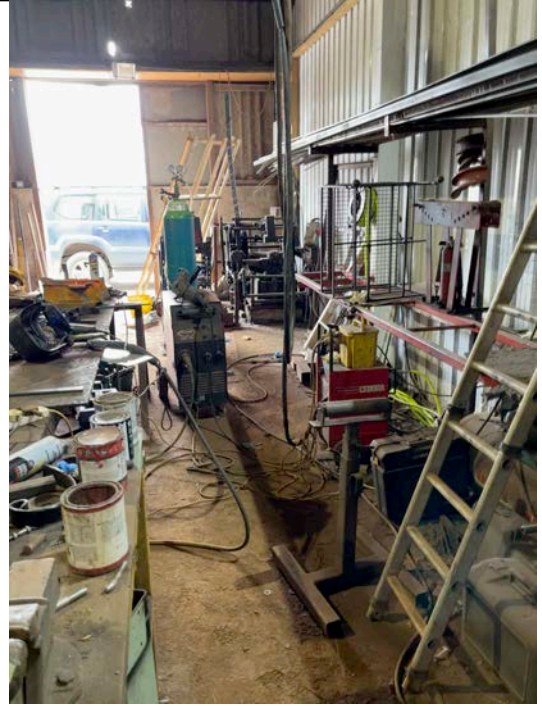
He's full of praise for Stan, who taught him how to use the wide variety of machines that a quarry uses. And grins at the irony of the quarry being closed in 1985 and him driving one of the bulldozers that shifted waste to fill the great gap in the landscape. He found regular work there, driving an Aveling Barford bulldozer with a 15 tons load capacity, loading aggregate at other sites to fill the crusher that produced aggregate for the Readymix demand.

That demanding work didn't last forever, like any physically demanding task and he moved

on to contract work for the Jaguar/Land Rover as an engineer in his own right. He and his family were living in Stock Cottage at Stock Green in rural Worcestershire, out beyond Worcester City. He bought that cottage in 1997 and operated as a private engineer until a change in family life saw him move west in 2013 to Craven Arms, a town he's grown very fond of with its lovely rolling countryside. He's still operating as an engineer, doing forging work for customers in Redditch. He did try other work, as manager of an abattoir: "A killer of a job," as he puts it with a quiet grin. Back to engineering, with a wide spread of customers as far away as Kidderminster, Lentwardine, Shrewsbury and Redditch; when you're known for a good job, the work keeps coming in.

He advertises carefully, in the Clarion, the Much Wenlock News and other specialist magazines. He does a lot of church work, like the double ladder access to the church at Clunton, designed, made and installed by Bill.

At 70, he says he doesn't want to work at 100mph. "I'll just carry on," he explains. "Because I enjoy what I do." You won't be surprised to read that he smiles a lot. He deserves it.



Where the man works. It's an old fashioned workshop with tools going back years, but the skill to use them is all there.



The man himself. One highly skilled craftsman.

BILL'S QUALITY METALWORK
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How to contact the Town Council

Telephone: 01299 271154 or 07483 112290

Email: council@cleobury.org.uk

Speak to us at the Councillor Surgeries held on the third Saturday of every month in the Market Hall.

Annual Town Meeting

We held the Annual Town Meeting in the Market Hall on Friday 19th April. Representatives from local community groups including the WI, Cleobury Gardeners, Cleobury Mortimer Footpath Association, Flourish and Nourish, Cleobury Community Hub, the Parish Hall, the Market Hall as well as the Town Council showcased what they do and their achievements over the last 12 months. Town Council members and staff as well as Unitary Councillor Gwilym Butler were available to discuss community matters including planning, community services, upcoming events and future projects.

Councillor Surgery

Cllr Guy James attended the monthly Councillor Surgery held in the Market Hall, alongside the Farmers Market, on Saturday 20th April. If you have an issue you want to raise, you can contact the office on the details above or drop into the next monthly Councillor Surgery on Saturday 18th May.

D-DAY Commemoration/Celebration

The 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings is on Thursday 6th June. Nationwide, there will be a number of ways that communities will pay 'tribute' to the thousands who sacrificed so much in helping secure the freedom we all enjoy today. In Cleobury, we are working with St Mary's and the British Legion to mark this occasion. The bell-ringers will 'Ring out for Peace' at 6.30pm and we will light our Beacon on the Playing Field at 9.15pm. The Sports and Social Club will be open and refreshments will be available on the field too.

Cleobury Festival

This event is on Saturday 22nd June and starts at 12 noon on the Playing Field. We have confirmed the falconry display; live performances of dance, music and storytelling; a static motor vehicle show; the dog show; craft, produce and table top stalls from local groups and organisations; emergency services information stands; various food and drink providers as well as the Sports and Social Club being open. There will be other events on in the evening including an 80's disco in the Parish Hall.

