

## *Dear Friends*

Nestling between more famous counterparts, Easter and Pentecost (Whitsun), this month's Feast of Ascension (Thursday 30th May) is easily overlooked: no Hot Cross buns, no chocolate eggs, no bank holiday, not even a ceremony like bread and cheese to mark it!

Maybe it's the strangeness of it all; our inability to fathom the Bible's description of Jesus going up, hidden in the clouds and gone ... where?

But if we get stuck there, we've missed the point - Christians have always believed that it represents a kind of enthronement – the carpenter from Nazareth is now king of the universe. The point is not so much a change of elevation as a change of acclamation.

Which leaves us not despairing about the state of this world or looking to escape from it, but rather determined to work in our world to bring about God's kingdom – striving to see justice and order come out of unfairness and chaos.

Matt Rees

## **St Mary the Virgin St Briavels & St Mary Magdalene Hewelsfield**

All are most welcome to join us for worship, which is welcoming, relaxed and open to all. Join us to find what God's love could mean for you. Both Churches are open from 9.00am until 4.00pm for those who wish to look around or find a space for quiet and reflection. More can be found on our website [www.stbandhchurches.org.uk](http://www.stbandhchurches.org.uk) which gives up to date information. For a wedding, baptism or blessing, or to request healing or other prayer, please contact me, [robert.simpson02@btinternet.com](mailto:robert.simpson02@btinternet.com), or 01594560202, or our Reader, Mandy Vaughan - 01594 530844. I usually work Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and mornings on Wednesday, and am available anytime for urgent requests.

May is the month between Easter and Pentecost, Whitsun, when we reflect on the meaning and significance of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, both for his first disciples and for us.

We see how and why this transformed their lives and how ours too are being transformed.

Finally, we look at the changes that they brought to their world and what changes we can bring to ours as we respond to Jesus' last words in Matthew, to go into all the world and proclaim the gospel.

On 11/12 May, St Mary Magdalene Hewelsfield is holding an Historical Weekend. (Further details on page 5.) On Monday May 20th @ 7.30pm we start a monthly Reflective Service, with time to explore different ways of drawing closer to God. We will be meeting at The Cottage, St Briavels Square, home of Chris and Sandy Garrett.

**Hewelsfield and Brockweir Church** is looking urgently for a Treasurer. This is not onerous; we need someone with bookkeeping skills. The treasurer does not have to be a worshipper at our Church. Please give me a call if you think you could help.

**Advance Notice.** Whittington Purse Sermon and Bread and Cheese Distribution. Start 6.45 pm on the 9th June between the Castle and the Church. Once again we have the Silver Band and a guest speaker, Rev Dr Rob James from Newnham, Blakeney and Awre.

### **MAY SERVICES: PREACHERS AND THEMES:**

#### **ST MARY THE VIRGIN, ST BRIAVELS**

##### **SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> - Easter 3: Renewed, Restored, Recommissioned. David Treharne**

8.30am	BCP Communion
9.30am	All Age Eucharist

##### **SUNDAY 12<sup>th</sup> - Easter 4: Hearing, Helping, Held.**

9.30am	All Age Eucharist
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##### **SUNDAY 19<sup>th</sup> - Easter 5: Love One Another**

8.30am	BCP Communion
9.30am	All Age Eucharist

##### **SUNDAY 26<sup>th</sup> - Easter 6: Come Over and Help Us. Tony Jones**

9.30am	All Age Eucharist
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##### **SUNDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE - Easter 7: That They May Be One. David Treharne**

8.30am	BCP Communion
9.30am	All Age Eucharist

#### **MIDWEEK AT ST BRIAVELS**

2 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
7 <sup>th</sup> Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
8 <sup>th</sup> Weds	10.30am	Communion
9 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
14 <sup>th</sup> Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
16 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
21 <sup>st</sup> Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
22 <sup>nd</sup> Weds	10.30am	Communion
23 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
28 <sup>th</sup> Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
30 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
4 <sup>th</sup> June Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
5 <sup>th</sup> Weds	10.30am	Communion
6 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer

#### **ST MARY MAGDALENE, HEWELSFIELD & BROCKWEIR**

##### **SUNDAY 5<sup>th</sup> - Easter 3: Renewed, Restored, Recommissioned. David Treharne**

11.00am	Family Communion
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##### **SUNDAY 12<sup>th</sup> - Easter 4: Hearing, Helping, Held.**

4.30 pm	Service of Celebration
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##### **SUNDAY 19<sup>th</sup> - Easter 5: Love One Another**

11.00am	Family Worship
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##### **SUNDAY 26<sup>th</sup> - Easter 6: Come Over and Help Us. Tony Jones**

11.00am	Family Communion
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##### **SUNDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE - Easter 7: That They May Be One. David Treharne**

11.00am	Family Communion
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### **FOREST OF DEAN QUAKER MEETING**

We meet for Worship every Sunday at 10.30am in Staunton Village Hall (near Coleford.) There is a car park behind the hall. Contact me for more information.

Jen Cothier 01594 530348

## BROCKWEIR MORAVIAN CHURCH

### Church Services for April 2019

Sun	5 May	6.00pm	Rev Patsy Holdsworth ( <i>Holy Communion</i> )
Sun	12 May	6:00pm	Rev Julian White
Sun	19 May	6.00pm	Rev Patsy Holdsworth
Sun	26 May	6.00pm	Chris Hewitt
Thur	30 May	7.00pm	Rev Patsy Holdsworth ( <i>Ascension Day Service</i> )

### REGULAR MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

**Tap Dancing** - 6.45-7.45 & 7.45-8.45 – Mondays in the School Room. 'Tap for Fun' classes for adults from complete beginners to intermediate levels. Please contact Deborah Stock on 07801 479269, email [deborahstock@aol.com](mailto:deborahstock@aol.com) for more information.

**Table Tennis** - 2.15 - 4.00 pm - Tuesdays & Thursdays in the School Room. Players of all abilities always welcome - for more information contact Jean Green on 01594 530955.

**Charity Lunch** - at 12noon in the Sunday School Room on 1<sup>st</sup> Thurs of the month. 2nd May in aid of Christian Aid. 6th June in aid of Brockweir Church Gift Day.

**Book Group** - Please contact Heather Armstrong (01291 689326) for details.

**Brockweir & Hewelsfield History Group** - Normally on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7.30 pm in the Sunday School.

**Food Bank Collection** - Donations for the food bank may be brought to services, charity lunches etc or left in the church porch at any time. We welcome your gifts of tinned and dried food, and also toiletries.

### Ecumenical Welcome



Because we are the only church offering regular public worship in the village of Brockweir, we invite all Christians in the local community to play as full a part as they are able [allowing for any continued commitments to their own denomination] in the life and fellowship of this congregation. We invite those of all Christian traditions, and those having no particular denominational affiliation, to worship and to share in Holy Communion with us, and to share in the ministry and mission of the Church in this area.

**Minister:** Rev Patsy Holdsworth, 35 Quarry Way, Emersons Green, Bristol, BS16 7BN, Tel: 0117 907 8994 email: [Patsy.holdsworth@moravian.org.uk](mailto:Patsy.holdsworth@moravian.org.uk)  
Please note that Patsy's day off is normally on a Tuesday. Please try to only contact her in an emergency on that day.

### Church Committee

Katie Groves-Bond	07814 431892	Jean Green	01594 530955
Heather Armstrong	01291 689326	Sue Groves	01291 689804
Carol Ostler	01291 689675	Judith Ashton	01291 689572
Philip Ashton	01291 689572		

## ST BRIAVELS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

We're a group of ordinary people, united by our belief in Jesus Christ and with a desire to follow him.

Our services are at 10am and 6pm. Our morning service is a family service, when we have a "Sunday Club" for young children.

We meet for Bible study and prayer every Thursday (8pm, venue changes) and Tuesday (10:15am in the chapel).

Coffee Morning on Tuesday May 7th (10-12) We raise funds for charities that we support and also provide a great chance to meet up for a chat. Everyone is welcome.

Our Coffee Morning, Tuesday May 7th, 10-12.

If you would like to know more about us please get in touch or visit our website: [www.stbriavelscongregational.org.uk](http://www.stbriavelscongregational.org.uk).

