

Dear Friends

Irish friends amongst us will celebrate the 17th of March as St Patrick's Day.

Apart from Shamrocks, I wonder what you know about him? Whilst many of the stories associated with him are later myth and hagiography, Patrick didn't expel snakes from Ireland; the 3rd century Roman writer Solinus had noted their absence which probably dates back to the last ice age!

What we do know from his own writing is even more remarkable: Kidnapped at 16 by Irish raiders from his home in Wales, he was kept as a slave and forced to tend sheep alone. During this time of isolation and enforced reflection he became a Christian.

After six years, Patrick escaped and found passage back to Britain. After 25 years, convinced he was doing what God wanted, he returned to Ireland – not with malice or after revenge but rather as a missionary, bringing the good news about Jesus.

Patrick's mission caused great social change; he was a vocal opponent of slavery and of women being forced into marriage. In a culture that was largely illiterate and uneducated, he placed a great emphasis on learning, enabling people to study the scriptures.

Patrick went from kidnapped slave to missionary to national emblem – a great figure, worthy of celebration.

"Daily I expect to be murdered or betrayed or reduced to slavery if the occasion arises, but I fear nothing, because of the promises of heaven".

Rev Matt Rees
St Briavels Congregational Church

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 which gives up to date information. For a wedding, baptism or blessing, or to request healing or other prayer, please contact me David (OLM) david.rees17@btinternet.com or 01594 530443 or our Reader, Mandy Vaughan - 01594 530844. I usually work Sunday, Monday afternoon, Tuesday and mornings on Wednesday and Thursday and am available anytime for urgent requests.

MARCH SERVICES AT ST BRIAVELS & HEWELSFIELD

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, ST BRIAVELS

SUNDAY 1st

8.30am	BCP Communion	Rev. T. Jones
9.30am	Service of the Word	Rev David Rees

SUNDAY 8th

9.30am	All Age Eucharist	Rev. Barry Coker
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SUNDAY 15th

8.30am	BCP Communion	Rev. D Treharne
9.30am	All Age Eucharist	Rev. D Treharne

SUNDAY 22nd

9.30am	All Age Eucharist	Rev. Dr. Tom Clammer
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SUNDAY 29th

8.30am	BCP Communion	Rev. D Treharne
9.30am	All Age Eucharist	Rev. D Treharne

SUNDAY 5th April

8.30am	BCP Communion	Rev. T Jones
9.30am	Palm Sunday Celebrations	

MIDWEEK AT ST BRIAVELS

3 rd Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
4 th Weds	10.30am	Communion
5 th Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
10 th Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
12 th Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
17 th Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
18 th Weds	10.30am	Communion
19 th Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
24 th Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
26 th Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer
31 st Tues	9.00am	Morning Prayer
1 st April Weds	10.30am	Communion
2 nd Thurs	9.00am	Morning Prayer

ST MARY MAGDALENE, HEWELSFIELD & BROCKWEIR

SUNDAY 1st

11.00am	Morning Worship	M Vaughan/ Rev. David Rees
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SUNDAY 8th

11.00am	Family Communion	Rev. Barry Coker
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SUNDAY 15th

11.00am	Family Communion	Rev. D Treharne
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SUNDAY 22nd

11.00am	Family Communion	Rev. Dr. Tom Clammer
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SUNDAY 29th

11.00am	Morning Worship	Rev. D Treharne
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SUNDAY 5th April

11.00am	Morning Worship	
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ST BRIAVELS CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

As I write this, the Wye Valley is flooded, the bridges all closed, and a number of properties are under water; but as you read this I hope that the waters have receded and the clean-up is well underway. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who've lost so much.

Hope and a new beginning are the very heart of what we believe is on offer to us through Jesus Christ. We invite you to come along, find out more and celebrate with us. 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 Monday (8pm in my home) and Tuesday (10:15am in the chapel).

Coffee Morning (with pancakes!) returns on Tuesday 3rd March, 10am.

If you would like to know more about us, please get in touch or visit our website: www.stbriavelscongregational.org.uk

Matt Rees, Pastor. 01594 530098



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 March 2020

Sun	1 Mar	6.00pm	Unity Prayer Day Service (<i>led by the congregation</i>)
Sun	8 Mar	6:00pm	Rev Russell Doddington
Sun	15 Mar	6.00pm	Rev Patsy Holdsworth (<i>Holy Communion</i>)
Sun	22 Mar	6.00pm	Rev Rose-Marie Dagggar (<i>Mothering Sunday</i>)
Sun	29 Mar	6.00pm	Jan Pain (<i>Passion Sunday</i>)

REGULAR MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Tap Dancing – 7 - 8pm improvers/intermediates. New beginner classes start in January. Please contact Deborah Stock on 07801 479269, email 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 – 12 noon in the Sunday School Room on 1st Thurs of the month. 5th Mar in aid of the 2020 Moravian Unity Project in Rwanda. 2nd Apr in aid of Brockweir Community Play Area.

Fun Bingo – on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Eyes Down @ 7.00 p.m. £3 per book, plus a donation for refreshments, Maximum prize £5. All proceeds to the Church Building Repair Fund.

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. 12 March, 'A Different Look at Dry Stone Walling'.

Food Bank Collection – Donations for the foodbank 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

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

Jean Green	01594 530955	Judith Ashton	01291 689572
Carol Ostler	01291 689675	Sue Groves	01291 689804
Sr Mary Harris	01291 689668	Philip Ashton	01291 689572

LENT COURSE - Starting Tuesday 3rd March

Brockweir, Llandogo & Tintern churches are holding a joint Lent Course following the 'Journey to the Cross' study guide published by Embrace the Middle East*.

Meetings will be held at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesdays in Lent. The first meeting will be on Tuesday 3rd March in the committee room of Llandogo Village Hall, and will be led by Rev Jane Avery.

All are welcome to join us, from any faith background or none.

A small donation towards refreshments would be welcomed.

**Embrace were formerly known as BibleLands, producers of the Bethlehem Carol Sheets.*

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE - Friday 6th March, 2020 @ 2:30 p.m.

To be held at Brockweir Moravian Church

This year's service has been prepared by the women of Zimbabwe on the theme: **'Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk!'**

All Welcome — Refreshments will be provided

See www.wwdp.org.uk for more info on the WWDP
www.wwdp-natcomm.org Registered Charity 233242



SYLVIA SCRIVEN

The Editorial Committee sends its condolences to the family of Sylvia Scriven, whose funeral took place at the Forest of Dean Crematorium on 13 February.

Sylvia was born in Tintern on 13 April 1929 and moved to Brockweir in 1951, where she lived for the last 69 years. Her funeral was attended by many who came to celebrate her long and valued life.

A full obituary will appear in April's edition of Village News

HEWELSFIELD AND BROCKWEIR PARISH COUNCIL

Summary minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11th February 2020.

Present: Cllrs. Fox, Harris, Brundle, Sinfield, Groves-Bond, Haythornthwaite, District Cllr. McFarling, Parish Clerk and four parishioners.

Cllrs. Harris and Sinfield declared a pecuniary interest in Investigation into Sewage Discharging into the Rive Wye. A dispensation was granted to both councillors to enable them to take part and vote.

A parishioner presented information on a Tri-Village Wildlife Corridors Footpath Initiative to maintain, create and protect paths for wildlife and walkers. Parishioners from the three villages will work closely with Parish Grasslands Project, Wye Valley AONB and Public Rights of Way (PROW) Inspector – Forest of Dean / West Gloucestershire. A free public event to publicise and invite support for the initiative will be organised during April 2020.

