



*The Newsletter for
Clungunford
Volume 27 • Issue 3
January 2024*

THE GUNNAS GAZETTE

Dates for your Diary

19th January – Flicks in the Sticks – The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry
16th February – Flicks in the Sticks - Living
22nd March – Arts Alive – Desert Island Flicks

More information on Clungunford.com

Regular events in the village hall

- Public Bar is open every Friday night from 19.00-22.00
- Foody Friday available 1st Friday of every month*
- Carvery Sunday available 2nd Sunday of every month*
- Takeaway Wednesday 3rd Wednesday of every month*
- St Cuthbert's Café every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 10.00 – 12.00.
- Bike Night on the first Monday of the month 18.00-20.00
- Table Tennis Club every Tuesday 14.00.
- Thrift Shop open every Thursday In the Bowls Green Pavilion
- Post Office Van in the Hall car park from 11.45-12.45 every Thursday

*See www.clungunford.com for all details, menus and ordering contacts

*A Happy and Peaceful New Year to
All Our Readers*

Farm Born and Bred

A new year, a new beginning.

We always wrote out our list of New Year's Resolutions. Very seriously we considered what we would promise to do to please our mother, grandmother and more importantly, our grandfather. He was very definitely head of the household. To upset granddad was unthinkable. My list of resolutions usually included cleaning out the hen houses - a really horrid job - smelly, flea ridden, louse infested, muck!

Then there was washing up - a chilly job. This took place in the back kitchen, with a bowl standing in a low stone sink. There was only one cold water tap, so hot water had to be carried from the stove in the kitchen. There was a solitary light bulb suspended over the sink. No washing up liquid, soap suds were made using a metal device which was like a very small wire cage, with a long handle. In the cage would be put the small pieces of soap, remnants from a bigger bar. This was then swished vigorously to create foaming soapy water in which to wash the cutlery, plates etc.

It was so cold in the back kitchen!

Another resolution was to black lead the grates. A messy job, no rubber gloves available in those days, so I would end up with filthy black hands.

As I grew older, doing my homework on time would be among my resolution list.

How long did the resolutions last? I don't remember, but guess my resolve faded quite quickly, but the thought was there!

M.E.B.

P.S. Something to ponder on:-

My mum never worked, a stay-at-home mum.
And modern mums say, "it's alright for some"
No, mum never worked, she walked to the shops.
And waited with bags at rainy bus stops.
She made up the fire, she made up the beds.
We'd no ready-meals... she made 'em instead.
We didn't have phones, well, one up the street.
And no television, nor puttin' up feet.
No washing machines, the copper were all.
A mangle to squeeze the wet from it all.
My mum never worked, she'd sweep out the rooms,
We never had Hoovers, just dustpan and brooms.
She'd bake and she'd iron, she'd polish and dust.
And any old problem my mum had it sussed.
She taught us good manners, she let us have fun.
A housemaid, a teacher all rolled into one.
And when all us children got home after school,
We knew she'd be waitin', sat there on her stool.
With no central heatin', one fire in the grate,
And hot buttered crumpets all piled on a plate.
My mum never worked, but I have no doubt,
Through love and affection she tired herself out.

From Rev Martin Quayle

Like many, I heard the interview that Esther Rantzen gave about her approach to the end of her life moving and compelling. I thought about how she first discovered about her cancer, and the process of thought which has led to her contacting Dignitas. The transition of going from someone with a straightforward life, to someone with a terminal prognosis, will be different from one person to another. Some may be stoical, whilst others may go to pieces.

Human life is a precarious gift, and although in modern times we know more security than our predecessors and ancestors, we will begin New Year, reflecting upon those we have buried in the previous year, or whose lives have changed irrevocably in ways that they would not have imagined as the previous year began. Life, like love, happiness and prosperity are precious gifts. We should never take these things for granted. Although it is sometimes easy to hunker down in these grey days of winter, intuitively we know that the sun will return, nature will awaken and the world will again feel free and open to adventure.

One of the choices we all face in life is whether to face life with a sense of delight, joy, anticipation of the good things and a sense of optimism, or alternatively, as something to be feared, dreading the on-coming days, worried that new days might bring further ills or disasters upon us. When we engage with Faith in the best of ways, then we experience positives more fully and don't feel as burdened by fears and anxieties. These are generalities, but Faith is generally recognised as being good for our mental health.