Matt Rees, Pastor

### **NOT JUST A HISTORY EXHIBITION – A HISTORY FESTIVAL!!**

**At Hewelsfield Church, 11th May and 12th May. 10.30am to 4.30pm**

*We will be showing you a glimpse into 900 years of history*

- **Take a walk round Churchcroft Gardens in the afternoon and learn a little of its unique history**
- **Enjoy the displays from Medieval to Victorian**
- **View a history of the local area**
- **Read memories of local people • Eat gruel!**
- **Look at clothes from past and present**
- **Try pottage and bread for lunch! • Experience the stocks!**

**PLUS**

- **Children's activities • Buy from our sales table**
- **Have a go at the raffle • Refreshments all day**

## ST MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH, HEWELSFIELD: AGM - 07 April 2019

Apart from being responsible for financial affairs and care and maintenance of the church fabric, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) also embarks on activities to support our priest and serve parishioners.

### Some highlights of the year:

**Memorial Garden** - We started the year clearing dangerous trees and associated vegetation in the churchyard, with the vision of creating a memorial garden for Dorothy Woodcock, whose memorial tree was felled. The PCC envisages creating a nature reserve where flowers and herbs may thrive and where people can scatter ashes of loved ones. The arrival of good weather should see the project getting on its way.

**Little Larder** - Open all day and night, offers food and toiletries to anyone in need.

**Bi-weekly walks** – Meet at church for a healthy walk around the area.

**Defibrillator** - Installed by the church gate - is available for all to use in an emergency.

**Car Boot Sales** - Mandy Vaughan leads this fundraising initiative.

**Flower Festival** - A biennial display led by Marion Harrison. This year, it contributed greatly to church funds.

**Nativity Exhibition** - A yearly end-of-year spectacle led by Carol Stickland. The 100+ exhibits from all over the world always attract many visitors from far and wide.

**Music to our ears** - a phrase, in previous years, I would not have attempted to describe our singing in church. But we gained a talented and motivational organist / pianist and musician, Jane Benson. God heard our prayers and granted our wish to sing better. Jane inspired us to sing well, thus worship better. Thank you, Jane, for joining our church. Who would have thought of a "Hewelsfield Church Choir"? Stuff of dreams we thought. But not now!

**Church Kitchen** - We hope to improve catering facilities in order to give better service to parishioners attending activities in the church, a mammoth task. I salute Carol Stickland's drive and tenacity to see this project through. I hope everyone gives her all the support she needs.

A big "thank you" goes to **Mandy Vaughan**, our reader, who tirelessly works hard for the well-being of parishioners inside and outside the church.

**Robert Simpson**, our Associate Priest, guided and led our spiritual journey, listened to our thoughts; provided good counsel, comfort in time of need, visits when we were sick and light in time of doubt. His apostolic work outside and inside the church is much appreciated. Thank you, Robert, for just being there.

**David Wedel**, our treasurer for over 5 years, tendered his resignation at last year's AGM but agreed to stay in post until a new treasurer was found. **We now seek a new treasurer**, and hope for a smooth transition during the first few months of this year. Anyone interested (not necessarily a member of the church), can contact Rev. Robert Simpson - 01594 560202 - who will give details of this important job.

Pearl Bradney. PCC secretary

## HEWELSFIELD AND BROCKWEIR PARISH COUNCIL

### Summary Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd April 2019 at The Loft, Brockweir.

**Present:** Cllr. Bowen, Cllr. Fox, Cllr. Haythornthwaite, Cllr. Brundle, Cllr. Sinfield, Cllr. Harris, the Parish Clerk and three members of the public.

A parishioner clarified the situation at 6 The Triangle, advising councillors that a final report had not been received and subsequent meetings with the planning department were arranged. In the meantime, the driveway could not be used, thus increasing parking on the road causing local problems. It was also pointed out that the caravan parked at The Triangle was not being used as a dwelling but was being refurbished.

**Finance** - Payments were agreed, and cheques signed as follows:

Payee	Service	Amount
Forest Equipment Services	Emptying Dog Foul Bins	£64.80
Lynda Skuse	Clerk salary & expenses	£329.45
AEB Price	Strimming/Litter Picking	£60.00

**Planning Applications** - P0030/19/DISCON – Alexandra Bungalow, Coldharbour Road, Brockweir. Discharge of condition 05 (external materials) of planning permission P0160/18/FUL. Councillors had no comment to make on this application.

An acknowledgement of a list of current planning issues brought to the attention of the Enforcement Officer had been received asking for further information about the caravan parked at Bailey Lane.

**Review of the Definitive Map of Footpaths** throughout the Parish - Cllr. Bowen will contact GCC for advice on surveying footpaths for the Definitive Plan and seek advice from Mr Wheeler about the status of the old road leading from Hewelsfield Church to St. Briavels. It was agreed that Cllrs. Harris and Bowen would investigate further and liaise with interested parishioners.

**Possible Flood Defences** - The Environment Agency had not provided an update on the situation. The Clerk will continue to monitor progress.

**Former HAPPA/Oil Yard site** - Following the Extraordinary Meeting held on 19th March, one possible source of funding had been identified for a preliminary feasibility study for the Old Mill. Estimated costs for a survey were still awaited. It was agreed to seek approximate costs for project management of the initial survey and feasibility study. It was reported that, at the time of the meeting, no official planning application had been submitted for the development of the site.

The Clerk was asked to request a report from GCC Highways following investigations/work carried out to drainage between Underhill and Quayside.

It was reported that (at the time of the meeting) the sale of The Brockweir Inn had fallen through and that the existing owners would be returning to re-open the pub.

**The date of the next meeting is MONDAY 13th May 2019. 7.00 pm at The Loft, Village Shop**

**The Annual Meeting and the Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 21st May 2019 at The Loft, Village Shop. Parishioners and all groups/societies in the parish are invited to attend.**

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## **ST BRIAVELS PARISH COUNCIL**

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***Notes from the Meeting held on Monday, 8th April, 2019 in the Assembly Rooms, St. Briavels***

**Acts of Criminal Damage to Property and Threats to Parishioners** reported to the Parish Council at its April meeting were condemned by all the Councillors. (See the separate article opposite.) If you have any information that may help identify the perpetrators, then please contact Gloucestershire Constabulary on 101 and quote incident number 212 of 22/03/2019.

**Local Elections - Polling Day is 2nd May, 2019 from 7.00am. – 10.00pm.**

Eleven people are standing for the nine places available on the Parish Council. Voting will also take place for District Councillors and with the boundary changes, the number of District Councillors has been reduced from 48 to 38. So, make sure that you register your vote for your choice of Parish and District Councillor. Results will be published as soon as possible after 2nd May and the new Councillors will take up office at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 13th May, 2019.

**Repair of Playing Field Boundary Wall** – the contract for the repair to 40 metres of wall, which is an important part of the Village's heritage, has been awarded to local company, P. J. Adams & Son, after consideration of the 4 quotes received.

**The New Notice Board** has now been installed in the bus shelter on The Square. Please contact the Clerk if you would like to add useful information, for residents and visitors alike, to the board.

**Whittington Close Signage** is now in place, so hopefully the emergency services and delivery drivers alike will be able to locate the new houses without a hitch.

**Whittington Close Play Area** - the Council decided to start the process of leasing the land for the Whittington Close play area from the Forest of Dean District Council and Guinness Partnership with the idea of improving and maintaining the existing play area.

**A Date for Your Calendar - The Annual St. Briavels Get-together** will be held on **Wednesday, 22nd May, 2019, at 6.00 p.m. in The Pavilion**. This annual event is your chance to come along and hear what's happening in your Parish from several groups, societies and organisations, as well as the opportunity to put forward ideas and comment on Parish Council projects that are in the pipeline. It is an informal occasion with a delicious two course buffet provided, so a night off from cooking!

With a new financial year just started, **Grant Requests** from local groups/ organisations are welcomed by the Parish Council. A grant application form is available from the Clerk; contact details below.

**Next meeting** – Monday, 13th May, 2019 at 7.00 p.m. in the Assembly Rooms, with planning applications available to view from 6.30 p.m. and Councillors available for you to raise any issues you feel the PC may be able to resolve. Full minutes are available on the Parish Council website.

Ursula Deighton, Clerk, St. Briavels Parish Council  
Tel: 01594 516518. E-mail: [stbriavelsclerk@outlook.com](mailto:stbriavelsclerk@outlook.com)

## **! BE VIGILANT**

Most of us will be aware of or have read about the disturbing spate of acid attacks in St. Briavels. The Parish Council would like to make it known that we condemn absolutely these acts of vandalism - attacks that are destroying the reputation of our beautiful village and, understandably, worrying so many residents.

In consideration of such we would like to state the following:

1. Be vigilant - if you see anyone acting suspiciously, call 101.
2. If you see a crime being committed, call 999.
3. Do not approach anyone committing an attack - take a picture if possible or make a note and call 999.
4. Warn children not to pick up discarded containers - these may contain corrosive substances.
5. Make use of the Police Information Point (PIP) that will shortly be in place at the Assembly Rooms.
6. Help the Police with any information that will help with their investigations.
7. Call Crimestoppers quoting reference 212 of 22nd March.