P0008/20/DISCON – Prince Hill, Sandy Lane, Hewelsfield. Discharge of conditions 06 (hard and soft landscaping), 07 (lighting scheme), 08 (biodiversity enhancement), 12 (arboricultural method statement) and 13 (construction method statement) relating to planning permissions P2003/17/FUL.

Councillors had no comment to make on this Discharge of Conditions.

Update - P1129/19/FUL – Land Adjacent to Gregory Farm, Brockweir NP16 7NG. Erection of 5 No. dwellings with associated gardens, landscaping, parking and works. Retention of existing Mill building as bat roost with any essential repairs required for safety. Opening up of culverted millstream. Updates had been received from FODDC Flood Risk Engineer and District Cllr. Chris McFarling. However, Councillors agreed there were still concerns regarding investigations into pollution levels for residential dwellings, and possible flooding of the site. Councillors would consider whether to request the application be called to Planning Committee.

Payments were agreed as follows:

Payee	Service	Amount
Lynda Skuse	Clerk salary	£271.00
AEB Price	Strimming/Litter Picking	£80.00
Inland Revenue	PAYE	£17.40

Cllrs. Brundle and Haythornthwaite reported that a survey of equipment at the Playground was being carried out before quotes were sought for repair/replacement.

A request for a 'No Through Road' sign at the entrance to the road leading to Gregory Farm had been received from a parishioner. This was not possible as technically it was possible to drive through.

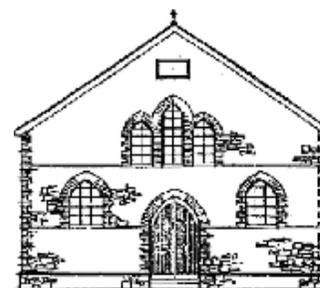
The new large grit bin on Bailey Lane has been damaged beyond repair for a second time and this would not be replaced. Cllr. Brundle will produce a map of grit bins throughout the parish to ensure that all bins are filled regularly.

Highways to be requested to repair dangerous pot holes and clear drains and grips around the parish, and investigate overhanging trees.

A meeting of the PROW group had been organised for 25th February, 7pm at The Loft to review the current footpaths map. Investigations into FHE38 are ongoing. The draft definitive map will be agreed by full council after consultation with the parish.

Advice from the Environment Agency on sewage discharging into the River Wye is that properties require permits. Owners, if they wish, can contact the EA to discuss options that can be implemented.

Next meeting Tuesday 3rd March 2020, 7.00pm at The Loft, Village Shop



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.

WINTER/SPRING 2020

Thursdays March 5, 12, 19	SILVER JEWELLERY (10 classes) £230 for 10 x 3hr sessions 1 – 4 pm (Silver is not included)	Ann Skehel
Fridays March 6, 13, 20	PAINTING AND DRAWING (10 classes) £220 for 10 x 3hr sessions, am or pm. 9.30am - 12.30pm and/or 1pm - 4pm.	Ann Hulme
Sunday March 15	WEAVING WITH WASTE £50 for 1 day workshop. 9.30am - 4pm	Sarah Cooke
Saturday April 25	PLAY WITH CLAY FOR A DAY £50 for 1 day workshop. 9.30am - 4pm	Val Welham

Tel: 01594 530214 Email: info@wyearts.co.uk Web: www.wyearts.co.uk

Casual Vacancy – Cllr Mike Smith was welcomed to the Council after the election held in January.

Cemetery Works – after reviewing a Tree Survey report, the Council decided to contract a tree surgeon with immediate effect to remove a dead branch and a large tree limb as recommended by the surveyor. The work will go ahead once planning permission is received. The survey will also be used to manage the trees on a long-term basis so that the graveyard and cemetery are safer and more amenable places to visit.

Wild Boar – the Council has received several reports of wild boar in the parish. Wild boar can be dealt with by registered and authorised people. Two such people are listed on page 35 of this magazine, Useful Telephone Numbers. The Council are reviewing areas that we manage, especially the graveyard and cemetery, to ensure that they are fenced appropriately.

Your hedges – hedges are growing rapidly at this time of year. Please note that it is your responsibility to cut back your hedges that border a public highway. It is essential to cut back before the birds start nesting.

School Parking – The Council has met with Glos Highways on numerous occasions to try and improve the parking at the school. The intention is to make crossing the road far safer for parents and children, whilst helping traffic turning into and out of the High Street. Unfortunately, Glos Highways have bundled the approval of the work at the school with many other works across the Forest, so that we are tied by the progress of the collective bundle. We will update when work is scheduled.

Appointments – Cllr John Hurley was appointed as our representative on the Playing Fields committee, and Cllr Mike Smith was appointed as the Lead Cllr for Emergency Planning and Snow Warden.

Clerk – Unfortunately, our Clerk Kirstie Watkins has resigned. The Council wishes Kirstie the best of luck going forward. If you are interested in the position of Clerk, please do get in touch.

Next meeting – Monday, 9th March, 2020 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.

E-mail: stbriavelsclerk@outlook.com

ROAD CLOSURES IN MARCH

The B4228 and Horsepool Lane, St Briavels will be closed for resurfacing during March. Full details on the bus shelter noticeboard in The Square and on FB: St Briavels Watch.

SOFT (Sharing our Faiths Together) MEETING

SOFT meetings will be held in the Loft above the Village Shop on Wednesdays 4th & 18th March at 7.30pm.

We are a 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 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.

IDEAS NEEDED!

Many things are needed to keep your church in St Briavels in good repair or suitable for modern use. You may have seen the scaffolding around the East end of the church. We are also looking to provide a kitchen area to bring us into line with current food safety standards. We provide refreshments on many occasions for concerts, meetings, after worship, etc. The church is dark and we would like to improve the lighting and make it more welcoming for visitors. As a church, we give

Ideas Needed! continued on next page...



YOGA COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER – not forgetting coffee and cake!

SATURDAY 28th MARCH

St Briavels Assembly Rooms. 9.30 -12.30



Ali ROSE warmly invites you to a morning of yoga, relaxation and meditation (not forgetting coffee and cake!) to raise awareness and funds for **Yoga Stops Traffick** - a small charity rescuing and rehabilitating children and women survivors of human trafficking in South India. All donations go directly to YST.

9.30 - 11.15 Yoga practice 11.30 -12.30 Coffee, cake and conversation
Join us for some or allEveryone welcome!

CONTACT ALI FOR FURTHER INFO ali@yogawithalirose.co.uk
Tel: 07883 678629 www.yogawithalirose.co.uk

a portion of our income to charity each year, as we believe we should be a giving church and support those in need.

We have various fundraising events for which we thank those who support our efforts. However, we can do with some new ideas for raising the funds we need. We hope to form a group of people with ideas to attract and encourage others to support us. At the moment, we rely on our presence at the Carnival, an annual Hog Roast, the annual Craft Fair and a biennial Open Gardens. This is not enough for the increased demands on our resources.

We invite anyone who would like to be part of a fundraising group to contribute ideas to ensure ongoing events throughout the year, to contact me on 01594 531096. Many thanks.

Jean Sheraton

ST BRIAVELS PLAYING FIELDS

We are already busy planning this year's Carnival, which will be held on Saturday 13 June so please put the date in your diary and start thinking about your fancy dress costume!

