

she had left me. I explained that someone had stood on my foot.

Knighton Show was another local show we used to attend. There were classes for flower arranging and cookery which my mother always entered with great success. I would enter the children's classes. and as I grew older would be competing against my mother, occasionally beating her, but she was always pleased to see my success. Well, I did learn from one of the best!

This competitive streak used to continue into the annual garden fete held in the village. Later also when the Women's Institute held competitions, we had a formidable reputation between us, but then everyone knows the WI ladies are excellent cooks!

M.E.B.

Sister B found this interesting article -

Fascinating flu facts:-

It's possible that the 1918 H1N1 virus, or the "Spanish Flu" first cropped up not in Spain but in a military camp in Kansas in the USA.

The camp's pigs suffered from a swine flu that they passed to the troops stationed there, who were sent overseas to Europe to fight during World War I

Pigs are unusual because they can become infected with influenza strains that can infect three different species:- pigs, birds and humans.

This makes pigs a perfect breeding ground for new and dangerous strains of influenza.

Food for thought!

Flicks in the Sticks

Friday 23rd January 2026 at 8.00pm

Mr. Burton (cert 12)

Starring: Toby Jones, Harry Lawtey, Lesley Manville.

Director: Marc Evans Drama

A film biopic that tells the true story of the relationship between Port Talbot schoolmaster Philip Burton and a wild young schoolboy called Richard Jenkins, the son of a wayward drunk. Mr Burton recognised the raw talent in Richard and made it his mission to fight for him, becoming his tutor, strict taskmaster and, eventually, his adoptive father.

The film tells the story of how Richard Jenkins was turned into Richard Burton, the greatest star Wales has ever produced.



Friday 27th February 2026 at 8.00pm

Downton Abbey-The Grand Finale (cert PG)

Starring: Michelle Dockery, Maggie Smith, Hugh Bonneville.

Director: Simon Curtis Drama

In the summer of 1930, the Crawleys grapple with the threat of social disgrace when Mary finds herself at the centre of a public scandal and the family faces financial trouble.



Entrance £5.00 Adults £3.00 Children

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

Tel: 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 Church Tower Update

We hope to start work on the restoration of the Church tower in the Spring when the weather is more suitable for building work and doing lime mortar pointing in particular. We submitted a couple of applications for grants back in November and hope to hear from both bodies during January.

The first to be submitted was to the Shropshire Historic Churches Trust. Many of you will know this charity because of their main fund-raising event, 'Ride and Stride'. Clungunford has enthusiastically supported this event for many years and we have been the top contributor to it now for more than ten years. We hope that this will be a helpful factor in our application.

The submission we are most reliant on is that to the National Heritage Lottery Fund. This was an in-depth submission, taking many hours to put together. We are grateful to the Hereford Diocese for their guidance in completing this. We hope to hear from the NHLF in the next few days. Clearly, we need to secure funding before contracting with our selected builder.

Once the work has been started we will be unable to use the Church bells and unable to do so for up to nine months after the work has been completed. The reason for this is

the nature of lime mortar which needs this time to go hard enough to stand the vibration of the bells.

We do not yet know whether we will be able to allow the clock on the tower to chime. Currently it rings on the hour and the half-hour – thanks to Ennis Brown climbing the tower to wind it twice a week! The tower houses six bells which have been cast over the last 600 hundred years. The oldest of these was cast by the Gloucester foundry during the second half of the fourteenth century and bears an inscription (in Latin) ‘Sent from heaven, my name is Gabriel’. The Earl of Arundel, who was the custodian of Clun Castle, is thought to have paid for it. This might be seen as a very generous gesture, but bell was used as a ‘calling’ bell from the beginning. The ‘calling’ was not just to call people to worship but also to summon peasants to work.

For the last six hundred years a calling bell has continued to make the people of Clungunford Parish aware of the time and today, thanks to Ennis, to within a second or two!
Eddie Gledhill - Church Warden

Parish Church News

For more information about services, events etc, please contact our Church Warden, Edward Gledhill (tel: 01588 660485, email: edward@aegledhill.co.uk).