We, the Parish Council, will continue to do whatever we can to halt these attacks, support the victims and bring those responsible to justice and encourage all residents to assist with this effort.

St. Briavels Parish Council



## EXTINCTION OR ARREST

The Extinction Rebellion movement continues to draw in people from all backgrounds and ages, frustrated by the lack of urgency in addressing the biggest issues of our age – the mass extinction of species and the fear of a rapidly changing climate on our future existence. The fact that many of them are willing to be arrested for protesting, blocking roads, interrupting meetings and being a non-violent nuisance, is powerful.

Such movements are difficult to sustain and many rebellions have been suppressed by the use of force and weakened by internal divisions. However, if this peaceful movement gathers momentum, believing that truth is more frightening than being arrested, then it is possible that climate change may force a cultural change which eclipses even Brexit.

Chris McFarling. [chrismcfarling@phonecoop.coop](mailto:chrismcfarling@phonecoop.coop)

## THANK YOU

I would like to thank all those who left rucksacks for me. I had fourteen to deliver for filling and despatch to the refugees in Calais. This was a wonderful and unexpected response.

Thank you all very much. They will be much appreciated.

Jean Sheraton

## THANK YOU TO EVERYONE

I have been overwhelmed by the good wishes of so many people after my accident, 4 weeks ago at the time of writing.

I would like to say a particular thank you to Paul, who found me lying on the path and phoned the ambulance, and Liz and her 2 children who covered me with blankets and hot water bottles to bring up my temperature. There are also so many others - those who visited me in hospital and home, looked after my dogs, sent me cards and messages, provided meals and countless other things that have aided my recovery. I still have some way to go but I must rely on time!

To all of you a big THANK YOU. I am very, very grateful.

Pauline Siddons

**Citizens Advice at  
St. Briavels Assembly Rooms**

For free, impartial and confidential advice.  
Drop-in sessions first Thursday each month  
1.30 - 4 pm  
For a fixed appointment please call 0300 330 9006



## HELPERS NEEDED

As I didn't hear from anyone, I am making a further request for helpers to join the roster of people keep the church looking clean and tidy for the many visitors who drop in, and the concert goers who attend our church in St Briavels. It is not an onerous task and takes 1 or 2 hours. We currently have only three couples, who take turns every six weeks. If there were more people, the length of time between being needed would be greater. I'm sure they would appreciate this, as well as new people being required less often. Cleaning materials are provided. To find out more please 'phone me on 01594 531096. Thank you.

Jean Sheraton.

## NEWS FROM ST BRIAVELS SCHOOL

Our fantastic team of parents have been very busy working on the outdoor space at school, building a new seating area, painting fences and redoing the artwork on the front yard. The work is still in progress, but the children love the picnic area and have already enjoyed lunchtimes outside.

We would welcome any plant donations, particularly any trellis plants to cover the lovely arches. A big thank you to all the parents, staff and children who have given up their time and put their amazing skills to good use.

The children enjoyed the Easter Service at church on the last day of term, with our new school choir happily leading the singing.

A reminder to visit our schools RHS garden at the RHS show at Malvern over the weekend of 11th May 2019.

## INFORMATION FROM YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY WELLBEING AGENT

**Exercise Classes** - For some months now, there have been very successful Gentle Exercise Classes held in Sedbury Village Hall. I can vouch for myself how effective they have been with various clients. They are for "all those wanting to improve or maintain their strength, fitness and overall health, including people with disabilities, limited mobility or long term health conditions".

**Classes are on Tuesdays:** 12.45-1.30, Seated exercise.1.45-2.45, Strength and Balance. Phone: 01594 812399 or Liz Pearce 01291 620306.

**Gloucestershire Carers Service** - From April 1st the provider has changed from Gloucestershire Carers/Guidepost Trust to 'PeoplePlus'. The new service will be called 'The Gloucestershire Carers Hub' Enquiries: [carers@peopleplus.co.uk](mailto:carers@peopleplus.co.uk) Tel. 0300 111 9000, The Gloucestershire Carers Hub, Conway House, 31 Worcester St, Gloucester. GL1 3AJ, [www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk](http://www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk)

The current emergency number on Carers' emergency cards remains the same; providers of Carers Breaks remain the same.

Services provided include: Information, advice and guidance; Carers' assessment and support planning; Carers' Emergency Scheme; Carers' Breaks; Hospital Liaison; Carers' emotional support and counselling; and Peer support and support groups

Richard Skinner, Community Wellbeing Agent Tel. 07927 051328  
[richard.skinner@fdean.org.uk](mailto:richard.skinner@fdean.org.uk) / [Richard.Skinner@publicagroup.uk](mailto:Richard.Skinner@publicagroup.uk)

### NOSH AND NATTER

Despite several apologies from members who were unable to attend, there was a good turnout for Sally's coffee morning. It was lovely to see a mixture of newer and older members enjoying a laugh and a chat. We sat in Sally's spacious new conservatory, which meant we were all able to sit together and look out over the normally lovely view which, sadly, was shrouded in mist! As always, Sally had a table full of lovely cakes, and plenty of tea and coffee. Thank you, Sally.

And thank you for the welcome from everyone at Sally's as I begin to get out and about after my accident.

Our next meeting, in May, has been put forward a week due to special circumstances. **We will be meeting at Nikki Hutchings on Wednesday 8th May (NOT 15th May)** for a Soup lunch from 12.30 – 2.00. The address is Blackberry Hill, South Bank, Hewelsfield, GL15 6UT. All ladies are welcome to come along and enjoy a laid-back social occasion. Either pop along to the meeting or, if you need more information, call me on 01594 530524 or email [siddonspauline@aol.com](mailto:siddonspauline@aol.com)

Pauline Siddons

### Brockweir & Hewelsfield Local History Group

The Local History Group's next meeting will be on Thursday May 9th 2019 when we'll be taking a look at the ships that were built in Brockweir.

“Ships that sailed the World”

To find out more, do join us in the Moravian Schoolrooms, Brockweir at 7.30 pm on Thursday 9th May.

All welcome.

John Norman

### **WILL YOU HELP US KEEP GIRLS IN SCHOOL IN THE FOREST OF DEAN BY DONATING PERIOD PRODUCTS TO THE RED BOX PROJECT?**

For the last two years, a UK-wide initiative called The Red Box Project has been quietly ensuring that no girl misses out on school just because she has her period. Access to period products is a huge problem for some girls. Many would rather stay home from school during their period than risk a humiliating incident in class. Red Box Project volunteers help girls get the education they're entitled to by providing local schools with red boxes filled with free period products.

Along with Louise Penny from Lydney, I set up the Red Box Project Forest

of Dean in March and I've been thrilled by the response we've had so far. Generous donations of period products from local women mean we've been able to provide red boxes to Five Acres school in Coleford and to CANDI, a charity supporting young people across the Forest. We hope to get more boxes to more girls over the coming months. But to do that, we need your help! We would love to build a community of Red Box supporters across the area. Could you commit to popping a packet or two of pads (or tampons, though demand for pads is greater) in your shopping trolley once or twice a month? Not only will this help us keep our boxes at Five Acres and CANDI well stocked, it will help us reach more schools and youth organisations too – and ultimately help more girls stay in school. And the great news is that the government has promised to step up and provide products in schools from 2020, so you don't have to donate indefinitely!

Please get in touch if you'd like to find out more. Phone 01594 530879 or email [vernonah@gmail.com](mailto:vernonah@gmail.com). You can also find us on facebook: [www.facebook.com/RedBoxProjectForestofDean](https://www.facebook.com/RedBoxProjectForestofDean) You'll find a donation box by my front door at The Court, Pystol Lane, St Briavels. Thank you!

Alex Vernon

### SOFT (Sharing our Faiths Together) MEETING



SOFT meetings will be held in the Loft above the Village Shop on Wednesdays 1st & 15th May and 5th & 19th June.

We are friendly, mixed faith group of people seeking to explore and understand the world around us. Our discussion topics range across a wide variety of subjects chosen by members in turn. Anyone is welcome to just come along and join in, or if you would like more information

please contact: Carol Stickland - 01594 530882 or Sue Groves 01291 689804

There is no admission fee to meetings though we do request a contribution towards room rental and refreshment costs.

### CHARLES LORD DENTON ALMSHOUSES

Two allotments in the gardens of the Almshouses are available for rent. If interested please contact either Marie Bird (07774 048609) or David Rees (01594 530443) for further information.