As you are aware, the proceeds of the Carnival are used for the upkeep and improvements of the Playing Fields. We are currently planning on making a further improvement to the children's Play Area with the installation of a roundabout which will be accessible to all children, including those in wheelchairs and pushchairs. Together with the proceeds of last year's Carnival, we have kindly received money towards this project from the following:

St Briavels Parish Council; Community Turbine; Action4OurCare; Friends of Mike Parry Coffee Morning; St Briavels School children

We are very grateful for these kind donations towards our project but we still have some money to raise to make this project happen, and are currently waiting for the results of our latest grant application. Hopefully, we will have the roundabout installed in time for the summer.

If you are able to help out on Carnival Day, please contact Tessa on 01594 530650 or Jill on 01594 530035

St Briavels Playing Fields Committee

BROCKWEIR WILDLIFE WALK

A free wildlife walk to explore Brockweir in the Spring

Sunday 5th of April 2020, 2pm-4pm. Starting at The Loft,
Brockweir Village Shop

- Expert wild flower identification
- Hands on experience of erecting bird boxes
- Take part in your local community wildlife project

Booking Details: The Wildlife Walk is free but please book to ensure you have a space/handout materials for the walk - wcivillages@gmail.com

FOREST READ EASY DEAL (FRED)

Can you read this? "Tihs si a wya you nac teg an diea of hawt ti is keli ot rstulegg wthi readgin"

You may be able to work it out, but

Being able to read is a vital life skill in the 21st Century, which thousands of people lack. In the Forest of Dean there are an estimated 5,000 people whose reading and writing skills are insufficient for the complexity of modern life. If you are reading this, you are NOT one of them, but you may know someone who is, possibly without being aware of it. People who are unable to read or write well, often develop sophisticated strategies for hiding the fact, as they do not want to admit it, which makes it difficult for them to get help.

We need YOUR help to spread the word that there IS FREE HELP AVAILABLE, here in the Forest of Dean.

FRED (Forest Read Easy Deal) is a scheme available to any adults who wish to learn to read or write, or improve their reading and writing skills. FRED has trained volunteer coaches, able to adapt to the needs of each individual, and you can assure anyone who might be interested, that any contact with FRED will be totally confidential.

For more information see www.forestreadeasydeal.org.uk or get in touch by phone 07746 371353 or email info@forestreadeasydeal.org.uk

BANK HOLIDAY COFFEE MORNING

Just a reminder about the next Coffee Morning on Easter Monday (April 13th). We would love to break through the £100,000 mark, but we cannot do it without your help.

If you have any items to donate, please could you drop them in my porch, which is always open. Bottles, and draw prizes would be greatly appreciated.

But the most important thing is to see you all at The Pavilion between 10 am and 12 noon for a cup of tea and a chat. Any help setting up and clearing away is always helpful.

So don't forget the date and we will see you there.

Adele, Tessa and Family

WHATS ON...
AT ST BRIAVELS PAVILION
Chocolate Bingo
21 March - 8pm
Raffle & Nibbles All Welcome

Brockweir & Hewelsfield Local History Group

The Local History Group will be meeting on Thursday 12th March when we welcome the return of Chris Hodges the renowned dry stone waller. Chris will be giving his new illustrated talk entitled "A Different Look at Dry Stone Walling" which will include some aspects of archaeology and landscape history. We start at 7.30 pm in the Moravian Schoolrooms, Brockweir and as usual everyone is invited to come along.

John Norman

NOSH & NATTER

As usual, the Curry Lunch provided by Judy at our February meeting was given high praise by those who attended. Several regulars expressed their disappointment and annoyance that they were away that day and could not attend! Hopefully, Judy will repeat her very popular lunch next year and all those who missed out this year will have their chance to attend. The variety of curries plus the extras are always amazing and leave us so full we are unable to eat another mouthful for the rest of the day! Thank you, Judy.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday March 11th at Celia Burton's home in Brockweir. She will be serving afternoon tea from 3.30-5pm. All ladies are welcome. For full details contact me on 01594 530524 or [email siddonspauline@aol.com](mailto:siddonspauline@aol.com)

Pauline Siddons

AFTERNOON TEA - Saturday 14 March 2-4pm at Hewelsfield Church

Everyone is invited to Afternoon Tea and cakes with Raffle, Books and Bric-a-Brac. All are welcome and any donations towards this event would be gratefully received.

For more information, contact Mandy Vaughan 01594 530844

THE NEXT BIG QUIZ

The Mackenzie Hall are holding a **Quiz Night on Friday 6th March**, 7pm for 7.30pm start.

Just turn up on the night as a team or as individuals, maximum 4 per team.

Cost per person £4.00. *Prize for the winning team.*

LICENSED BAR and SNACKS (no BYO please)

Tickets available from Village Shop



WYE VALLEY MUSIC (ST BRIAVELS MUSIC SOCIETY)

Over 80 people braved the January weather to attend the Illustrated Talk by Professor Stephen Walsh and pianist Clare Hammond at Monmouth School for Girls.

The subject was 'Debussy, A Painter in Sound' and our presenters did a fine job in combining a fascinating sketch of the composer's life with expert introductions to, and fine performances of, key pieces of Debussy's unmistakably individual piano repertoire.

On the following day, as part of Wye Valley Music's Musicians in Schools project, Clare played a 45 minute programme of piano music for primary pupils in three Chepstow schools. The children and their teachers responded enthusiastically to her introductions and performances – and Clare was inundated with eager questions from the children at the end of all three concerts. Please contact us if you would like to support WVM's Musicians in Schools project!

Our next concert takes place on: Sunday 15th March, 3.00pm in St Briavels Church.

It features outstanding soloists and ensembles from the **Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama** in an action-packed programme. Works for piano (played by **Charlotte Kwok**) will include a Haydn sonata, plus pieces by Liszt and Prokofiev. Songs for baritone will include pieces by Mozart, Schubert, Poulenc and Puccini. As is fitting in this Beethoven anniversary year, his music will have a prominent place in the programme. A piano, cello and clarinet trio will play the composer's own arrangement of the Septet in E flat major (op. 20). Composed in 1803, this is a major work in six contrasting movements. A second trio, 'The Concordia', will play Shostakovich's

Trio Number 2. Lots to enjoy – so do come along and hear these talented stars of the future and support them as they embark on their musical careers.

Admission £14, £12 for WVM members, £2 for students.

More Beethoven to look forward to! In May, we reach the end of our three concert series of Beethoven's violin sonatas played by **Mary Hofman** and **Richard Ormrod**. The first two recitals, one in St Briavels and the other in Monmouth Girls School, were thrilling – so be sure to book for the final set of three which features the famous Kreutzer Sonata (op.47).

Looking forward to October, we focus on Beethoven's piano music with a recital by the international award-winning pianist **Reiko Fujisawa**. Reiko will be playing a selection of piano works from different phases of Beethoven's career, together with an introduction to some of the composers who influenced his piano music and some who in turn were most influenced by him. Before that, we have a guitar and violin recital of Spanish and South American Music in April, and two special events on the first two Saturdays in early June: an all-American piano and violin duo (6th June in St Briavels) and the ever-popular and colourful medieval ensemble, **Joglaresa** (13th June in Monmouth).

Full details of our programme and booking arrangements are on our website at wyevalleymusic.org.uk

Mike Haines

A BROCKWEIR SPRING WILDLIFE WALK

Join us for a gentle stroll exploring Brockweir's Spring wildlife on Sunday the 5th of April, starting at The Loft, Brockweir Village Shop

Would you like to know your cowslips from your violets or your wild garlic from your moshate? Then come and join us on our first wildlife walk, where we will be looking at the wildflowers we can find around our beautiful area, and ways to enhance an area for wildlife. No previous knowledge is necessary, and families are very welcome. We will start with the basics and by the end of the walk we hope you can identify at least a couple of wildflowers and any other wildlife we may have come across, as well as had a fun time! We hope to build a curiosity in our community about what surrounds us in plain sight but shouldn't be taken for granted.

