

## On the Black Hill

Head south out of Clunton, pass through Clunton Coppice and eventually you come to Cwm. Look up to the right and there it is, Black Hill, rising to 441 metres (1442 feet) above sea level, the highest point in the parish. Home once to Red Grouse and Whinberries (but more perhaps of these aspects another time), it includes a patch of 'Parish land' – our land (and more perhaps of this too another time) – and is party to a little piece of literary history.

*On the Black Hill* (1982) is the title of a novel by the celebrated travel writer and novelist Bruce Chatwin (1940-1989), subsequently made into a film of the same title (1987). Although set near Hay-on-Wye (where there is another Black Hill), it owes much to our own Black Hill. We know this from Nicholas Shakespeare's biography, *Chatwin* (1999):

'He actually began writing the book in the stable flat at Cwm Hall, the home of Martin and Stella Wilkinson. Bruce turned up at the end of October 1980 in a 2CV with a mountain bike on the roof. The flat, said Stella, "was just austere enough for him to feel comfortable and comfortable enough for him to feel austere"...

One day Bruce returned, excited, from a bounding walk on the hill above the farm known as the Black Hill. He had a title. "I am going to call it *On the Black Hill*", he told Martin.

In the room over the stables, he fell into a routine. He came to the main house for breakfast at 8.30, made toast, scurried back ... He worked hard till 9pm when supper was ready. Every now and then he played the great chef... "He made a turkey stuffed with chocolate and peanut sauce and a mad spice no one's ever used before or since from Jersey City. Everyone was full of admiration," says Martin. "Next day on a high because of the success, he decided to go for a

*poulet à l'ail* ... But instead of putting in 30 cloves of garlic he put in 30 whole garlic. It was completely inedible ...".

Much though Stella loved her guest, she deplored his manners. "He was happy to use up your chattel, but couldn't accept responsibility for the kitchen of life. He lived two winters with me and I saw him for three meals a day and he did not once lift his plate from the kitchen table to the kitchen sink".

But what a wonderful book!

## Phone Boxes Rerieved

We reported in the Dec / Jan edition that phone boxes in Clunton and Clunbury were under threat of removal (Kempton's phone box wasn't threatened as far as we know). Following consultation and representations from local people who wanted the phone boxes to stay, BT have agreed to retained them. However, in other parts of Shropshire over twenty phone boxes are being decommissioned.



## Tools for Self Reliance South Shropshire & Borders Annual General Meeting

7.30pm

Thursday 12 March

Methodist Church

Clun

*Guest Speakers*

**Bobby and Martin Britnell of  
Hands Up For Uganda will talk  
about their charity's work**

**All welcome**

**Admission free**

**Tea, coffee, cake etc!**

**For more information contact  
Dave Thomlinson 640550**

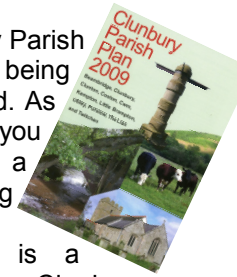
# The Parish Post

Number 57  
March 2015

for Beambridge Clunbury Clunton Coston Cwm Kempton Little Brampton Obley Purslow The Llan & Twitchen

## Your Parish Plan Questionnaire is on its way!

The 2009 Clunbury Parish Plan is currently being reviewed and updated. As part of that process you will shortly receive a Questionnaire asking for your views.



The Parish Plan is a document used by Clunbury Parish Council and Shropshire Council to ensure that the views, needs and opinions of the people of Clunbury Parish are taken into account when important decisions are being made about key facilities and services.

It is important therefore that as many people as possible provide information so that the Parish Plan accurately reflects the majority view.

Please look out for your Questionnaire which will be delivered to your home in the next few weeks. There should be one for every person in your household over the age of 18, plus a separate sheet for completion by youngsters under 18. If you do not receive the correct number of Questionnaires for your household, or you require any further information, please contact either David Hill (660355), John Hoskins (660192) or Pat Harding (660169).

Your completed Questionnaires will be collected approximately two weeks after delivery, and the results analysed for the Review, which will be published later in the year. Thank you in advance for your help.