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

Sunday 4 January	No service at St Cuthbert’s	
Sunday 11 January	10.00 am	Family Service lay led
Sunday 18 January	10.00 am	Morning Prayer lay led
Sunday 25 January	11.00 am	Holy Communion led by Rev John Daniels
Sunday 1 February	No service at St Cuthbert’s	
Sunday 8 February	10.00 am	Family Service lay led
Sunday 15 February	10.00 am	Morning Prayer lay led
Sunday 22 February	11.00 am	Holy Communion

Coming up;

A week of accompanied prayer Sunday 8th February - Saturday 14th February

“There is no right or wrong way to pray!”

For the first time, St Cuthbert's will be hosting a week of accompanied prayer, and we would love you to join us. If you are new to prayer, or have never prayed, this will be for you every bit as much it is for those with an already established prayer life. No commitment to any faith is required or expected.

We will meet together first at 6pm on Sunday 8th February for a light ‘bring and share’ supper, where we will be introduced to our prayer companions. We will talk about what to expect from the week, and how to plan it. Our commitment is to spend half an hour each day from Monday to Friday in the privacy of our own home in personal prayer time. This might be –

- * studying a piece of scripture provided for us
- * sitting with a special poem or piece of art of our own choice
- * listening prayerfully to a piece of music
- * dancing or moving in a sacred way
- * or something/anything else!

We also commit to spending half an hour each day with our allocated companion in a one-to-one, private and confidential session. In these sessions we will be gently and quietly encouraged to share whatever we feel comfortable with sharing about our experience. If that means sitting in companionable silence, that’s fine too.

On the morning of Saturday 14th February we will all meet together again, this time for a hosted breakfast, where we can share how the week has been, if we wish to. For note, our prayer companions will be approved by the Diocese of Hereford to work with us.

Pease contact Anna Dreda on 07772 288077 or annadreda@icloud.com if you would like to find out if this is for you. ***Please note that an expression of interest is needed by 6th January at the latest.***

Craft Fayre Saturday 28 February 10 - 3pm

We are so looking forward to our second craft fayre just a couple of weeks ahead of Mother’s Day. Buy your mum something lovely, or bring her out for the day and treat her to delicious coffee and cake! If you would like a stall, please contact Dee Wilkinson on deliastewart@rocketmail.com. (See the write up of our first Craft Fayre below.)

World Day of Prayer 6 March – Nigeria – ‘I will give you rest, come’

The Women’s World Day of Prayer was started in the 19th century in the US and Canada with a focus on concern for women and children across the globe, and an emphasis on prayer. The first service in the UK took place during the

1930's. The Day of Prayer aims at promoting prayerful living and worship and helping raise awareness of the lives and concerns of others throughout the world, especially those who write the service.

Each year the service is written by a different country. This year it is written by women in Nigeria with the theme of 'I will give you rest, come'. This service will be used by people across the world on the 6th March.

St Cuthbert's Church is hosting the World Day of Prayer 2026 for the Benefice on Friday March 6th, do keep the date, and contact Chris Tinker for any further information on 07970 577614 or ctinker101@icloud.com.

Calling all creative people of Clungunford: artists, designers, crafters and makers, needleworkers, anyone interested

St Cuthbert's altar frontals have seen better days. The PCC would like to replace at least the green one, which is no longer green. We've been talking for a while about combining our talents to make a new one. With a new year we thought it time to see if the idea has legs.

If you are interested, please bring your ideas and creative brains along to the church. This is just an exploratory get together; you will not be committed to do anything.

- When: 2pm Monday 12th January 2026
- Where: St Cuthbert's Church

Regular events

Churchyard and Church Maintenance Group 2 February

There will be no Church yard and Church maintenance meet up on the 5th January, and so the next meeting will be the 2nd February from 10 – 12.00. All welcome to pitch in. There is coffee and biscuits which helps with the work!