"No one will protect what they don't care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced" **David Attenborough**

The Wildlife Walk is free but please book to ensure you have a space/handout materials on the walk - wcivillages@gmail.com

This is the first community event for the Wildlife Corridors Initiative (WCI), who are a group of local people investigating ways we can support wildlife in our communities, and who are working alongside the Parish Grasslands Project.

We have a fantastic footpath network in the area, which is bordered with stonewalls, hedges, grassland and shrub/scrub land. These footpaths are primarily for access but they also can act as corridors for our local flora and fauna. Some of the footpaths are ideal for wildlife, but others could benefit from small changes to make them better for wildlife, without compromising access. WCI aims to identify, maintain and enhance local footpaths, and their hedgerows, field and garden margins as wildlife (both flora and fauna) corridors. If you are interested in hearing about the Initiative or becoming involved contact us via wcivillages@gmail.com

Ali Crashaw



STAKE HOLDER AND PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday 17th of March at 7pm
Village Shop Loft

If you are interested in being involved with a 'hands on role' with the future of the play area please come along to this meeting.

If you want to be involved but can't make this date please email me
sarahmclellan20@gmail.com

This is not a meeting for people who are interested in what is happening but are not for whatever reason offering to get involved.

Once we have a plan for next steps we will make You – The Community – know the plans and time scales.

APPETITE FOR CHANGE

A significant part of our carbon footprint comes from the food we eat. On average, for every unit of energy (calorie) we get out of the food, ten calories have been expended getting it to our plate. Most of those processes involve the burning of fossil fuels in transporting, processing, retailing, wholesaling, driving to the supermarket and back, and finally cooking the food. Intensive farming contributes greatly to our carbon emissions budget, through the production and use of heavy machinery, herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers; deforestation, growing and transporting animal foods and the food miles associated with buying produce grown abroad, in some cases from the other side of the world. The system is dangerously dependent on fossil fuels and therefore unsustainable.

Locally, our arable farmers grow wheat and oil seed rape producing about 8 tonnes and 3.5 tonnes per hectare respectively. However, good allotmenters can produce 35 tonnes of food per hectare. They also generate zero food miles, zero packaging, support high biodiversity, carbon-enriched soils and make people healthier. If we want to seriously reduce our carbon footprints, what better way than to grow as much of our own food locally as we can? The trouble is, it takes time to change to, and recreate, a local food growing culture; and time is running out.

Chris McFarling. chrismcfarling@phonecoop.coop

BADS Presents...

...not quite... **The Three Musketeers**

Will the evil baron take over the kingdom of Malodeurs?

Can D'Artagnan save the lovely princess?

Will the Three Musketeers help or hinder our brave hero?

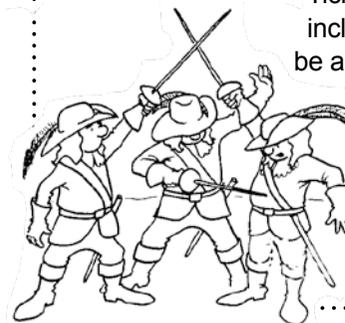
To find out you need to get your tickets and come along to

**Mackenzie Hall on Friday 20th March at 7.30pm
or Saturday 21st March at 2.00pm or 7.30pm.**

Ticket prices for the evening performances are £10 including a hot snack and £3.50 for the matinee. There will be a bar available for the evening performances.

Tickets are available from The Pantry in St Briavels, Browns Village Stores in Llandogo, The Village Shop in Brockweir and online at eventbrite.co.uk.

For a sneak preview have a look at our website www.badsbrockweir.co.uk or follow us on facebook at **Friends of BADS**.





PARISH GRASSLANDS PROJECT

We've become used to hearing how climate change is affecting distant continents. However, in recent weeks its effects have been all too evident on our collective doorstep. Storm Dennis brought flooding and disruption into our community, and that surely underlines the validity of the climate change initiative

launched last month. The idea is to find ways in which two rural parishes can work together to reduce our combined carbon footprint.

We got off to an excellent start. The Cake and Climate Bake Off at the Mackenzie Hall on February 1 drew a crowd of about 120, including many young families. It was gratifying to see the hall buzzing with engagement and enthusiasm. The bake off proved hugely popular. A total of 26 magnificent cakes were entered in four categories. Hats off to the winners: best looking cake, Alison Macklin; best tasting, Liz, Frank and Karla Garnham; best "free from", Matthew Stone; most outrageous, the Hulme family. Also massively popular, particularly with the children, was the appearance of Bjorn the polar bear. We're very fortunate to have a hot line from Brockweir to the polar regions, which enabled us to arrange his visit.

Then there was the more serious business of the afternoon. We adopted and adapted the concept of speed dating to launch our five climate change hubs: Food, Transport, Energy, Land Use and Stuff (aka consumption and waste). Each hub had a table with details of plans for events and action, and audience members were invited to sign up at any hub that interested them. After 10 minutes a bell was rung and everyone was invited to move to another hub. Each hub attracted a great deal of interest and about 75 people signed up as supporters.

Three of the hubs, Transport, Energy and Stuff, have already held their first meetings. Plans for this month include: Food Hack & Ferments, Saturday 7 March, 7pm at the Loft: learn how to use fermentation and other preserving techniques; Transport hub follow-up, Wednesday 11 March, 7pm at the Loft: prepare for electric bike and car demonstrations at the Mackenzie Hall on Saturday 25 April from 11am. Whether or not you attended the launch, please come along if you are interested to attend any of these meetings. We are also planning a Midsummer Festival on Saturday June 20 - save the date!

Another important date is the Parish Grasslands Project annual general meeting at the Mackenzie Hall on Thursday 26 March at 7.30pm. As usual, we will do our best to dispose of the AGM business quickly so that we can move on to the speakers, followed by an open discussion. We plan short talks on climate change by very knowledgeable locals. Gemma Bode will give an overview of the science of global warming, and Matt Dunwell will look at some of the positive actions that can be used to counter the problem. As always, all are welcome and refreshments - including cake! - will be served during the interval.

Mike Topp

www.parishgrasslandsproject.org.uk

ST BRIAVELS WI

UPDATE FOR FEBRUARY 2020

February's speakers were from Jamie's Farm at Monmouth, which provides inner city children the opportunity to experience rural/farming life. At the time of submitting this report we had not had our monthly meeting, but were looking forward to this visit, especially as they had promised to bring the Farm Collie!

The speaker for the meeting on the 18th March is Tamzin Powell, who will be talking about folklorist Margaret Eyre, who lived on the Hudnalls and who played an important part in recording the herbal skills and story of the cunning folk of the Wye and Forest of Dean. This looks an interesting talk with a local connection, and any local women can attend this talk as a guest for a small fee, with no obligation to join the WI.

We held our 1st Craft Group on Thursday 30th January at the Community Café in the Assembly Rooms. This was a successful meeting and we have decided to hold this group on a monthly basis, on the 4th Thursday in the month, 2.30 to 4.30. The group is a low key, informal arrangement and is open to everyone. The focus of the February group was learning to crochet and the March session will have an Easter theme.