### ST BRIAVELS LUNCH CLUB, THURSDAY 23rd MAY 2018.

We all meet at 11.45 for a glass of sherry and a three-course lunch at 12 o'clock in St Briavels Pavilion. We are a happy group of about 20 people and are always pleased to see a new face. If you are new to the village and would like to join us please contact Mary (01594 530505) for more information. The three-course meal, sherry and coffee costs £5.50. There is also a raffle. We look forward to seeing you on the 23rd May.

Mary Perryman

## SAVE THE DATE: THE GREAT GET TOGETHER, ST BRIAVELS, SATURDAY 22ND JUNE

When the Labour MP Jox Cox was murdered in 2016, thousands of people came together across the UK to celebrate her life and her belief that 'we have more in common than that which divides us' - the words she used in her maiden speech in parliament.

This was the birth of an annual event called The Great Get Together - and it's coming to St Briavels! There'll be more details in next month's Village News, but for now, pop the details in your diary: Saturday 22nd June, 1pm, St Briavels Castle Moat. We're thinking a community picnic, a bake off and some live music. EVERYONE is welcome!

If you'd like to help organise our Great Get Together or provide some musical talent, we'd love to hear from you. Please email Alex at [vernonah@gmail.com](mailto:vernonah@gmail.com) or call 01594 530879. You can find out more about Jo Cox's legacy and The Great Get Together at <http://www.greatgettogether.org>

Alex Vernon and Piers Cardiff

## ST BRIAVELS CARNIVAL

St Briavels Carnival will be held on Saturday 8th June. This is a really special day for our Village and the committee are working hard to make it really enjoyable for all. If you would like to get involved or can help out in any way, please get in touch. We look forward to seeing you all on the 8th June.

Tessa 01594 530650

## CASUAL JOB OPPORTUNITY SUITABLE FOR STUDENTS HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Do you know of - or are you - a student who is looking for a casual/flexi part-time job through the Summer holidays? If so, the trustees of St. Briavels Assembly Room would love to hear from you to discuss the position further. We are looking for responsible individuals who are happy to assist in our community café over the weekends, and possibly some week days, just for a few hours?

Apart from giving you an opportunity to earn some money on a casual basis, it would give you some good work experience and be a lot of fun, working in a friendly community environment!

Please get in touch if you are interested. Many hands make light (and café!) work!

The St. Briavels Assembly Rooms Committee  
[trustees@st-briavels.com](mailto:trustees@st-briavels.com) / 01594 530950

## THE MOAT SOCIETY OF ST BRIAVELS

We're back into the swing of cutting, pruning, weeding, pond clearing, and mowing banks after our winter break, even though during our first meeting it felt as if we'd returned to the original medieval moat. Everything is growing fast now and even though we have a great team of helpers, we always welcome more. We'd particularly like some younger, stronger members as most of us are just a bit past our prime! If you can spare a couple of hours on the second Saturday of each month, just turn up at 10am. It's not all hard work - we usually enjoy some refreshments and a bit of a gossip as well. So, if you're new to the area it's a good way to get to know people. You don't need to be an experienced gardener either.

We're pleased that the new table and bench are being so well used. The idea was that people could buy a drink or snack at the Pantry and have somewhere pleasant to sit while they enjoyed it. It's also proving popular with dog walkers, who can sit on the bench for a rest and throw a ball to keep their dogs happy. On a less positive note, we ask yet again that you do not dump your own garden rubbish in the moat. It is us - the volunteers who have to clear up after you.

This year, we're hoping to work with the Parish Grasslands Project to reintroduce some native plants that have disappeared from our area in the past few years. A frightening number of once-common species have vanished. We've identified an area in the moat which we hope will prove both attractive and educational to local people, and perhaps encourage some to set aside a piece of their own gardens for lost plants

On the subject of plants, we will be running a plant stall as usual at this year's St Briavels Village Carnival on 8th June. This is our only way of raising funds for equipment, insurance etc. We'd very much welcome donations of potted and labelled flowers, shrubs, vegetables etc. and we'd also like to hear from anyone who is willing to help us with selling on the day. Please contact me on 01594 531460

Sue Davis, Secretary



**The Mackenzie Hall AGM**  
**Thursday 6th June, 7.00pm.**

The Trustees would be delighted if you could join us for our Annual General Meeting this year. We will recap on all the improvements made in the hall since last year and take stock on what we need to do next for the benefit of the village.

## ONE PLANET DEVELOPMENT

In 2011, the Welsh government launched a planning policy called 'One Planet Development' (OPD), to establish sustainable agricultural smallholdings in the Welsh countryside. The policy aims to reverse the recent decline in traditional land-based livelihoods, while at the same time increasing biodiversity, encouraging the trade of local produce from small-scale farms, and rebuilding rural communities by encouraging residents to work locally rather than commuting to cities.

Since the launch of the scheme, just under 40 smallholding-businesses have been established, almost all in West Wales. An OPD is a significant undertaking, imposing strict rules, requiring residents to generate all of their energy needs off-grid (usually from solar power and sustainable coppice), provide at least 65% of their food needs from the land, and limit carbon expenditure in all aspects of life below a 'One Planet' threshold, i.e. using a per-person share of the Earth's resources and no more.

Forest of Dean Council recently became the second county in the UK to declare a climate emergency, and in January called a meeting to discuss introducing the OPD planning scheme to the area. If adopted, FoD would become the first region in England to take this step. However, OPD is not currently legislation, and as such there are no examples in England.

Encouraging people to re-learn traditional skills and establish low-carbon, land-based enterprises would be a positive step in the face of the ongoing climate crisis. We (Freyja and Matt) have been living just outside Brockweir for the past five years, and are keen to demonstrate the viability of the approach, making it the first OPD either in Monmouthshire or the whole of England. We are seeking a 3-5 acre agricultural plot in the area to develop an organic hedgerow wine business, which could be used as a test case for the OPD scheme in England or Monmouthshire. We have posted details at [mattjdunn.co.uk/opd](http://mattjdunn.co.uk/opd), for anyone interested in learning more.

Dr Matt Dunn and Freyja Sears

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★  
Feel free to bring your own wine, drinks & snacks.  
Teas, coffees & ice cream on sale.  
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Film Night**

**Friday 10th May**  
Oscars for best film, supporting actor, and original screenplay

**Green Book**  
"outrageously appealing"  
Empire Online

**Tintern Village Hall 7.45pm**

**Tickets £4.00 15s & under £2.50**

Information:  
tinternvillage.co.uk  
or phone  
07774 726860

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## AUSTYN WILLIAMS. Oct 1933 - Feb 2019

Austyn resided within the area of St Briavels and Brockweir for the majority of his life, living there and raising a family with his wife, Margaret.

His father had been a member of the Royal Engineers serving near Ypres during World War One. Following discharge due to a gas attack, his recuperation at home saw him spend his gratuity on radio components and it was being surrounded by radio parts that inspired Austyn to start a hobby making wireless sets and follow an eventual career in electronics. Austyn's mother had attended the Narth school and prior to her own father's death had been due to train as a teacher, demonstrating that Austyn's eventual career lecturing in Electrical Engineering seems born of the skills he gleaned from both parents.

Austyn attended St. Briavels School and then Bells Grammar School. He won a scholarship to attend and was given a Hercules single speed bicycle in order to make the journey from St Briavels and back to school at Coleford. It was the norm then during wartime for students to cycle to school and cycling was to be Austyn's life long interest. Post retirement, he eventually rode from Land's End to John O'Groats.

Austyn became an Electronics Design Engineer in 1964. In 1965 he obtained his Final City & Guilds Telecommunications Technician's Certificate. Further studies resulted in membership of the Institution of Electronic and Radio Engineers. He started at Cardiff University in October 1966 and obtained his BSc in Electrical and Electronic Engineering in 1969. Austyn became a Lecturer at Gwent College of Higher Education in 1970 and progressed to the position of Senior Lecturer. He retired in 1986, but for many years continued to give tuition in mathematics and physics.

Austyn's passion for the environment and interest in renewable energy saw him design his own solar energy system for the family home, then at Woodspring. His interests in engineering, gardening, exercise and health all related to his wish to live in a manner that cared for the environment. He lived by that philosophy until the end, mindful of never using more than he needed, and living by his principles of caring for the world and those that reside within it.