Christianity uses light as a symbol, and much of our language is about light and the meaning of light to our thinking. As many of us older folk recall, the Collect for Aid Against All Perils from the Book of Common Prayer says simply, and often with emotion,

Lighten our Darkness, we beseech thee O Lord;
And by thy great mercy,
Defend us from all perils and Dangers of this night;
For the Love of thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Light is an allegory for many things in life which are precious. Love, hope, friendship, culture, enjoyment, and many other aspects of life, which are difficult to quantify, but without which, life would be cycle of drudgery and obligation. The Book of Common Prayer was written against the living memory of the Civil War, in which many had lost lives, relatives, property, status and perhaps most devastatingly, a sense of security and a sense that life might be good.

Christmas is a celebration that new life comes to us all through the birth of a child. From an 'ordinary life', disadvantaged, but sincere, emerged a series of events which changed the world. We are still affected by these events two thousand years later. Faith is a gift which all of us can experience and benefit from. It may take a little

courage, but it is available to all. Our church is a testament to the promises and gifts that faith brings. I wish all of you a happy and contented New Year. Whatever life brings you, may you find good and things of blessing. Believe in the good, be kind and good and so much more will be added to you.

Martin Quayle

Parish Church News

The Revd Martin Quayle, Vicar for the Parishes of the Middle Marches Benefice, can be contacted by email at office.middlemarches@gmail.com. Should you need more information about services, events etc, please contact our Church Wardens, Michael Jones (tel: 01588 661145, email: mpjt51@hotmail.com) or Edward Gledhill (tel: 01588 660485, email: edward@aepledhill.co.uk).

The planned Services for St Cuthbert's Church, Clungunford in the Middle Marches Benefice for January and February are as follows:

Sunday 7 January	10.00 am	Family Service
Sunday 14 January	10.00 am	Morning Prayer
Sunday 21 January	11.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 28 January	No service at St Cuthbert's	
Sunday 4 February	10.00 am	Family Service
Sunday 11 February	10.00 am	Morning Prayer
Sunday 18 February	11.00 am	Holy Communion
Sunday 25 February	No service at St Cuthbert's	

2023 was a busy year for St Cuthbert's Church, Clungunford! As well as all the usual activities of worship and pastoral care which the PCC manages so carefully and thoughtfully, we also had the coronation of our new King! Celebrations within the village were augmented by the Middle Marches Benefice Service to Celebrate the Coronation of King Charles. First though....

The Church Organ

I think that we ought to start by agreeing that church organs are not meant to wheeze. Organist's may wheeze as may the clergy, but church organs are not meant to do so. So the fact that the Binns organ has developed a nasty 'wheezing' sound once the blower is turned off has given for concern.

The wheezing noise is due to air escaping through the walls of the concertina bellows. The concertina bellows are made of wood and leather, and it is the leather that has been attracting the attention of the 'church mice' over the years as they nibble away at it. Mice are a

particular problem at St Cuthbert's as they nibble the leather and urinate on the lead, pneumatic hoses which leads to corrosion. The bellows have been patched on a number of occasions but the time for a major overhaul is now due.

We are very grateful to those that contribute to the organ fund which means that we are able to have the bellows rebuilt using new leather as well as keeping it in good condition. The organ will be de-graded for a couple of weeks whilst the work takes place.



Many thanks to the 100 Club!

Many thanks to those who contribute to the 100 Club. Without your support we would not be able to keep St Cuthbert's Church in such a good state of repair. If you would like to become part of the 100 Club, with the opportunity to win one of three cash prizes every month, please see contact details in separate piece below.

The Abbess Way, June 15th - 17th

This was another hot, hot, hot walk, though blessed with a welcome day of rain!

This year's pilgrimage will be on the Llein Peninsular, with (tides and weather permitting) a visit to Bardsey Island. The group is full this year because of accommodation constraints ~ but watch this space if you'd like to join us for other walks and pilgrimages.



Clun Valley Rural Deanery BBQ

On 25th July, St Cuthbert's had the pleasure of playing host to the Clun Valley Rural Deanery BBQ. There was a full church, and all left with full tummies in true Clungunford style.

Hymns and Pimm's

Our first ever Hymns and Pimm's was held in the summer on 20th August - hymns in the Church and Pimm's in the church yard! It was a surprisingly moving event with people sharing their personal reasons for choosing their favourite hymns. To be repeated!