St Cuthbert's Cafe, Thursdays 8 and 22 January and 12 and 26 February: 10am - 12pm

Just turn up at the village hall (the side entrance nearest to the village green) to enjoy tea, coffee and homemade cake along with plenty of friendly chat. A great way to socialise with village friends old and new while supporting the church. It's also where the 100 Club draw is held. If you are still looking for a New Year's Resolution, how about joining Rob's team of bakers? Contact Rob Rees on 07497 427376 or 01547 540248. (Second and fourth Thursday of each month)

The Quiet Church, every Thursday (but NOT New Year's Day!)

If you are making New Year's Resolutions (are you?!) then perhaps one of them might be to carve out some peace and quiet in your life. Let us help you. Every Thursday afternoon a small group of us meet in the church for about 25 minutes of silent meditation. It is surprisingly lovely! Before the meditation we listen to about 15 minutes

of music chosen to help us transition from the busyness of the day to a place of peaceful calm. We then have a shortish reading (not from the Bible) and from there we go into silence together. After the silence, we have another reading, or sometimes a poem, and then a few quiet words if anyone want to say anything. We gather for the music at 4.45pm and the first reading is at 5pm. Although this group follows the model of the World Community for Christian Mediation, it is inclusive and welcomes people of any or no faith. Everyone is accepted as they are. Just turn up, or contact Anna Dreda on 07772 288077 or annadreda@icloud.com.

Sacred Space

Please note there is no Sacred Space in January and February. Our dates for the spring/summer are Friday 6th March, *Thursday 19th April**, Friday 8th May, and Friday 12th June. We gather from 5.45pm for a 6 o'clock start. We listen to six beautiful pieces of music, interspersed with periods of silence which are just under 5 minutes each. We usually finish with a short poem, but other than that – no words! It makes a lovely hour, do come and try it. All information from Anna Dreda on 07772 288077 or annadreda@icloud.com, but feel free to turn up.

* Please note the change of day for April's Sacred Space only.

Christmas at St Cuthbert's



Christmas was a busy time at St Cuthbert's, as you might expect.

The Church has a tradition of choral workshops that extends back more than 20 years. They were started by Robert Bunting and, after his death, have been continued by Alistair Auld. The format of the workshop has always been the same in that the pieces the singers worked on during the day would be performed at a concert in the evening. The **Christmas Choral Workshop** this year was slightly different in that the pieces that the singers workshopped were performed at the Carol Service in the evening. As well as singing four well-known pieces to perfection, they also led the congregation in singing favourite Christmas Carols with some verses for choir only. The **'Christmas Festival of Lessons and Carols'** is one of the most popular services of the year and this year saw

more than seventy people attend. Our guest organist for the evening was Stephen Powers who is the Director of Music at St Mary's Monmouth and previously Director of Music at Brecon Cathedral. Stephen concluded the service in grand style by playing the organ voluntary: Chorale Prelude "In Dulci Jubilo" BWV729 J.S. Bach.



Another very popular service is the 'Carols around the crib' on Christmas Eve. This year Naomi Hardwick started the service wonderfully, playing 'O Holy Night' as a harp solo. The organist for the evening was Michael Miller, who proved again that he is a talented organist as well as a mean cocktail mixer! Is there no end to this boy's talents!

Caroline Hughes led the crib service which included carols and readings. Two angels purporting to be the Angels Gabriel and Michael played a part in the service, however rumour has it that they came from Abbott and not Heaven! The service was well attended by people of all ages, and a collection was held on behalf of the Craven Arms Food Bank.

Without a doubt, the stars of the evening were the children who read beautifully and those who placed figures into Mary and Joseph's stable. Their very evident joy in doing so brought tears to many looking on!



The lay led service on **Christmas Day** was delivered by Robert and Christine Flitney and **Christmas Communion** on Sunday 28th concluded the Christmas Services.