We have a busy social calendar in the next few weeks. We had a coffee morning on 28th February at Taurus Crafts and there is one on 23rd March at Toast, Tutshill. On the 4th March we are going for lunch at the Woodman's at Parkend, and on the evening of the 11th March we have a Skittles match against Chase WI. This is an enjoyable evening, although we always are beaten by The Chase, as they are serious league players.

We continue to contribute to the food bank on a monthly basis. We have received a thank you from them; last year, we donated 172.75 kg of food. Unfortunately, despite an increase of 8% in donations there has been an increase of 10% in use of the food bank. We will continue to hold a monthly donation to support local people

St Briavels WI meets on the 3rd Wednesday in the month at 7.30pm in the Pavilion. New members are always welcome

Sue Smith

ORGANIC FRUIT & VEG * FRENCH BREAD & PATISSERIE * ORGANIC LAMB *		
* RARE BREED PEDIGREE BEEF & PORK * FREE RANGE POULTRY & GAME * CHEESE		
CHUTNEY * OLIVES * NUTS * CIDER * *EGGS * DELI * HERBS *	ST BRIAVELS LOCAL PRODUCE MARKET	SAUSAGES * PASTIES HONEY * BUTTER
	Saturday 7th March	UIT JUICE * CAKES * RESERVES*
	The Pavilion 10-12.30 pm	
INNOVATIVE VEGETARIAN & VEGAN FOOD * FUDGE * PLANTS * REFRESHMENTS*		
SWEET & SAVOURY PIES * AUTHENTIC FRESHLY MADE CURRIES & INDIAN SNACKS		

DIARY DATES – weekly/regular activities

Mondays

ZUMBA TONING WITH JO: 9:15-10:15am – Mackenzie Hall Brockweir.

CUB SCOUTS: (8-10½ year olds). 6.00-7.30pm. St Briavels Pavillion. Emma-Jayne, 07807 068296, stbriavelsscoutgroup@outlook.com.

ADULT TAP FOR FUN: 6.45 - 7.45 improvers+ / Intermediates; 7.45 - 8.45 Beginners. Moravian Church Hall. Call Deborah: 07801 479269.

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.

Tuesdays

YOGA WITH ALI ROSE: 9:30-11am. Assembly Rooms, St Briavels.

07883 678629. simplyalirose@yahoo.co.uk

COURTYARD CAFE: (in the Assembly Rooms, 1:30 - 4:30) with home-made cakes, free range eggs, hairdresser, beauty salon, book library (borrow or buy), PCSO monthly, notice boards. Community Wellbeing Agent 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 2-4pm

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, 3.00 - 4. 30 at St Briavels Assembly rooms. For info contact Claire@nissel.co.uk

BEAVERS COLONY 4.45 – 5.45pm. St Briavels Pavillion

BEGINNERS UKULELE GROUP 6 - 7pm at St Briavels Pavillion.

Contact: Janice 01594 530188. janicelighty@gmail.com.

www.facebook.com/groups/351866028735856/

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

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 Wednesdays, Mackenzie Hall. For more information call Bob Broughton 01594 530003.

BEAVER SCOUTS: (5¾-8 year olds). 5.00-6.00pm. St Briavels Pavillion. Emma-Jayne, 07807 068296, stbriavelsscoutgroup@outlook.com.

BROCKWEIR YOUTH CLUB – the club meets during term time. For further information please ring 01291 689 327 or visit: www.brockweiryouthclub.co.uk.

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION GROUP First Wednesday of the month, 7-9 pm. All welcome. Please call Diana on 07952 548040 for new venue details.

SOFT MEETING. On two Weds each month. 7.30pm. The Loft above Village Shop.

Thursdays

COURTYARD CAFE: (in the Assembly Rooms, 1:30 - 4:30) with home-made cakes, free range eggs, hairdresser, beauty salon, book library (borrow or buy), notice boards, CAB every 1st Thursday of the month

CRAFT GROUP: meets last Thursday of month, 2.30-4.30 Assembly Rooms, St Briavels

SCOUTS: (10½-14 year olds). 6.00-8.00pm. St Briavels Pavillion. Emma-Jayne, 07807 068296, stbriavelsscoutgroup@outlook.com

MIXED CIRCUITS CLASS: 6:30pm at Mackenzie Hall

YOGA WITH ALI ROSE: 7- 8:30pm, Assembly Rooms. 07883 678629 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: 9:30-11.00am – 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 or call/message Kische Redwood 07805 729893

UNDER 5s PLAY CLUB – 11am - 1pm at the Pavilion.

BOARD GAMES CAFÉ – Last Friday of the month, 7-10pm at the Assembly Rooms, St Briavels

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

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.

ST BRIAVELS SCHOOL TERM DATES: 2020
Spring Term 7 Jan - 14 Feb / 25 Feb - 3 April
Summer Term 20 April - 22 May / 1 June - 17 July

DIARY DATES FOR MARCH			
3 Tues	Coffee Morning	10am	St Briavels Congregational Church
3 Tues	Community Wellbeing Agent in Courtyard Café	2-4pm	Assembly Rooms, St Briavels
3 Tues	Hewelsfield & Brockweir PC meeting	7pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
4 Weds	SOFT meeting	7.30pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
5 Thurs	St Briavels Walking Group	1pm	Meet at St Briavels Church
5 Thurs	Charity Soup Lunch	12noon	Moravian Schoolroom
6 Fri	World Day of Prayer Service	2.30pm	Brockweir Moravian Church
6 Fri	The Next Big Quiz – quiz night	7 for 7.30pm	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
7 Sat	Produce Market	10 -12.30	St Briavels Pavilion
7 Sat	Food Hack & Ferments	7pm	The Loft Brockweir Village Shop
9 Mon	St Briavels PC meeting (planning applications and councillors available from 6.30pm)	7pm	Assembly Rooms, St Briavels
11 Weds	Nosh & Natter: Afternoon Tea	3.30-5pm	Brockweir
11 Weds	Bingo	7pm	Moravian School Rooms, Brockweir
11 Weds	Transport Hub follow-up meeting	7pm	The Loft, Brockweir Village shop
12 Thurs	Walk & Talk Group	2pm	Meet at Hewelsfield Church
12 Thurs	History Group: A Different Look at Dry Stone Walling	7.30pm	Moravian Schoolrooms, Brockweir
14 Sat	Churchyard Tidy-Up Day	10am-12.30pm	Hewelsfield Church
14 Sat	Afternoon Tea and Cakes	2-4pm	Hewelsfield Church
15 Sun	Wye Valley Music: RWCMD Students	3pm	St Briavels Church
16 Mon	New exhibition opens: Mariana Robinson		Café, Brockweir Village Shop
17 Tues	St Briavels Senior Citizens Club	12.30pm	Orepool, Sling
17 Tue	Community Wellbeing Agent in Courtyard Café	2-4pm	Assembly Rooms, St Briavels