The Big Breakfast

This was held under blue skies and sunshine in the Church yard, which had been vigorously tended by a team of volunteers that we might all enjoy its beauty. Thanks as ever to the chefs and organisers, and all who came to make it such a successful event, both socially and as a fund-raiser for the church. The generous donations from those who attended, meant that £826 was raised for the maintenance of St Cuthbert's.



Ride and Stride on 9th September

This was again a lovely event though hot, hot, hot for striders and riders ~ ice cream at Stokesay Castle never tasted so good! Funds raised through Ride & Stride are divided between St Cuthbert's and Shropshire Historic Churches Trust. The total raised was £1,280, of which Clungunford's share this year was £640, which means that yet again St Cuthbert's was the leading fund-raiser across the county.

The Harvest Supper

As ever, a feast of food and fun! The Harvest Supper and Quiz was won by 'Napoleon Snowball' in a 'heads and tails' play off with 'Persons of Quality'! Thank you again to all the organisers and to everyone who came.

St Cuthberts Café

the cafe raised £1721 during the year, for St Cuthbert's Church and other charities like Christian Aid. On 14th December all our income was given to Craven Arms Food Bank: we raised a massive £415 as well as a substantial amount of food donations. Everything was

handed over to the food bank in time for Christmas and so, certainly, some families in our own area will have had a more enjoyable Festive Season because of your generosity. Thanks to everyone who has attended St Cuthbert's Café over the past year.

We look forward to seeing you again this year on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month, 10.00am - 12.00 noon in the village hall, for hot drinks and delicious home-made cakes. The next café opening will be on January 11th, 2024. Happy New Year to you all. (And grateful thanks to Rob and Sara who organise all this!)

Poetry Events

Two poetry events were held in the Church: an **Easter Poetry Reading** on Holy Saturday and the now traditional **Christmas Poetry Special** on December 17th. Both were well attended and were felt to offer alternative and complementary ways for people to celebrate these special occasions.

Sacred Space

completed its second year of music and silence in St Cuthbert's and will be held this year on March 8th; April 12th; May 10th and June 7th. Dates for the second half of the year to follow after the summer break. All very welcome.

The Quiet Church

started in September and is a weekly meditation group held on Thursdays from 4.45pm. All are welcome to join this group for half an hour of silence, plus gentle reflection afterwards.

A Course for Lay Leaders

This was held at Anne and Eddie's, facilitated by Rev. Martin Quayle. The course was thought-provoking and inspiring and will be followed up with a second course this month.

The Bible Study Group

met at Isa and Mike's in the run up to Christmas. It was a lively group that enjoyed passionate discussion and thoughtful deliberation of Mark's gospel.

The Carol Concert

was very special: Tim's passionate reading of Luke will be long remembered, as will Max and Angus's surprise (to them!) and beautiful duet of the first verse of Once in Royal David's City.

The Crib Service

held on Christmas Eve was a lovely combination of carols and readings arranged by Christine and Caroline. To have the village's children joining in and reading so beautifully made it very special indeed. There was an added extravaganza of travel to Mexico courtesy of Mike and Isa who donned traditional Mexican costume (complete with sombreros) and gave us a history of Christmas celebrations in that faraway land.

I don't think the children will ever forget the thrill of 'whacking the piñata' to get at the sweets (symbolising God's grace) inside!



We didn't quite get a White Christmas but we did enjoy a little dusting of snow in early December.



But, it will take a lot more than a bit of snow to keep Dennis from his near daily shopping trip.



Looking back over 2023 in this whistle-stop tour, it only remains to thank everyone who contributes to the life of the church in our village: the many who arrange flowers; clean the church; lead services; arrange events; care for those in need and everything else that goes into running a church that is such an integral part of its community. And a special mention to Ennis who locks and unlocks the church on a daily basis, winds the clock and manages the heating to keep us all as warm as possible.

Happy New Year!

And here's a poem, in honour of Ennis.

Locking the Church by David Scott

It takes two hands to turn the key
of the church door, and on its stiffest days
needs a piece of iron to work it like a capstan.
I know the key's weight in the hand
the day begins and ends with it.
Tonight the sky is wide open
and locking the church is a walk
between the yews and a field of stars.
The moon is the one I have known

on those first nights away from home.
It dodges behind the bellcote
and then appears as punched putty or a coin.
The key has a nail for the night
behind the sneaked front door.
Carrying a tray of waters up to bed
I halt a careful tread to squint
through curtains not quite met
at the church, the moon, and the silver light
cast on the upturned breasts of the parish dead
locked out for the night.