A busy Christmas indeed!

And looking back

The Craft Fayre

What a lovely day and what a talented village! Thank you so much to everyone who made it so special, with huge thanks to Dee Wilkinson (Acanthus Glass) for organising it. There was so much to look at and to buy, and the refreshments were outstanding – thank you to all who baked and served. The next Craft Fayre is planned for the 28th February (see above for more details). A date for your diary.



'Strings, Still Life and Scenery': the Concert (8th November)

We received this from Maureen Cooper, a friend to Anna and Hilary, who visited from Leicester to attend the above concert. Here's what she had to say –

Overnight to Clungunford for a concert that featured music composed by two very talented Shropshire lads, Jonty Lefroy Watt and Oran Johnson, who met at The Royal College of Music and gained more musical friends while there: Declan Hickey (guitar), Eliza Nagle (violin) and Zea Hunt (violin). There is a closeness between the composers and the musicians interpreting the music, a real understanding. These young men create very modern, maybe challenging, music but I love what is on offer. If they recorded it, I'd buy it!

Their inspirations here are largely visual works of art that are not at all English but the music feels so very English. I don't think it's because I am sitting in a Shropshire village church, with perfect acoustics, at the end of a day of even more perfect Autumn weather. Scents of Howells, Gurney, Vaughan Williams, Holst, Elgar, Britten hang in the air for me as I listen to these modern compositions of a very different generation in a very different time. I feel it is a privilege to be here and I am not the only person who finds that word coming to their lips.

Thank you Maureen, for this, and for the photos below. We had over seventy people in the church for this concert. It was a triumph of talent, generosity, love and, on the part of the church, a willingness to support these young musicians at the beginning of their careers.



100 Club winners

November

First Prize (£60) – Jonathan Roberts
 Second Prize (£30) – Christine Tinker
 Third Prize (£15) – Pat Morris

December

First Prize (£60) – Simon Lyster
 Second Prize (£30) – Ennis Brown
 Third Prize (£15) – Anna Dreda

The Slow Ladies

Friday 27 February: Walk to Ludlow from Bromfield. Meet at your nearest bus stop to catch bus at 10.05am. We may have a quick lunch in Ludlow, but bring something small to eat in case there isn't time. Catch bus back at 12.45pm. New walkers are always welcome. Do not hesitate to contact me - Pauline Mattison (01588 660596) from whom meeting times and venues may be obtained.

Weather report - A very wet, mild autumn following a very dry summer in 2025

In my last weather summary, near the end of August I noted the exceptionally dry spring and summer. Since then, the autumn has been very wet, replenishing low water tables and causing extensive flooding. The total for September to November that I recorded at Hopton Heath was 424mm compared with 57mm for June to August. This was the second wettest autumn in my records, after 2019, when I recorded 493mm. We probably do not remember that there were two dry spells this autumn, from 21-30 September and from 5-19 October, but November was wet all month. Storm Claudia giving 51mm on the 15th November and the monthly total was 193mm, the wettest November that I have recorded at Hopton Heath.

December, up to 20th, has also been wet with a total of 130mm so far. The wettest period in December was caused by Storm Bran, when 30mm was recorded over a two day period from the 9th to the 10th.

Temperatures were fairly average in from September to November, with a brief cold spell in November. Then snow fell on the 19th and frost on the 20th, 21st, 26th and 27th. Since then it has been mild, with only one day with slight frost in December, so far, and maximum temperatures of 10C or above on all days from 6-16 December. The forecast is for mild weather to continue for a few days but possible snow on Christmas and colder weather in the following week! By the time you see this report we will know whether the forecast is correct.

Mike Tucker 20 December 2025



Special Notice: AMNESTY!! Tablecloths and tea towels

Has anyone taken home the Church table clothes and some tea towels, most likely after an event to wash? We seem to have lost twenty or so tablecloths and a few tea towels. The tablecloths are made from a red gingham material. For note, the Village Hall has green gingham tablecloths. If you have them, please could you return them or let the Churchwarden know so that he can collect them. Many thanks!