17 Tue	Brockweir Play Area Stakeholder & Public Meeting	7pm	The Loft, Brockweir Village Shop
18 Weds	St Briavels WI: Folklorist Margaret Eyre	7.30pm	St Briavels Pavilion
18 Weds	SOFT meeting	7.30pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
20 Fri	BADS: The Three Musketeers	7.30pm	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
21 Sat	BADS: The Three Musketeers	2pm & 7.30pm	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
21 Sat	Chocolate Bingo	8pm	St Briavels Pavilion
26 Thurs	Walk & Talk Group	2pm	Meet at Hewelsfield Church
26 Thurs	Craft Group	2.30-4.30pm	Assembly Rooms, St Briavels
26 Thurs	PGP: AGM	7.30pm	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
27 Fri	Board Games Café	7-10pm	Assembly Rooms, St Briavels
27 Fri	Garden Soc: Spring Bulb & Bloom Show & talk: 'Hestercombe'	7.30pm	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
28 Sat	Brockweir Events: Gadarene	7.30for 8pm	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
ADVANCE DATES			
1 Apr	SOFT meeting	7.30pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
2 Apr	Charity Soup Lunch	12noon	Moravian Schoolroom
5 Apr	Spring Wildlife Walk	2-4pm	Starts at The Loft, Brockweir Village Shop
13 Apr	Bank Holiday Coffee Morning	10am	St Briavels Pavilion
15 Apr	SOFT meeting	7.30pm	The Loft, Village Shop, Brockweir
18 Apr	Churchyard Tidy-Up Day	10 -12.30	Hewelsfield Church
25 Apr	Electric Bike and Car demonstrations	11am	Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir
26 April	Garden Society: Annual Plant Sale	2.30pm	St Briavels Pavilion
6 June	Garden Society Eco Project Launch	11.30am	The Moat, St Briavels Castle
13 June	St Briavels Carnival		Playing Fields, St Briavels
20 June	PGP: Midsummer Festival		
11/12 July	The Winters Tale		St Briavels Castle



The Birds!

When I read a headline in my daily comic "Skylark numbers crash by 50% in the last ten years" I'm assailed by alarm, despondency and a sense of helplessness. I mean, what the heck am I supposed to do about this? Something tells me I'm not alone here.

But here's a lifeline, of sorts. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has urged us to participate in The Great Birdwatch Count, and for one hour during a given day to record every bird we spot in our gardens, send the results back to them and help them to get a picture of the current state of play across the country.

"Splendid!" I say. But then.... I recollect an occasion at the College where I worked that bore a certain resemblance to the RSPB idea, namely The College Photograph! A random event, called by the Principal, on a whim, but one which required huge logistic and disciplinary expertise to organise hundreds of students, three ranks deep across the impressive Victorian building.

I also recollect that it was known for an enterprising and agile student – possibly for a wager – to get his fotie taken at one end of the row, and then to sprint down the line, pausing perhaps to grope a girl student or goose a particular foe, arriving at the far end, demure and smiling, for the photographer's final frame.

I think of that student a I settle down for my hour's bird surveillance, and realise

that all I can find to record is Blue Tits. Legions of them, indistinguishable from one another, taking turns at the peanuts. Pranksters, the lot of 'em! Yesterday I could have recorded a football team of Long Tails or a charm of Goldfinches! I'm a bit vague about the rules. Can I include the birds which can be heard but not seen? The Raven, hundreds of feet up, or the daytime Owl down in the wood?

For a Moucher, and for lots of us, every day is Birdwatch day. I keep a sort of running "tab" in my head, and the debit side of my account is the one which tells me most about the state of play. The Siskins, Tree Creepers and Flycatchers, gone but not forgotten.

And there's one big Spoiler for my Golden Hour. It's a Huge Hen Sparrowhawk, who comes daily and sits for 20 minutes on the top of our bird feeder. She settles down and peers hopefully down at the hoppers. She fidgets, looks at her watch, "Where IS everyone?" Gets bored. Flies off, leaving me to record half an hour of Nil Points. Correction! I enter: "Dozey Sparrowhawks – 1".

This Birdwatch malarkey is, to say the least, an inexact science, but What the heck? It's forced me to admit that I'm still pushed to tell a hen Greenfinch from a Siskin, and, across the country, hordes of us are rooting for those little critters as we wave them goodbye.

So, Hats Off to RSPB!



SPRING PROGRAMME. MACKENZIE HALL, BROCKWEIR NP16 7NW

SATURDAY 28th MARCH 2020. GADARENE*

www.gadarenemusic.com

Gadarene are an energetic five piece acoustic band that blend ancient and obscure traditional English dance tunes, virtuoso acoustic musicians and electronica, transforming them into intricate acoustic trance and alternative modern dance hits. Drawing together

Folk, Pop, Rock, Funk, Reggae, electronica and trance, Gadarene's selection of miniature masterpieces get amazing audience reactions and fully deserve the exposure given them by the band. Expect to dance!

SATURDAY 25th APRIL 2020. THOSE MAGNIFICENT MEN*

www.foundrygroup.co.uk

The nail-biting side-splitting true story of the first ever non-stop Atlantic flight. To mark the centenary of this great British first, the award-winning Foundry Group return with Mitchell and Nixon's hit play about Alcock and Brown and their daredevil dash across the Atlantic to Ireland and world-wide fame. Marvel, as two actors recreate the epic flight with

just cardboard, chairs and some left over props. Starring David Mounfield (Count Arthur Strong's radio show) and Brian Mitchell (The Ornate Johnsons-BBC4). Strap yourselves in and cry 'Chocks Away' for a night of thrills, spills, and uproarious comedy. "Spiffing perfection" *DAILY TELEGRAPH*.

Doors 7.30 Performance 8.00. Advance tickets £10 from Brockweir and Hewelsfield Village Shop, brockweirevent@gmail.com or Adrian Birch on 01291 689812. £12 on the door. Refreshments available but BYO alcohol. See also www.brockweirvillagehall.co.uk.

***Supported by Air in G.**

Adrian Birch

★★★★★ Feel free to bring your own wine, drinks & snacks. Teas, coffees & ice cream on sale. ★★★★★	Film Night Friday 13th March Official Secrets "Keira Knightley is terrific." <small>Sunday Times</small> Tintern Village Hall 7.45pm Tickets £4.00 15s & under £2.50	★★★★★ Information: tinternvillage.co.uk or phone 07774 726860 ★★★★★
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NEWS FROM 1st ST BRIAVELS BEAVERS, CUBS AND SCOUTS

1ST ST BRIAVELS CUBS & SCOUTS BRAVE WINTER HIKES AND CAMPS

The wet and windy start to the year hasn't dampened the enthusiasm of our Cubs and Scouts. They've been taking part in exciting outdoor activities across the Forest of Dean.

Scout Camp - In January, 12 Scouts braved the cold and spent a night camping outdoors at Beaver Lodge in Parkend. They slept in bivouacs they built themselves and cooked their own food over open fires. Lots of our Scouts are at the younger end of the age range, so we were really proud of their achievement. They showed true resilience and had a great time too!

Cubs Incident Hike - Beaver Lodge was also the starting point for a three-mile 'incident hike' for Cubs in February. More than 60 Forest of Dean Cubs took part in total, and 17 of them were from 1st St Briavels. It was great to be part of such a large local event. During the hike, the Cubs encountered ten activity stations which developed team-working, problem solving and leadership skills. They came back to base tired, muddy and hungry. Luckily, our Scout Leader Tom was on hand with hot-dogs and hot drinks, which went down very nicely. Big thanks to Tom and his parents for organising this fantastic event and getting us out having fun in the fresh air on a winter's day.

We'd also like to say a special thanks to all the parent/carer volunteers who support us with activities like these and during our regular weekly sessions. From craft activities to hikes and extreme camping, having plenty of helpers means we can offer a varied programme with lots of opportunities for young people.

This is just a taste of what's to come for 1st St Briavels Beavers, Cubs and Scouts in 2020 – there are loads more exciting outdoor activities planned this year. As well as having lots of fun, everything we do is geared towards helping young people aged 5¾ to 14 develop #SkillsForLife.