Listen:

<https://soundcloud.com/davidscottpoetry/locking-the-church>

The Gunnas Gazette by email

We are making genuine progress in reducing the number of printed copies of *The Gazette* delivered. However, there is still more that can be achieved, so if you can receive your Gazette by email, please sign up to do so by sending an email to gunnasgazette@aol.com.

Just remember, you will be able to read the *The Gazette* in colour by signing up for the digital edition.

The 100 Club

Winners for November:

1. (£60) Anne Gledhill
2. (£30) Jane Roberts
3. (£15) Janet Thain

Winners for December:

Special Christmas prize (£100): Ennis Brown

1. (£60) Iris Groves
2. (£30) Elizabeth Lyster
3. (£15) David Roberts

If you would like to join (£5 per month by standing order), phone Maureen Rooney (01588 660781) or Mike Jones (01588 661145) or Jim Bason (01547 540782).

Clungunford Village Hall – Flicks in the Sticks

Friday 19th January 2024 at 8.00pm

The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry (cert 12a)

Starring: Jim Broadbent, Penelope Wilton, Earl Cave

Director: Hettie Macdonald Drama

A seemingly unremarkable man in his sixties named Harold one day learns that his old friend Queenie is

dying. He embarks on a walk, only to keep going for 724kms until he reaches Queenie's hospice, much to the despair of his wife Maureen.

Living (cert 12a) (Re-booked after cancellation in October due to flooding)

Starring: Bill Nighy, Aimee Lou Wood, Tom Burke.

Director: Oliver Hermanus Drama

Overwhelmed at work and lonely at home, a civil servant's life takes a heart-breaking turn when a medical diagnosis tells him his time is short. Influenced by a local decadent and vibrant woman, he continues to search for meaning until a simple revelation gives him a purpose to create a legacy for the next generation.

Entrance £5.00 Adults £3.00 Children

Licensed Bar, Ice creams, raffle (Donations welcomed), good car parking

Tel: 01588 660781 (Maureen)

maureenrooney2012@gmail.com or 01588 660159

(Keith) for bookings and enquires.

We now show all our films with subtitles.

We advise booking, and request cash only at the Box Office. Card payments accepted at the bar.

The Parish Council

At our last meeting Mike Jones was formally co-opted and welcomed as a parish councillor.

The Parish Council finances are in a healthy state, largely through not having to pay a clerk. The precept for next year will be discussed in January. It is anticipated that the precept will be kept at a similar level to this year in the hope that we may be able to secure the services of a clerk. It is quite a few years since the precept was last increased – please note, Shropshire Council, the Police and the Fire Service – and so in real terms, taking into account inflation, the local element of the Council Tax has been decreasing year on year.

Increased pressure (quite a bit of it!) for the posts for our speed awareness signs to be erected has producedno response (other than an acknowledgement!). The Police and Crime Commissioner's Office helpfully referred us back to Shropshire Council without bothering to extract the digit to exert the pressure direct on our non-performing local authority, as had been requested.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 10 January in the Village Hall, starting at 7pm. Interested members of the public, as ever, are welcome to attend. Parish matters before (or after) the meeting may be raised via clungunfordparishcouncil@gmail.com or directly with me. Jonathan Roberts, Chairman (01588 660673: jonathan.roberts@morgoedestates.com).

TWO LEADING LADIES, ONE MASHED UP MOVIE MARATHON

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**Every Tuesday, 2.00 – 4.00: TABLE TENNIS,
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Every Thursday, 11.00 – 13.00; THRIFT SHOP



First Monday of the month; BIKE MEET

First Friday of the month; FOODY FRIDAY



Second Sunday of the month; CARVERY

Third Wednesday of the month; TAKEAWAY NIGHT



Third Friday of the month; MEAT RAFFLE

Every Friday: Bar night from 7pm

And finally and for no reason other than the fact that the event was reminisced over by some attendees at the 2023/4 New Year's Party, and also to cheer you up with a summery photo, who remembers the visit of Monsieur Didier Garcon in 2006? Didier played a number of obscure ancient French instruments to an appreciative audience. Far from being a touring French national, he was in fact an émigré weatherman from Reading. Most of the instruments appeared to be either hollowed out sticks or the inflated innards of various animals.