*Parish Plan Review Committee*

## Clunbury Village Hall Committee presents

**The Open Gardens Tragedy**  
a Murder Mystery Play  
set in the Clun Valley  
Saturday, 14 March at 7pm

It's Open Gardens Week in the Clun Valley in the 1990s. On a beautiful, sunny day in June, keen gardening enthusiasts and lots of nosey people are out and about, visiting the many splendid gardens that are open to the public. Most of them will want to see the Manor House in Cluningburyford, impressive home of Basil and Violet Dibber-Hoe, to admire the immaculate lawns, flourishing flowerbeds and the expensive new summerhouse (from Harrods, of course!). But the day isn't going to proceed quite as planned...

Actors from Clunbury and Clungunford will be performing this specially written play for the audience to try to guess 'Who Dunit?'



Bring a plate of food to share and your own alcohol if you like - you might need it!

Entry £2.00 per person (for tea / coffee and free raffle ticket)

Booking is essential please tel Lin Brown 660578 to reserve a place

**Please send your contributions by the 20th of each month**

**Kemp Valley  
Community Wildlife Group  
Annual Public Meeting  
Tuesday 24 March, 7.30pm  
Powis Arms, Lydbury North**  
Lapwings in the Kemp Valley  
Survey results for 2014  
Action to help Lapwings  
Plans for 2015 Survey  
Other events and activities  
Annual General Meeting  
**All Welcome**

New Helpers Needed Training Provided  
Contact: Chris Penny 680590

### Women's World Day of Prayer

Come and join in a special service of drama, music and singing, prepared by the Christian women of the Bahamas. This will be held in St Mary's Church, Hopesay and start at 7pm on Friday 6 March. Refreshments will be provided. All welcome.

### Mothering Sunday 15 March

Take your Mum out for tea on Mothering Sunday to St Swithin's Church, Clunbury. Tea and cakes will be served at 4pm, followed by a service at 5pm. During the service you can give your Mum a posy of spring flowers.



### The Future of NHS services in Shropshire

A talk by Dr. Bill Gowans  
**Clun Memorial Hall**  
**Tuesday 10 March 7.30pm**  
followed by  
the Meadows (Clun Surgery)  
Patient Group AGM  
Refreshments provided

### Spanish Fiesta

Entertainment, Tapas and Wine  
with *Christina Whitehead as Sybil Fawly*  
High Town Community Room, Clun  
Friday 27 March, 7.30pm  
Tickets £9 from Christina on 660424  
Proceeds to Médecins Sans Frontières,  
Clun Church & Hightown Community  
Room



### Borderlines Film Festival

Back for the thirteenth year, this Festival, which runs from 27 February to 15 March, offers the opportunity to see a wide range of films many of which would not otherwise be shown locally. Bedstone Village Hall and SpArc in Bishop's Castle are our nearest venues (see the Diary page for dates and details). Information about the full programme can be found on the website [borderlinesfilmfestival.org](http://borderlinesfilmfestival.org)

### Clunton Village Hall

Clunton Village Hall is to have a bit of a "make-over". Does anyone have photographs of "old Clunton" which can be reproduced and framed and used to brighten up the walls in the hall.

Please contact: Val: 660762,  
Pat: 660169 or Alan: 660652

### Get Rid of All That Unwanted Clutter and Feel GREAT

Spring, the season of renewal, is almost upon us and now is the perfect time to free yourself of all the clutter you have been meaning to get rid of for ages. Fortunately, Clunbury's fortnightly café has a bric-a-brac stall that is the ideal destination for your smaller clutter. Donated items are sold to support Village Hall activities and those that are not sold are passed on to local charity shops. Contact David Hill (660355) or Duncan Brown (660578) for more information.

### March 1896 – Clunbury

This extract from the 'Clun Valley Parochial Magazine' gives a brief view of life in the parish 115 years ago.

"*The Confirmation.* – The Bishop came to Clunbury on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, and stayed at the Vicarage, until Monday morning. He very much appreciated the honour paid to him by the Bellringers, who had sent out 'spies' to warn them of his approach, and as he drove through the village he was greeted by a hearty peal from the belfry. On Sunday morning shortly before 11 o'clock the Churchwardens, and the Choir in their surplices met the Bishop at the Vicarage and the procession passed through the village to the Church, where they sang the processional hymn 391, "Onward Christian Soldiers"...The Bishop gave 2 stirring addresses...The number of candidates was 21, and their confirmation was witnessed by a large congregation from all parts of the parish."

"The County Council are kindly giving us a series of Dressmaking Classes which are most popular, and are being very largely attended. They are held in the Schoolroom at Clunbury...Miss Smith gives her instruction so clearly that all can understand, and we are much pleased to add the art of dressmaking to our many accomplishments!"