Judith Lowery (Austyn's daughter)

## PEOPLE POWER PLEDGES

### The Hows, Whys, Lows, and Highs of Small Steps - stories from our community

“The thing about being 72 years old, is I can remember life before plastic. When it arrived it was so glamorous and deified. My first child was born before the invention of plastic pants, and my last child was born after. What a difference! We used to have to wash everything, bedding, clothes, nappies, everything got wet; plastic pants came like a blessing. My grandmother had a row of empty plastic detergent bottles lined up in front of the sink. One day I asked her if I could throw them all away and she said “No! That’s what I dry my plastic bags on.” Plastic was revered.

“So the washing of plastic bags is cultural to me, genetic even. My grandmother did it, and my mother, and now me. It feels important to me to reuse what I can; and it also reminds me of the incredible veneration that plastic was given when it first joined our lives. I’ve got bag washing down to a fine art. I do it once a month. In between I stuff all the plastic bags into one big bag, then one Sunday morning with The Archers Omnibus playing I wash them all with soap, because if you wash them with detergent they get sticky and smell. Then I rinse them in 10 litres of cold water and 2 Milton tablets; but I must not let the Milton go into the septic tank. They need to be sterile so I can store food in them. After that, I peg the bags up on the line outside; when they are dry I turn them inside out to dry the other side. Next, I air them in the kitchen; lastly I store them by size, so I can quickly get the right size bag when I need it. It is a faff, but they play such an important part in the life of a smallholder, freezing fruit, veg, bread, leftovers.

“A friend of ours once sent us his album of ‘A Photo a Day Aged 50.’ It included a photo of our plastic bags hanging on the line outside to dry; I guess plastic bags drying on a washing line is not a common sight. There is a photo of them airing in the kitchen too.

“I do get complaints from family, because sometimes the larder door can’t open there can be so many bags stored behind it; but come autumn time all the bags are in use again, packaging up our precious harvest to keep it fresh for when we we’re ready to cook with it.”

For more information on People Power Pledges, to get involved, or share your story, contact [rachelslee@hotmail.com](mailto:rachelslee@hotmail.com)



## NATURE NOTES: THE GREAT OUTDOORS by Moucher - John Josephi

### Where is Everyone?

It has dawned on me that it is the duty of a VN Nature Notes writer to take a long hard look at Mother N. and to report back what he sees, instead of idly poking fun at his hapless acquaintances, as I have lately done. So, here goes.

I've always thought of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder as being to do with not treading on the cracks in a pavement “otherwise the bears will get you”, but I now find I have a mild form of it myself, and it involves the concept of “loneliness”. The story goes that when the N. American Indian, Chief Seattle, was obliged to sell tribal lands to the American State, he wrote a letter to the President, urging him to cherish the land he was acquiring and to value all its wild inhabitants. Failure to do so, he said, would leave humankind overcome “with a great loneliness”. I share his view, and this is why



I'm more worried than optimistic each Spring as I watch out for the first of our Summer “marker” species, The Swallow, the Chiff Chaff, the Cuckoo (who he?) and all the later followers.

Each year leaves me diminished as I note the gaps in the ranks, and my “Disorder” increases as I read about a local council in Norfolk netting off sandy sea cliffs to prevent Sand Martins from returning to their old nest sites. I've seen good old Mother Nature accidentally pull the same stunt on the River Monnow, washing away a section of river bank and leaving a host

of migrants hovering in dismay above the empty space. It doesn't help when I see a householder scraping the messy House Martin nests from the eaves of his bijoux residence, or find that a time-worn local residence is to be completely renovated, thus terminating the breeding pattern of our Swifts, those flagship high Summer birds, and their formations of screaming Black Arrows. The silence is deafening.

It's hard to see what a born worrier (O.C.D. subject or whatever ) can do to put things right, but I apply the “Do no harm” mantra to most of my dealings with the great outdoors, developing a semi-religious respect for the insect world, Bumble Bees, Hornets, and of course, Wasp nests, which I leave unmolested if I can. Last Summer, we found one in a shed doorway. We left it and, as it grew to be an architectural wonder, I had to stoop lower and lower on entering until I had to practically Limbo to get in and out, terrified of dislodging the whole edifice and finding myself sharing the shed with 1,000 infuriated residents.



All is not lost, however. Even with our sharp elbows and technology, I find, the four-legged jihadis of the Wildwood seem to prevail. Deer fray my young Larch, and two weeks ago a team of enterprising Badgers forced a hen house door to remove the entire contents.

Wild Wood Wins Again!

## DIARY DATES - weekly/regular activities

### Mondays

ZUMBA TONING WITH JO 9:15-10:15am - Mackenzie Hall Brockweir.  
TABLE TENNIS: 7.30 - 9pm (except 2nd Monday of the month). Assembly Rooms. St. Briavels. No need to book, all levels welcome. Good exercise and great fun. [tabletennis@st-briavels.com](mailto:tabletennis@st-briavels.com).  
ADULT TAP FOR FUN: 6.45 - 7.45 improvers+ / Intermediates; 7.45 - 8.45 Beginners. Moravian Church Hall. Call Deborah: 07801 479269.

### Tuesdays

YOGA WITH ALI ROSE: 9:30-11am. Assembly Rooms, St Briavels. 07883 678629. [simplyalirose@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:simplyalirose@yahoo.co.uk)  
COURTYARD CAFE: 1:30-4:30. Assembly Rooms - hairdresser, seamstress services, "Pop- up" shop: French bread/patisserie.  
ST. BRIAVELS "WALKING for HEALTH" walk every Tuesday for approx. 1 hour. Starts 2pm, Assembly Rooms, St. Briavels. Call John for more info - 01594 530890.  
KNITTERS GROUP meets every Tuesday, 2 – 4. 30 at St Briavels Assembly rooms. For info contact [Claire@nissel.co.uk](mailto:Claire@nissel.co.uk)  
OPEN MIC and NEW Wye Valley Acoustic Music Club at the Rose & Crown, Tintern, every first Tuesday of the month. For more info call Adrian on 01291 689812.  
ZUMBA GOLD WITH JO at 7-8pm St Briavels School Hall  
ZUMBA WITH JO at 8:15-9:15pm, Fitness, St Briavels School Hall

### Wednesdays

COMMUNITY VINYASA YOGA 9-10 am, Assembly Rooms, St Briavels, Lorna Kennedy 07793 381849 [lornayoga@me.com](mailto:lornayoga@me.com) [www.lornayoga.com](http://www.lornayoga.com)  
ECSTATIC DANCING 9.45 am -11.30 pm Mackenzie Hall  
FRIENDLY ART GROUP Most Wednesdays, 10am-1pm Assembly Rooms. Call Ann Kilminster on 07980 978348.  
PILATES: 2-3pm. Assembly Rooms, St Briavels. For info call: 01291 627243 / 07787 193302.  
BROCKWEIR BOWLS CLUB: 2-4pm Wednesday afternoons. For more information call Bob Broughton 01594 530003.  
BROCKWEIR YOUTH CLUB - the club meets during term time. For further information please ring 01291 689 327 or visit: [www.brockweiryouthclub.co.uk](http://www.brockweiryouthclub.co.uk).  
MINDFULNESS MEDITATION GROUP First Wednesday of the month, 7–9 pm at St Briavels Assembly Rooms  
SOFT MEETING. On two Weds each month. 7.30pm. The Loft above Village Shop.

### Thursdays

COURTYARD CAFE: 1:30-4:30. Assembly Rooms - hairdresser, seamstress services, "Pop- up" shop.  
MIXED CIRCUITS CLASS: 6:30pm at Mackenzie Hall  
YOGA WITH ALI ROSE: 7- 8:30pm, Assembly Rooms. 07883 678629 [simplyalirose@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:simplyalirose@yahoo.co.uk).  
ZUMBA WITH JO, 'Zumba Strong', St Briavels School Hall, 8.15pm - 9.15pm  
ST BRIAVELS WALKING GROUP - monthly walks. John Hurley 01594 530890

### Fridays

TEA AND TOTS: 9:00-11.00am - term time only, Assembly Rooms, St Briavels. For more information please visit our Facebook page: St Briavels Tea and Tots.  
IYENGAR YOGA - 9.30-11am at Mackenzie Hall. [www.wildwoodyoga.co.uk](http://www.wildwoodyoga.co.uk) or call/message Kische Redwood 07805 729893  
UNDER 5s PLAY CLUB - 11am – 1pm at the Pavilion.

### Saturdays

YOGA WITH ALI ROSE: Once a month, last Saturday of month, 9.30-11.00am Assembly Rooms, St Briavels. 07883 678629. [simplyalirose@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:simplyalirose@yahoo.co.uk)  
ZUMBA WITH JO, 'Toning', St Briavels School Hall, 9.00 - 10am.