Wishing everyone a healthy and peaceful New Year, if you haven't yet been to a service or an event at St Cuthbert's Church, Clungunford we look forward to giving you the warmest of welcomes, and if you are not a church-goer but might enjoy helping in the churchyard or with church maintenance or having a creative input (ie new alter frontals!) or any other part of the community aspect of St Cuthbert's, your welcome would be every bit as warm!

Working in
partnership with
partners across
Shropshire

WOW

Winter Outreach Wellbeing

**CLUNGUNFORD RESIDENTS!
WE WILL BE DROPPING BY THE
VILLAGE HALL SY7 0PP
ON: 29TH JANUARY 2026!
TIME: 10AM- 11AM**



Maybe even
get a mini
health check!

What to expect:

Meet the Community Wellbeing Outreach Team and partners!
A chance to chat about: health and wellbeing concerns, cost of living issues (energy and food costs), vaccinations, mental health, stopping smoking support, screening information, think campaign, lifestyle advice, social groups and support services

Everyone welcome - bring a friend!

The Parish Council

At our November meeting we were pleased to note that road repairs had been completed at Shelderton and elsewhere in the parish. We also discussed without reaching a definite conclusion whether we should invest in a solar powered speed sign. Remember, we share a battery operated speed sign with Clunbury, but still do not have any posts to hang it on! Sam Walmsley, our local Shropshire Councillor, offered to look into this (we have tried many times!).

The high speed broadband does not quite seem to have made it to us by Christmas, but work is certainly underway in Broome, and so we wait expectantly.

Subsequent to the November meeting we also convened to discuss a proposed lodge development to replace The Oak Works at Hopton Heath. Whilst approving the principle of development, we have made various comments on lay-out and design and also matters of detail such as drainage and the protection of an existing bore-hole. The applicant, Lee Burdon, helpfully attended the meeting and will discuss the various points raised with his planning agent.

The draft minutes of the November meeting may be seen on the village website at

<https://clungunford.com/parish-council-papers/>

Our next meeting is on 14 January 2026 at 7 pm in the Village Hall.

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).

A novel from Judith Trustman

It is always good to promote local creativity, and Judith has just had published her book, entitled *How Like A Winter*.

It is a good read, and priced at £9.99 you can get it from Amazon or direct from Judith's own website: www.judithtrustmanauthor.com

To give readers a taste, the back of the book reads:

Two Women, Two Mothers.

Two Lives Reshaped By The Children They Lost

For Tara and Jo, life is never the same again after their children have been adopted. Are you still a mother after your child has gone? In the fallout of separation, they must try to make sense of who they are now, who they might have been. And when the children come looking, nothing is certain, hidden connections emerge and unexpected love stories.



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. This saves trees, but in reducing postage costs it also serves toward the sustainability of *The Gazette* as a free newsletter.

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

Just to emphasise the point – the picture on the next page is a lot better in colour!

The Clungunford Dodo



*Hester in the
taxidermist's
workshop*

Meet Hester, the Clungunford Dodo!

A little over a year ago there came up for auction locally some plaster casts taken in the 1880s from the head and feet of the Nation's only real Dodo remains, held by Oxford University.

A highly skilled taxidermist, late of the Natural History Museum, used these to construct a life-size Dodo, possibly unique in incorporating casts taken from a real bird. Hester's colouring is taken from a 17th century Indian painting of a Dodo for the Mughal princes, which is believed to be the only occasion a live Dodo was a subject matter. Not surprisingly, Hester is widely regarded as the best looking bird in Clungunford and for miles around!

Why Hester? Hester was the impoverished widow of the man who once owned the Oxford Dodo. Her only income came from charging visitors to see her specimen. But by nefarious means, one Elias Ashmole (yes, The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford) purloined the bird for his collection over 300 years ago, thus depriving Hester of her income and committing her to poverty. The Dodo became the star exhibit of Ashmole's collection.