Emma Carey (Cubs Leader) and Tom Ovens (Scouts Leader)

For more information about joining or volunteering with Beavers, Cubs or Scouts, please contact 1st St Briavels Group Scout Leader Emma-Jayne Williams on stbriavelsscoutgroup@outlook.com or 07807 068 296.



NEWS FROM THE CASTLE

Well, hopefully, by the time of the March edition, the floods of February will be well behind us... who knows what will follow? Hopefully, those first splashes of colour to let us know Spring is on the way and minimal snow!

YHA have now officially started their year of #Project90 to celebrate our 90th Birthday as an organisation. There are lots of events planned across our network in England & Wales so please look out for further information on our website www.yha.org.uk or on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. #Project90 will help to fund 900 adventure breaks for disadvantaged young people under-26. We will be fundraising and running events throughout the year, so please look out for further details.

If you know anyone who works with young people under-26 who may benefit from funding to help with a break away from home at a YHA please visit www.yha.org.uk/breaks to check out the various opportunities.

Shakespeare at the Castle. We are pleased to announce that for 2020 the Shakespeare performance will be "The Winter's Tale". This will be the evening of Saturday 11th and the afternoon of Sunday 12th July. We hope to welcome you once again through our guests.

Linda Harrison, Manager

THIS MONTH'S RECIPE

COCONUT JACKS

- 5oz soft butter or soft margarine
- 5oz demerara sugar
- 1tbsp sugar
- 1tbsp honey
- 2oz coconut
- 1oz chopped hazelnuts or 2ozs walnuts chopped*
- 13ozs porridge oats



*Chopped sultanas can be used instead of or in addition to the nuts.

Cream the butter and sugar. Beat in the honey, coconut and chopped nuts. Add the oats and blend in well. Place the mixture in a well-greased tin and press down firmly. Cook for 30 minutes at 170°C until lightly browned. Cool in the tin and cut into squares.

Mary Perryman

PARADISE RESTORED – HESTERCOMBE GARDEN

In 1973, a project began to restore the run-down formal gardens at Hestercombe, a fifty acre garden near Taunton, open to the public since 1997. The restoration project continues. Visitors can now follow the progress of the garden as it is returned to its full eighteenth century appearance and see the work of 19th and early 20th century gardeners revealed.

Claire Greenslade, our speaker on 27 March, is Head Gardener at Hestercombe. She will talk about the garden and her work there as head gardener.

27 March, 7.30pm at Mackenzie Hall. All welcome. Visitors £5. The evening includes our **Spring Bulb & Bloom Competition**. See page 29 and our website for details.

MAKING A WILDLIFE GARDEN

At our first talk in 2020 we welcomed Cheryl Cummings, the RHS award winning garden designer who many of you will know, either through her previous membership of the Society or her regular contribution to the wildlife gardening section of the Village News. Cheryl began by reminding us that our actions have a huge impact on the well-being of the planet, and some of this impact is through the way we manage our gardens. Cheryl's particular interest is in designing gardens that are in tune with nature and the needs of wildlife and she demonstrated this through descriptions of a number of garden design projects as well as her own garden. We first need to consider the sustainability of the design - for example, it is very easy to specify Indian limestone paving without considering the carbon footprint of obtaining it. A drystone wall (preferably local stone) not only looks good but its many nooks and crannies offer a great habitat for insects and small animals.

Cheryl took us through many examples of wildlife-friendly design features; the aim being to design our gardens to attract wildlife. One example is to replace lawns, or last least part of them, with wildflower meadow. Drifts of flowers are also a good idea to make life easier for foraging insects. Ivy is a great addition, as it provides nesting potential, late season nectar for bees and winter berries for the birds.

Cheryl didn't apologise for the untidy look of her own garden at certain times of the year. In fact, she intentionally doesn't cut back her plants until the end of winter to give maximum opportunity for wildlife protection and food supply; and this, together with her other actions, has paid dividends in terms of the biodiversity within her garden.

Mike Weeks

IN MY GARDEN

The buds are bursting, the frogs are back, the birds are pairing up and gardeners fed up with a winter cooped up indoors are itching to tidy up the garden and rip out all the emerging weeds. I'm as keen as anyone to be in my garden but I won't be weeding, I'll be appreciating all those native plants we love to hate, the weeds! In my garden, the golden heads of dandelions shine like mini suns from the grass, bush vetch is

a favourite of several bee species as it scrambles through borders and it looks stunning with Salvia 'Caradonna'. Wild fennel in flower is loved by hoverflies and stands majestically all winter with the tall grasses. Wild carrot romps around my meadow lawn covered in tiny pollen beetles and sometimes a ghostly crab spider perfectly camouflaged by its flat white umbel of flowers in wait for an unsuspecting bee or butterfly.



Nature Isn't Neat (www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/nin/) is a pollinator project being trialled in Monmouth by Monmouthshire County Council, the Town Council, Monmouthshire Meadows, Bee Friendly Monmouthshire and other groups, before it's rolled out across the whole county. Its aim is to encourage us all to be less tidy and recognise our native plants as a vital food source for our pollinating insects. Without them, much of the food we take for granted would just not exist and eventually neither would we. By creating a safe and forage filled garden for pollinators, we're welcoming their predators too and the birds that will happily make a meal of them all – a fully functioning ecosystem, full of flowers and full of life. Now that's what I call a good garden.

Cheryl Cummings

WHAT TO DO THIS MONTH

So far, February's weather has definitely been more wintry than January's – not to mention even wetter! March is surely going to offer us some dry days in which to start some serious gardening. Encouraged by the relatively warm soil and mild temperatures, plants and birds are certainly anticipating Spring. Be prepared for cooler days this month, and don't rush to start on the weeding, unless you can follow with a good layer of mulch. Though you might not want to abandon weeding altogether, as Cheryl suggests above, it's important to leave some areas of the garden for wild flowers, especially in the early Spring, before many ornamental plants begin to flower.

- Plant onion sets and early potatoes
- Sow hardy annuals, lettuce, parsley and sweet peas. Sow tomatoes and cucumbers in a propagator or heated greenhouse
- Plant deciduous shrubs, climbers and roses but wait until late March to plant evergreen shrubs and trees
- Prune late summer flowering shrubs and clematis, and standard and bush roses
- Take out every third stem of Dogwood and Willow to encourage new shoots and good winter colour
- If you use slug pellets, avoid ones containing metaldehyde and use sparingly - one or two early applications should be enough. Remember, there are lots of Good Slugs that don't eat your lettuces!

Christine Haines

See our website www.wyegarden.com for our full programme, meeting reports, garden advice and more.



NEWS FROM THE BROCKWEIR VILLAGE SHOP

We are developing plans for an improved range of bulk goods for you to bring your own containers to fill, saving on wasteful packaging.

This has been a welcome feature for some products, such as detergents and a few foodstuffs, so let us know if you have any special favourites and we'll see whether it is feasible.

Ready meals from Lodge Farm Kitchen, pies from Plenty! Pies and spices from Parva Spices are now stocked regularly, and at the time of writing we still had a few bottles of Wye Valley Gin and Damson Negroni – we are really fortunate to have so many excellent local suppliers of high quality. Did you realise that about 40% of everything we sell comes from within a 10 mile radius?

Our new accountant has finalised our official accounts for 2019. These will be

available for all members at the AGM in May, and will confirm the increased turnover for the year. It was a busy year and our dedicated volunteers and staff have also managed to reduce waste from out-of-date stock significantly – helping to demonstrate our eco-credentials.