### Sundays

ST BRIAVELS PEOPLE'S CHOIR meets at 7 pm at the Assembly Rooms every week.

## BROCKWEIR COMMUNITY.....WE NEED YOUR HELP!

**SUNDAY 12th MAY 10am – 3pm**

### **Please join us for a community spring tidy of Brockweir Play Area.**

Local families are coming together for a day of maintenance and odd jobs to give the Play Area next to the village shop a spring tidy. Please join us, as many hands make light work! Refreshments available for children.

If you are a local parent, grandparent or community member who values our lovely Brockweir Play Area as a village asset, we are currently recruiting volunteers to support this amenity for the coming future years. The existing committee members have installed, maintained and fund-raised for the last 8 years and are in need of new families to get involved!

*However large or small a commitment you may be able to offer,  
please do get in touch to find out more:*

*Sophie on 07747 711401 or Sarah on 07783 943298*

## DIARY DATES FOR MAY

Walking for Health every Tuesday – meet at the Assembly Rooms, 2pm			
1 Weds	SOFT meeting	7.30pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
2 Thurs	Charity Soup Lunch	12noon	Moravian Church Schoolroom
2 Thurs	St Briavels Walking Group	1pm	Meet at St Briavels Church
4 Sat	Produce Market	10am-12.30pm	St Briavels Pavilion
7 Tues	Coffee Morning	10am	St Briavels Congregational Church
8 Weds	Nosh & Natter: Soup Lunch	12.30-2pm	Blackberry Hill, Hewelsfield
9 Thurs	Walk & Talk Group	2pm	Meet at Hewelsfield Church
9 Thur	History Group: 'Ships that Sailed the World'	7.30pm	Moravian Church Schoolroom
11 Sat	St Briavels Moat Society Working Party - all welcome	10am to 12pm	Castle Moat
11/12 Sat/Sun	An Exhibition of Life Through 900 years	10.30am-4.30pm	St Mary Magdalene Hewelsfield
12 Sun	Community Spring Tidy	10am-3pm	Brockweir Play Area
13 Mon	Hewelsfield & Brockweir PC meeting	7pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
13 Mon	St Briavels PC meeting (planning applications and councillors available from 6.30pm)	7pm	Assembly Rooms, St Briavels
15 Weds	WI meeting: SS Great Britain	7.30pm	St Briavels Pavilion
15 Weds	SOFT meeting	7.30pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
16 Thurs	Coffee Morning & Plant Sale	10.30am – 12.30pm	Orchard Cottage, Underhill
17 Fri	Garden Society: Dowsing for Gardeners	7.30pm	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
18 Sat	Churchyard Tidy Up Day	10am-1pm	Hewelsfield Churchyard
18 Sat	WVM Concert: Pianist Clare Hammond	7.30pm	St Briavels Church

21 Tues	St Briavels Senior Citizens	12.30pm	Orepool, Sling
21 Tues	Brockweir & Hewelsfield: Annual Meeting & Annual Parish Meeting	7pm	The Loft, Brockweir Village Shop
22 Weds	St Briavels Get-together	6pm	St Briavels Pavilion
23 Thurs	St Briavels Lunch Club	11.45am	St Briavels Pavilion
23 Thurs	Walk & Talk Group	2pm	Meet at Hewelsfield Church
31 Fri	Board Games Café	7-10pm	Assembly Rooms, St Briavels

## ADVANCE DATES

5 Jun	SOFT meeting	7.30pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
6 Jun	Charity Soup Lunch	12noon	Moravian Church Schoolroom
6 Jun	Mackenzie Hall AGM	7pm	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
8 June	St Briavels Carnival		
9 Jun	Whittington Purse Sermon & Bread & Cheese Distribution	6.45pm	St Briavels Castle & Church
15 Jun	WVM Concert: Four Hands, One Piano	7.30pm	St Briavels Church
19 Jun	SOFT meeting	7.30pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
22 Jun	The Great Get Together	1pm	St Briavels Castle Moat
23 Jun	St Briavels Open Gardens		
29 Jun	St Briavels Peoples Choir Summer Concert	7.30pm	Assembly Rooms, St Briavels
30 Jun	WVN Concert: Katona Twins Guitar Duo	7.30pm	Drill Hall, Chepstow
6 Jul	Hog Roast in aid of the Friends of St Briavels Church		Church Farm, St Briavels
13/14 Jul	A Midsummer Night's Dream		St Briavels Castle



## PARISH GRASSLANDS PROJECT

**The headline from our flora survey last year was that over the last 100 years or so about 70 plants have become extinct in the parishes of Hewelsfield & Brockweir and St Briavels.**

We have been wondering what action, if any, we might take in response to the survey result (see box below), and came up with the idea of creating a “garden of remembrance” featuring some of the lost species. Now, after talks with St Briavels Moat Society and English Heritage, we can report that we have been offered a site at the west side of the moat, and that work to prepare the ground began last month.

The soil at the moat site seems to be fertile. The target species need a wide range of soil types and we expect to make some adjustments to suit them. Preparation of the ground has begun but this is not a piece of instant gardening and it will probably be next year before there is much to see for our efforts.

**There was an excellent turn-out of about 70 for our AGM** at the Mackenzie Hall. Six local speakers talked about how they look after their varied pieces of land. The diversity of field usage, the enthusiasm and imagination of the owners and the value of support from the PGP were all apparent.

**Last month an enthusiastic group turned up at the community orchard** at St Briavels Playing Field to do some weeding and apply a good mulch to the six apple trees. We were delighted to see that the trees were beginning to come into leaf. We finished a happy hour or so together with hot drinks and cake. If you haven't visited the orchard yet, do have a look. It is in the north-east corner of the playing field. We plan to produce permanent name plaques for each of the six varieties.

**Finally, a reminder that we offer a free service of advice for local landowners**, including botanical surveys and assessing the condition of grassland for wild plant species, management options and sources of help, including grants, contractors and availability of stock for grazing. Don't hesitate to get in touch, via the website, if we can be of help.

Mike Topp

[www.parishgrasslandsproject.org.uk](http://www.parishgrasslandsproject.org.uk)

**A word about the survey.** It was undertaken by George Peterken and Elsa Wood, with additional contributions by local residents, and compared current observations with those listed by local physician WA Shoolbred in his *The Flora of Chepstow*, published in 1920. During our survey about 500 species were discovered, leaving a shortfall of about 70 from the 1920 list (a number of “new” species were also discovered). Of course, we can't prove that these plants are locally extinct, but until and unless they are spotted in the parishes we have to assume that they are. The “lost species” range from easily-identified Heather to the more difficult to identify Gromwell. You can read a detailed survey report at the PGP website.

## WYEDEAN SCHOOL ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING COURSES

### SUMMER TERM 2019

Courses at St Briavels Assembly Rooms and The Pavilion, St Briavels

### THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS, EAST STREET

#### Painting and Drawing

Suitable for beginners to advanced. Starting with some basic drawing, you will move on to develop your Watercolour and Acrylic painting techniques. *Bring your own materials (advice at first session).* **Start:** 29 April. **Length:** 8 wks **Mon:** 2 - 4 **Cost:** £68

#### Painting and Drawing Day Workshop

Suitable for all levels. You know what it's like - just as you get going, it's almost time to stop! This is a chance to get to grips with the subject. Flowers are recommended; or if the weather permits we may work outdoors. Bring lunch and your own materials. Drinks are available. **Tues 28 May.** 10-2pm **Cost:** £25

#### Brush Up Your Basic French

This course is suitable for those who wish to learn French and consider themselves as ‘rusty’ beginners. The main aim is to increase confidence in conversation situations and to extend length of conversation. **Start:** 29 April. **Length:** 9 wks **Mon:** 10-11.30 **Cost:** £75

### AT ST BRIAVELS PAVILION, COLEFORD ROAD

#### Italian for Beginners (continuation)

This course is suitable for students who have never studied the language before or for those who studied Italian years ago and need to refresh their knowledge of the language. It will cover topics such as restaurants, directions and verbs, using fun/games/role play in a relaxed atmosphere, together with an insight into the Italian culture and - why not? - also a bit of slang. **Start:** 29 April. **Length:** 8 wks **Mon:** 10.30-12.30 **Cost:** £80

#### Italian – Intermediate

This course is suitable for students who have studied Italian for 2/3 years or who have a qualification at AS level. The course will consolidate grammar structures whilst introducing new grammar rules. Conversation will be at the centre of the course, together with other activities. Italian magazines and newspapers, real life listening, movies and recipes will be used during the course. **Start:** 29 April **Length:** 8 wks **Mon:** 12.45-2.45 **Cost:** £80

**For further information ring:** 01291 625340 (Term Time) or visit the website: [www.wyedeans.glocus.sch.uk](http://www.wyedeans.glocus.sch.uk) (Go to ‘Community’, ‘Adult Learning’, ‘Courses available’ and download the Spring Term 2019 brochure)



## NEWS FROM THE BROCKWEIR VILLAGE SHOP

### SHOP CELEBRATES FIFTEEN YEARS!

Brockweir and Hewelsfield Village Shop first opened its doors to customers on 7th April 2004. The community shop was created after

the last remaining shop in the village went out of business. Locals got together, raised funds, found a site and built a brand new shop with a café. And the enterprise has gone from strength to strength, over the years winning numerous awards, including Taste of the West, CPRE, Countryside Alliance, Rural Business Awards, and Pride of the Forest, as well as winning the Best Local Food Retailer category in the prestigious BBC Food and Farming Awards. The original business plan had envisaged a target turnover of £80,000 annually; this year turnover was heading for £340,000.