Grants available to community groups

The Town Council has some funding available to support local community groups based in Cleobury Mortimer. Grants are available for activities or for equipment. If you have a project or activity which would benefit from some financial support, please contact the Town Council for further information and an application form.

Dates for your Diary

Next Council Meeting - Tuesday 7th May 2024 at 6.30pm, at the Cleobury Country Centre.

Councillor Surgery – Saturday 18th May 2024, from 10am – 12noon, at the Market Hall.

Cleobury Festival - Saturday 22nd June 2024, from 12noon – 7pm on the Playing Field.

Clarion Clippings - The Local News

CLEOBURY GARDENERS

On Monday 8th April, Claire Tatler, M.Hort, shared details of her professional experiences "Gardening in Historic Places", a talk not so much about gardening and garden design, but how the activities of the properties themselves determined the way in which the gardens were planned and managed. An opportunity had presented itself which enabled her to start a new career in her much-loved interest, and she completed a three year Masters Degree with her thesis on "Control of Himalayan Balsam" winning her the Chitterden Memorial Award.

Claire explained the main four scenarios which governed the presentation of historic properties: Totally private; private, but used for business and income generation; The National Trust; A professional gardener having total responsibility for planning and working a site.

She talked of several sites, but Combermere Abbey is the one really to explain her experience of a business and income generation site. She joined Combermere Abbey, a privately owned, 5acre walled garden, as a trainee gardener. The Abbey has been developed as a business offering licensed, very high-end weddings and associated celebrations. Weddings were Spring and Summer, Autumn was for engagement parties, and the New

Year into Winter was for marketing and promotional events for future wedding bookings, usually two years in advance. Therefore, at any time, the gardens had to be immaculate, achieved through the professionalism of a dedicated team, working together, So NO downtime!

The constraints on planning turned the normal gardening calendar on its head; mulching in winter, pruning apples out of season, rushing or delaying growth of flowers for dressing the ceremony rooms. The choice of flowers grown was governed by their use, apart from their beauty and colour: could they serve a dual purpose, would they hide some bare earth or a patch of failed planting, and their role in companion planting. And very importantly, they had to be low maintenance.

The structural and architectural planting was always designed with an eye to photography, with geometric layouts and topiary, all created to help capture stunning wedding memories. And always the grass, gravel, paths, hedges, topiary and borders had to be immaculate and weed-free.

Claire continued her presentation with her experience at Elton Hall in Ludlow – a private garden, and The Weir Garden, Hereford, for the National Trust, showing how the different sites required different working and planning.

Our next event is the fundraising Plant Sale at the Market Hall on Saturday, 11th May, 10am start. Hopefully we will see you there.

Linda Ashman, Secretary, email ashmanlinda240@gmail.com

D-DAY, BIG DAY

Greg Dare, RBL Parade Master, will be joining a group of Light Infantry veterans in Normandy to march from Utah Beach to Pegasus Bridge to join the D-Day Parade. All funds raised from the march will be donated to the Care for Casualties charity, which supports veterans.

Greg makes and sells horseshoe devices of all sorts in the name of Mad Dog Horseshoes. See him at the Farmers Market on the 18th to appreciate what clever work he does. Make a donation there or in the collection pots at Hobsons Brewery or the Talbot Hotel; ask for Greg's D-Day pot. Or you can find him on Facebook and donate there.

He's been taking part in these walks since they started in 2018, meeting old comrades and new faces, all making an effort to support comrades in need and in memory of those who went off to fight for us and never returned. Let's never forget how much we owe such men.



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SPECIAL OCCASIONS

WEDDINGS & FUNERALS

FBK ~ Instagram ~ WhatsApp



eme CLEOBURY

FACILITIES INCLUDE:

- Gym 
- Exercise Classes 
- Sports Hall 
- Outside Astro Pitch 
- Netball 
- Tennis Courts 

OPENING TIMES

MON	7.30am - 10am 10am-12.30pm GP Referral 3.30pm - 10pm
TUE	3.30pm - 10pm
WED	7.30am - 10am 4.30pm - 10pm
THU	4.30pm - 10pm
FRI	7.30am - 10am 3.30pm - 10pm
SAT-SUN	7.30am - 1pm

Pre booking not required for Gym use.
Induction or Disclaimer required
in advance of use.

CLASS TIMETABLE

MON	9.15 - 10am 6.30 - 7.15pm	CARDIO PILATES & STRENGTH BODY PUMP
TUES	9.15 - 10am 10.15 - 11am 6.15 - 7pm	YOGA YOGA TRX
WED	5.15 - 6pm 6 - 6.45pm	PILATES CIRCUITS
THU	6 - 6.45pm 7 - 7.45pm	STEP & SCULPT SPIN
FRI	6 - 6.45pm	STRETCH & RELAX

Pre-Booking required for Exercise classes
Book online or at the Centre



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