Poppy Day Appeal 2025

May I pass on a big thank you on behalf of The Royal British Legion for the very generous donations from the Clungunford / Hopton Heath Area.

This year we raised a total of £402.48 with many of the donations kindly gift aided adding a further 25%.

A special thank you to the collectors - Mary Bason , Eddie Gledhill, Mike Jones and Mike Tucker for all their efforts.

Ennis Brown

Aunt Ag advises

The Gazette's own social affairs correspondent gives what she believes to be helpful advice to those who consult her on social issues. All names are changed in a vain attempt to mask the identities of those who are doubtless already well-known around the village.

Having recently returned from an extended holiday in my villa on the South of Wales Riviera, where I had to be de-iced by the constabulary after an episode of top-less bathing, I discovered the following letters in my postbag.

Mr P of Gunnas asks: How much snow was there up the Twitchen last week? My good wife left Gunnas on Christmas Eve afternoon to deliver some mince pies to Mr AZR, her long-time friend in the Twitchen., going up over the top. She only returned two days after Boxing Day minus the mince pies. Enquiring politely as to the reason for the delay, she merely said, "Snow on The Twitchen". I had no idea it had been snowing, as there was not a flake in Gunnas. I am hoping that other readers were not similarly inconvenienced by the weather.

Aunt Ag writes: I expect this is something to do with Global Warming, but I should not worry unduly if I were you, although limiting your wife's production of mince pies next Christmas may help.

Mr Cyrus Q Grossperson, Chief Operating Officer of Wet Licks, USA [editor's note: this is a long way the other side of Barmouth] writes: Hi, Aunt Ag. As you know we are always hungry for more content to sell to our subscription viewers. Minor royals watching some else making pots of jam is getting to be a bit boring. Any ideas? We heard that you and your husband, Tiberius, are very creative. We need action, tension, jeopardy and pathos in every episode

Aunt Ag writes: Cyrus, old chap, have you come to the right place? Tib and I have plotted out your new block-buster – The Hedge Cutting Channel. Move aside Ice Road Truckers, this has got everything. We have our three resident tractor hedge cutters, David, Ian and Robert. All

day and all night they cut hedges. This is 24-7 stuff. They just do not rest....endless hedge cutting. One camera is mounted on the hedge cutter, watching the flail as it goes along, all to dramatic music. The other camera is in the tractor cab, fixed on the changing emotions of the driver, as they flail away. People will be glued to the TV/mobile phone/Ipad/other device.

The ordinary day to day hedge cutting, which is gripping enough, is then punctuated by the crises. A telegraph pole is in the hedge. What is Robert going to do? Just pile into it or go round it. Come back after the break and find out. More dramatic music, and switch to the cab camera and the stress on Robert's face as he works out what to do. Then there are the road signs in the hedge. Will they be treated differently to the pole? What will David do? He ponders as he eats his sandwiches.

Then the absolute cliff-hanger. Will Ian spot the sparrow's nest a couple of feet away? Really heavy dramatic music and an extra long commercial break to allow several million more viewers to tune in. Come back to pictures of little birds tweeting happily in their untouched home, and Ian tearfully confirming "It's all in a day's work, mate", as he lifts the flail over the nest.

Man, I am telling you, this series will put you right up there.

Mr D W of Gunnas writes: The other night my wife and I invited our neighbours, Peter and Petronella, round to dinner. Pet, as we call her, is a very out-doors, open-toed sandal type. Unfortunately, I dropped my fork and disappeared under the table to pick it up. This woke up our collie, Ignatius, who was having a nap under the table and who then proceeded to lick Petronella's exposed toes. I rescued my fork and regained my seat. Petronella smiled at me but nothing was said. Advice please.

Aunt Ag writes: This is too awkward. Let us just be thankful that Ignatius did not have her big toe off.