Three years before the shop opened, numerous fund raising events were held and grants were obtained, including from Defra, the Forest of Dean District Council and Gloucestershire County Council. A further £20,000 was raised by issuing shop bonds. The first sod was cut on December 10 2002, and volunteers quickly gained expertise in digging trenches, laying drains, carpentry, wiring, plumbing, painting etc, earning £15,000 credit from the contractor for doing such work. To ensure the shop's eco credentials, another group worked on photovoltaic panels for the roof and a ground source heat pump. Some villagers donated whole trees for the oak-framed timber-clad building, and these were

milled on site. Despite numerous headaches along the way, the shop served its first customers on April 7 2004.

Vital to its success has been the heart of the project - the volunteers who have served the community with passion and commitment, some of whom have been working here since before the doors were opened!

Now we face new challenges as retailing has changed over the past 15 years, particularly with regards online shopping. The core aims of the project have not changed but may have to be adapted. The core aims were:

- To support local suppliers
- To provide a hub -
- To be financially sustainable
- To be eco friendly.

There are now more than 300 community shops across the UK, with Brockweir and Hewelsfield Village Shop often held up as something to aspire to. The parish can be incredibly proud of its vision. We are working hard to ensure that the shop will continue to grow and thrive, and so it is vitally important that it fulfils locals' needs. So please give us feedback on changes and suggestions for improvements.

- Support your shop and café by using it
- Become a member and have voting rights
- Become a volunteer

Thank you for your continued support. Congratulations to all involved.

Alison

PS: New Supplier: Milk Available from local Chase Farm

## ART IN THE CAFÉ

### TRICIA WILDER Botanical Drawing and Painting. Exhibition continues until 20th May

Tricia describes her background and her inspiration thus:

"I spent my childhood on the edge of Colchester, close to Mersea Island and then on the West coast of Ireland. My childhood was an idyllic upbringing full of outdoor activities from gardening, fishing, riding, and learning to sew, knit, cook, paint and play lots of sport! I have three sisters who are all artistic too. My father was an accomplished artist and encouraged us all to draw and paint – there was no television, so we had loads of time, never bored and consequently I have always been creative.

"After going to college studying Art, Design and Dressmaking, I worked for Thomas Sanderson, then Simone Mirman, Milliners in Chesham Place, London. In 1969/70 I was involved with creating hats for the Royal family, which was an amazing experience! In the 1980s, after

marrying, Jeremy and I ran a prep school and I was once again able to do some art and crafting. But with a young family this was difficult, as I was also involved with the catering and well-being of the school and our children. My art was put on hold!

"It wasn't until we moved back to Ireland in 2000 that I started getting back to my art. I took lessons with Patricia Morrison, an Irish botanical artist. My passion was rekindled and I began to paint regularly. We lived in amongst the inspirational scenery of Connemara. On our return to the UK in 2017 I enrolled as a student with the Anna Mason Online Art School, to regain my confidence in sharing my work and learning new skills. I recently won the 'Painting of the Month' with my 'Tomatoes', which forms part of my exhibition here at the café. This is my first show of paintings and consists of a selection of flora and fauna – which I hope you will enjoy!"

### GEOFF HOWELLS: 20th May - 30th June

A resident of Usk, Geoff originally studied for his BA in Architecture, but has made his own pen & ink drawings a lifelong interest. Showing his work in a number of professional galleries around South Wales and the Cotswolds, his background in architecture is evident in

his subject matter, buildings in landscape, farmsteads, agricultural markets, and of late an interest in the complexity of tree structure. He finds the etchings of Whistler and Rembrandt an endless source of inspiration.

Jacqui Trefgarne

Try swapping...!  
Try swapping...!  
Try swapping...!



Try swapping...!  
Try swapping...!  
Try swapping...!



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**Leading pianist at St Briavels**

The Society's May concert will be held on Saturday 18th May at 7.30 pm in St Briavels Church (not at Tintern Abbey as shown in the Annual Brochure). It will feature the return of the multi-talented musicologist and outstanding pianist, **Clare Hammond**.

Acclaimed as a pianist of "amazing power and panache" (*The Telegraph*), Clare is recognised for the virtuosity and authority of her performances and has developed a "reputation for brilliantly imaginative concert programmes" (*BBC Music Magazine*). In 2016, she won the Royal Philharmonic Society's 'Young Artist Award' in recognition of outstanding achievement. In addition to her classical repertoire, she has a particular interest in new music, and her discography includes world premiere recordings of over twenty works. As well as being described as a "star interpreter of contemporary music" (*The Guardian*), her recordings have received comments such as "unflinching bravura and conviction" (*Gramophone*),

"this array of wizardry is not for the faint hearted" (*BBC Music Magazine*) and "a dazzling athlete" (*The Guardian* on her 2015 Barbican performance). She is in demand as a speaker, regularly giving presentations for research series at universities across the UK, and she played the younger version of Maggie Smith's character Miss Shepherd in the film *The Lady In The Van*. Outreach forms an increasingly important part of Clare's work. In 2017, she set up a partnership with Gloucestershire Music to give recitals in local schools, and since then has performed to over 1,500 schoolchildren.

Clare's programme at St Briavels will include a selection of Preludes by Debussy, Rachmaninov's second Piano Sonata, works by Bartok, Ades and Finnis and what she calls Three Bees: The Bee's Wedding by Mendelssohn, The Flight of the Bumblebee by Rimsky-Karsakov and Flight of the Killer Bee by Ewan Campell.

Admission will be £18 for non-members, £15 for members and £2 for students up to 25.

**News of Summer Concerts in June**

Please make a note in your diaries of four returning artists: 15th June at St Briavels at 7.30 pm: **Jo Tong and Waka Hasegawa** - Four Hands, One Piano with music by Mozart, Schubert, Debussy and Gershwin, a great experience; and 30th

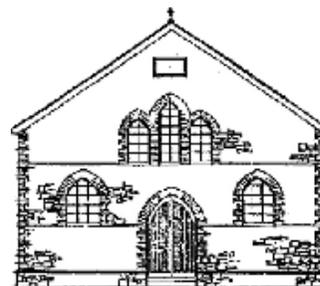
June at 7.30 pm at Chepstow Drill Hall: the **Katona Twins Guitar Duo**, with Spanish and South American music and West Side Story. If you have never heard them, don't miss their extraordinary energy and musicianship.

**Membership offer**

The Society's membership year runs from 1st August to 31st July, but we are offering 15 months' membership starting from 1st May for the price of 12. Join on-line at [www.wvm.org.uk](http://www.wvm.org.uk) for £15 per person, giving reduced entry to concerts (14 in total instead of just 11) during the next 15 months.

Enquiries can be made to the message line at 01291 330020 or by email to [info@wvm.org.uk](mailto:info@wvm.org.uk).

Keith Norman 01594 530419



**WYE VALLEY ARTS CENTRE, LLANDOGO**

Beginners and improvers are very welcome on all the courses as all will enjoy the individual attention which the tutors can give to small groups of students. There are 1, 2 and 4 and 6 day courses. Please ask for further details. We hope you will find an opportunity to come to The Wye Valley Arts Centre to enjoy our beautiful inspirational surroundings, the perfect creative environment.