Joyce McKay - a big thank you

Everyone associated with the shop knows Joyce McKay. She has been a dedicated volunteer since the very early days but has now retired. We all owe a lot to the commitment and dedication she has shown over the years. Our community is much stronger as a result.

Finally, our volunteers enjoyed a well-earned social in the Mackenzie Hall in February, catered by Ros Brooks and her team from Simple Street Food.

Peter Stickland

ART IN THE CAFÉ

Susan Hilton -10th FEBRUARY until 15th MARCH

Artist Susan Hilton recently relocated to Penallt, Monmouthshire from Kent. Trained at Sir John Cass, Wimbledon and Maidstone Colleges of Art, she has sold paintings at many venues, countryside centres, theatres, art galleries and in recent years from Buckland Lake Reserve, Kent and the Sir Peter Scott Lighthouse in Lincolnshire. Both Buckland Lake and the Lighthouse are wildlife conservation projects developed and restored by Susan and her husband Doug Hilton.

Susan enjoys painting in Gouache, chalk pastels and also paints on silk. With her wildlife and countryside interests her work

naturally focusses on these and she says she is influenced by the works of Samuel Palmer who lived in the Shoreham Valley near Sevenoaks, and also follows in the footsteps of Peter Scott, who started to paint the birdlife from the Lincolnshire Lighthouse situated on the Wash. This was the setting for the story, 'The Snow Goose' by Paul Gallico.

Colour and design are most important elements in Susan's work and a love of light as explored by the Impressionists. Sue hopes to be able to run some Silk painting courses from her home in Penallt in the coming year. We hope you enjoy this exhibition!

Mariana Robinson - 16th MARCH until 26th APRIL

Following Sue's exhibition, we shall be exhibiting works by Mariana Robinson. The former owner of 'Mariana-Art Gallery' in St Briavels, she will be exhibiting original watercolours and paintings in Atelier Interactive Acrylics. A professional artist for more than 25 years, Mariana says she has painted since she was old enough to hold a brush!

Her style is varied, always colourful, and she gets to the heart of a subject rather than copying. The exhibition, which is on the walls on Mother's Day and across

the Easter Festival, will feature Flowers, Landscapes and Mariana's colourful signature 'cross-grid' paintings, all available at affordable prices.

Why not bring Mum for Mother's Day tea, or your Easter visitors to enjoy this Spring exhibition! This is an ideal opportunity to see work by this talented local artist, who will also have prints and card packs available for sale. You can view the paintings during all shop opening hours, even though the café closes a little earlier.

Jacqui Trefgarne

GARDEN SOCIETY SPRING BULB & BLOOM COMPETITION

FRIDAY 27 MARCH, 7.30pm. Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir

In March, as well as a speaker, we have a Spring Bulb and Bloom competition. It's always a very pretty affair, not really competitive but a real show of Spring flowers. Everyone is welcome to take part whether a member of the Garden Society or not. There will be 10 classes, which are:

1. 5 single daffodils
2. 5 double daffodils
3. 5 multi-head daffodils
4. 5 miniature daffodils
5. A pot of Spring flowering bulbs
6. 1 stem of a flowering shrub
7. 5 different Spring blooms
8. 3 heads of hellebore, floating on water, 1 or more variety
9. A pot of Spring flowers, eg primula, snowdrop, pansy
10. A novelty or something of interest, eg a flower out of season or an unusual bloom

Only one entry per person per class is allowed. Certificates are awarded for 1st 2nd and 3rd in class, and a Cup is given for the Judge's favourite exhibit. Just bring along your entries on the night in time to set them up before the meeting starts at 7.30pm. Doors open from 7pm. Visitors - £5

Sally Secrett

VILLAGE NEWS ACCOUNTS FOR JANUARY - DECEMBER 2019

INCOME		EXPENSES	
News Sales	£1,968.28	Covers	£1,050.90
Adverts	£2,503.00	Printing	£1,395.23
Postal	£38.00	Typeset	£960.00
Donations	£8.20	Petty Cash	£46.84
NS&I Interest	£88.29	Refund	£3.00
		Donation	£250.00
Total	£4,605.77	Total	£3,705.97
CASH ASSETS		Accumulated fund opening balance	
Barclays	1455.45	Barclays	2143.94
NS&I	11124.51	NS&I	11036.22
		Surplus income over expenses	£899.80
		Grants paid from 2018 surplus	-£1,500.00
TOTAL	12579.96	TOTAL	12579.96

The Editorial Committee is very grateful to David Wedel for checking these accounts.
Joyce McKay. Treasurer

VILLAGE NEWS COMMUNITY GRANTS 2020

The Village News Editorial Committee received four applications for grant awards in January and an independent panel met to review them on 3 February.

Successful applicants have been informed of the grants awarded, as follows:

- Brockweir Moravian Church - £350 towards repairs to reinstate collapsed stage and floor
- St Briavels Church - £350 towards masonry repairs
- BEST - £200 towards annual community Christmas lunch

The panel members were Corinna Arnold, Lucy Midgley and Peter Stickland. The committee is very grateful to them, both for agreeing to serve on the panel and for the extremely efficient way in which they carried out their task.

The Editorial Committee

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A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SENT IN PHOTOGRAPHS FOR THE VILLAGE NEWS COVERS 2020

The covers have now been printed for the year ahead and look great.

Of course, with dozens of photos submitted and only 12 covers, it is inevitable that many of those submitted will not have been used.

How we choose the Photos:

The twelve covers for the year are printed together a year in advance (it's cheaper that way). Towards the end of November, all the photographs that have been submitted during the year, after weeding out those that are technically unsuitable, are passed to a sub-committee who choose the twelve.

None of the committee are told the names of the contributors – the choice is based purely on merit and suitability for a particular month.

We often have to make hard choices between excellent photos that are only suitable for a particular month (we don't print photos of bluebells in December!), so please don't take it personally if yours is not used.



So please, make it a New Year resolution to start snapping local events and views for 2021's Village News (did you get any photos of the floods?). You don't need an expensive camera or special skills. There is help with taking and submitting the photos on our website, www.villagemag.co.uk.

www.villagemag.co.uk

The **April** issue deadline is midday on **Tuesday 17th March**
(Adverts and boxed events to be submitted the Friday before)

Editorial: all contributions should be sent to: editors@villagemag.co.uk, or contact any of the Committee Members:

Christine Haines	01594 531050	David Rees	01594 530443
Carolyn Norman	01291 689418	Hilary Lee	01291 689326
Babs Bergdahl	01594 530623	Joyce McKay	01291 689910

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

Views expressed within 'Village News' are those of individual contributors, and are not necessarily those of the magazine or its committee members. We reserve the right to amend, edit or refuse any articles.

Advertising: all requests should be sent to: advertising@villagemag.co.uk

Classified: 3-line adverts £3 per month – Display: 1/4 page adverts (A7) £5 monthly, minimum of 3 months. Advertising subject to availability and adverts must be paid for before printing. All cheques payable to: Village News.

Magazine subscriptions: take out an annual subscription for £3.60 by calling Sally Secrett on 01594 530539, email: subscriptions@villagemag.co.uk

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Brockweir Youth Club	www.brockweiryouthclub.co.uk
Mackenzie Hall, Brockweir	www.brockweirvillagehall.co.uk
Parish Grasslands Project	www.parishgrasslandsproject.org.uk
St Briavels Assembly Rooms	www.st-briavels.com
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St Briavels School	www.stbriavelsprimaryschool.co.uk
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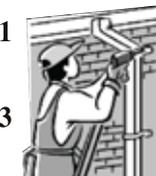
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