**SPRING/SUMMER 2019**

<b>THURSDAYS</b> May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, June 6, 13, 20, 27	<b>SILVER JEWELLERY (10 classes)</b> 1.00 - 4.00pm £230 for 10 x 3hr sessions (Silver not included)	<b>Ann Skehel</b>
<b>FRIDAYS</b> May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, June 7, 14, 21, 28	<b>PAINTING &amp; DRAWING (10 classes)</b> 9.30 – 12.30pm and/or 1 - 4pm £220 for 10 x 3hr sessions, am or pm	<b>Ann Hulme</b>
<b>July 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18</b>	<b>PAINTING AND DRAWING - 6 day course</b> £50 per day	<b>Ann Hulme</b>
<b>SATURDAY</b> July 20	<b>PLAY WITH CLAY FOR A DAY</b> 9.30 – 4pm £50 for one-day workshop	<b>Val Welham</b>
<b>SATURDAY</b> July 27	<b>FOUR SEASONS PHOTOGRAPHY- Summer</b> 9.30 - 12.30pm £25 per session	<b>David Broadbent</b>

Tel: 01594 530214 Email: [info@wyearts.co.uk](mailto:info@wyearts.co.uk) Web: [www.wyearts.co.uk](http://www.wyearts.co.uk)



**A Coffee Morning and Plant Sale**

in aid of the Moravian Church Buildings Repair Fund will be held on Thursday 16th May from 10.30 -12.30 at Orchard Cottage, Underhill, Brockweir

If you have any plants you would like to donate, please contact Hilary on 01291 689326

Regret parking is very limited so please walk up from the village if you can.



Looking forward to seeing you!

## **DOWSING FOR GARDENERS**

On 17 May, 7.30pm at Mackenzie Hall, we welcome Keith Harmon, who will give a talk and demonstration on Dowsing. Keith will begin by talking about the selection of garden items, where to plant them, finding water, pipe leakages etc, before we go outside to have a go at dowsing. Keith says, 'Once the new dowser has got the hang of it, they are off in all directions, following every offshoot of water they come to. The effect is that dowsers are scattered all over the place. It is fun, though, as people see me trying to round everyone up.'

Keith's dowsing activities have taken him to many parts of the country finding water for clients, discovering archaeological remains, giving dowsing talks and leading dowsing workshops. His talks are more than just a talk and equally an entertainment. He is a registered dowsing tutor and Council member of the British Society of Dowsers and Chairman of the BSD's health and healing Special Interest Group.

## **WHY I LOVE EPIMEDIUMS**

Sally Gregson, our speaker in March, explained why these once 'quiet, useful little plants for dry shade' are now some of her favourites. Newly discovered species from China and exciting hybrids produced by breeders in Europe and America are astonishing and beautiful, lending an ethereal air to woodland gardens among other spring-flowering bulbs and plants to achieve a tapestry of colour and texture. Some of these species have large blossoms like hang-gliding spiders suspended above brightly splashed and marbled young leaves. Others have clouds of small starry flowers or dainty, cup-shaped bells on wiry stems. Flower colours range from white, through pale yellow, pink, purple, brown and red.

Sally has been collecting epimediums for some years, making contact with collectors, nursery owners and plant breeders. She told us some of their stories, and we saw pictures of plants in the wild, including in the snow - which showed how tough these delicate little beauties are! A particular feature is that, unlike the more familiar plants, which produce flowers under their leaves (needing to be cut down in early spring if you are to see the flowers) the flowers of the new Chinese species appear above the leaves.

A fascinating group of plants. I've already added some beauties to my collection!

Christine Haines

## **IN MY GARDEN**

### **My Garden and Other Ecosystems**

A couple of years ago, I signed up for an Open University course about ecosystems and it gave me a real insight into my own garden's unique little ecosystem. I've learned more about what makes it such an interesting and diverse place, a series of interactions between plants converting energy from the sun and a multitude of living, breathing, growing organisms - from the birds and bees to the microbes and fungi which eventually return all that life to the earth.

I have often thought that nature would do a better job without my interference and find its own balance, but what I was reminded of is that, for my garden to retain all of its biodiversity, it does require a degree of management or it would eventually return to woodland.

As it is, a mix of woodland (the fruit trees), woodland edge (the hedges), woodland clearing (meadow lawn) and open water (the pond), it provides accommodation to species perfectly adapted to the conditions. Blue tits dangle precariously along the slender birch twigs; midges dance in the early morning sunlight; fluffy little tawny mining bees; a pair of wild ducks which have graced my pond with their mating displays; and the many hundreds of species of insects and other invertebrates that I can and can't see without a microscope. They are all part of my gardens ecosystem. There are no 'pests' here, just wonderful examples of life's rich variety.

Cheryl Cummings

## **WHAT TO DO THIS MONTH**

I see that in last year's 'What To Do' for May, I was still hesitant to pronounce the arrival of Spring. This year, it seems to have arrived, retreated and arrived again since February! Despite some lovely, warm and sunny days, nights have been chilly and this slows plant growth, both in and out of the greenhouse. Overall though, growing conditions are much better than last year's, and by mid April, when I'm writing this, it definitely feels as though it's time to get growing! Get vegetable seeds not yet sown into the ground or seed tray as soon as possible. The soil is warm and days are getting longer and longer. May is a busy but also magical month - so many shades of green as leaves unfurl and tender shoots emerge. Enjoy it all, while it lasts!

- Keep your greenhouse well ventilated and don't let the soil dry out
- Don't be in a hurry to plant greenhouse crops in their final positions. Wait until their roots fully fill their pots – treat them a little mean to get the best flowering (and fruit)
- Harden off young plants intended for outside gradually. Keep a watch on the forecast so you can protect them from cold winds or late frosts.
- When flowering is over, allow the leaves of bulbs to die down naturally. Lift and divide overcrowded clumps
- Refresh or replace the soil in outdoor pots and add a slow release feed before you plant up your summer displays
- Prune shrubs, if necessary, when they finish flowering (but don't do major pruning where birds may be nesting)
- Keep blades high when you mow - or treat your lawn as a meadow, save time and energy and wait until late July before you mow

Find detailed monthly guidance on our website [www.wyegarden.com](http://www.wyegarden.com)

Christine Haines

Find detailed advice, our annual programme and more on our website:  
[www.wyegarden.com](http://www.wyegarden.com)



**Harbottle & Jonas. Friday 5th April**

David and Freya were a very engaging young couple with clear voices which merged effortlessly into close harmonies. They were equally competent musicians. They performed a range of traditional songs together with some quirky songs of their own. The audience joined in with many, but were left in stunned silence when Freya sang a beautifully composed rendition of the classic Black is the Colour, which has been recorded in the past by the likes of Joan Baez, Nina Simone, Judy Collins and even Katherine Jenkins. A well-attended and memorable event.

**This was the last event of the spring season** and I would like to thank all those who turned out to attend live performances from such talented performers in our village hall. It could only be possible due to your support, the financial support from Air in G and the small group of volunteers (you know who you are!) who help out on the night.

**We hope to receive the new prospectus from Air in G in mid May** and it will go on the notice board in the Brockweir shop until the end of May. So have a look and let me know what you would like for the autumn and spring seasons next year and I will try and make it happen.

**I have already booked Johnny Coppin**, a well-known local singer and founder of folk rock supergroup Decameron, who is to perform at the Hall on Saturday 19th October, and I hope to sign up some great acts for the rest of the season.

Adrian Birch

**St. Briavels People's Choir  
SUMMER CONCERT**

*Folk and Inspirational Songs, and Choruses  
from Musical Theatre*

**Saturday 29th June, 7pm £6.00, the Assembly Rooms  
Tickets from 'The Pantry' 01594 530421 or on the door  
Proceeds to the Assembly Rooms & a local charity**



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**FOR A BLOOMIN' WEED FREE GARDEN** or for any other gardening needs you may require give me, Daemon Young, at the Young Ones Gardening Services a call on 01594 531426 or 07702 810924 and I'll be happy to help you.

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**YOGA** - Every Friday from 9.30am - 11am at Mackenzie Hall with Kiske Redwood, CIYT 2004. Drop in or contact me first at [wildwoodyoga.co.uk](http://wildwoodyoga.co.uk). Lovely end of week class for all to enjoy.

**IYENGAR YOGA** now in St Briavels! Every Tuesday @The Pavilion 9.15-10.45am. All welcome. Kiske demonstrates and observes well to assist and guide safely in all points of your practice. FFI [www.wildwoodyoga.co.uk](http://www.wildwoodyoga.co.uk)

**ADULT TAP DANCING FOR FUN** in the Moravian Church School Hall. Mondays 6.45pm Improvers + / Intermediates, 7.45pm Beginners. New beginners welcome. For more information call Deborah on 07801 479269 or email [deborahstock@aol.com](mailto:deborahstock@aol.com)

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(Adverts and boxed events to be submitted the Friday before)

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Layout/typing/adverts: Christine Haines & John French; Collation: Sally Secrett; Treasurer: Joyce McKay

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