"In our account last month of the pleasant evening spent by the youthful members of the Clunbury and Clunton Choir at the Clun Pantomime, we omitted to say that the expenses were kindly defrayed by Lady Ripley, Mrs Mieville, and the Vicar" [Does anyone know anything about Lady R and Mrs M or where they lived?]

"*Reading Rooms.* – There will be a "coffee night" at Clunbury and Clunton



after Easter, before the rooms are closed for the season. Members should make good use of the time now as there is not much more than a month left." [Where were these Reading Rooms?]

"*Clunton Football.* – We are glad to hear that Clunton have again distinguished themselves in the football field – beating their formidable Clun opponents by 6 goals to 2." Sue Hill

### Pontesford Hill Appeal

In 2010, people from the Pontesbury area lost 'their' Hill when the Forestry Commission sold it off to a private investor. This iconic twin-humped hill guards the gateway to the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is treasured by the community.

There was fierce opposition to the plans to develop it, but now the current owner has agreed to sell the hill to the local community, as long as we raise the money (£265,000) within six months. Once secured, the Hill will be owned and managed by Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT), in collaboration with the local community. Along with the SWT-owned Earl's Hill, this will provide one large, open access wildlife reserve, protected in perpetuity for everyone to enjoy. There are numerous fundraising events planned, including 'A Celebration of Pontesbury with Mary Webb' (10 April; see diary page) which features local singer-songwriter Janie Mitchell and Benji Kirkpatrick, and a dinner with Nick Owen from BBC Midlands Today. To donate, or for further information about events and the 'Hill Appeal', please visit:

[www.pontesford-hill-appeal.co.uk](http://www.pontesford-hill-appeal.co.uk)

### Clunbury 100 club February

£20 Tim Croxton; £15 Alice Whymark;  
£10 Clementine Morris; £5 Eileen Addy;  
£3 Brian Marsh



## News from South West Shropshire Gardening Club

**L**ooking back: The January talk was entitled "Right Plant, Right Place" by

Frank Hardy about plants and their preferred soil and conditions. He started by pointing out that an acer might "survive" on a patio in July but it was far more likely to "flourish"



in dappled shade. He encouraged us to feel the texture of our soil to ascertain the amount of sand or clay present. "Great dollops of wheat straw and loads of nutrients" will improve soil with clay in it. He was keen to encourage the use of conifers to provide an evergreen backbone for the garden. Red, blue and green grasses put together can look fantastic without having to rely on flowers.

### Next meeting:

**The Restoration of Attingham Park's Walled Garden:** a talk by Head Gardener Kate Nicoll, Wednesday 25 March, 7.30pm, Lydbury North Village Hall. Dr Kate Nicoll and her colleagues have been working for six years, in order to restore the eighteenth century walled kitchen garden at Attingham Park. It is a rare and excellent example, which, unlike many other walled gardens, was fortunately not modernised in Victorian times or demolished due to becoming economically unviable. When Kate started working in the garden in 2009 she was daunted by its massive scale: a huge two acre site of earth, grass and walls. It had fallen on sad times since the war but is now once again supplying the estate and café with home grown produce and flowers. Entrance free to members, visitors £3 including

refreshments. Any further queries to Carol Clarke 660753 or Allison Walter 620055 or look at our website [www.gardeningshropshire.co.uk](http://www.gardeningshropshire.co.uk)

*Angela Salmon*

## Bulk Fuel Buying Scheme

**T**he fuel buying scheme encourages households in rural Shropshire to purchase their heating oil together. Members benefit from cheaper fuel by being part of a group that can negotiate cheaper bulk-buying rates. This year so far our members have enjoyed oil deliveries under 35p per litre! We have also added bulk LPG and Cylinders to our service at very competitive rates.

As a rural charity Shropshire Rural Community Council works to tackle the issues surrounding fuel poverty. The scheme is open to individuals, businesses and community buildings in Shropshire. Annual membership fees: domestic £24, community building £36 and business £120. For more information call 01743 342167 or email [oil@shropshire-rcc.org.uk](mailto:oil@shropshire-rcc.org.uk). You can now join the scheme online by visiting our website <http://www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk/services/individuals/oil-buying-scheme>.

## Shropshire Furniture Scheme

**W**ANTED by the Furniture Scheme!! good quality or rare books for our Renaissance Centre book shop. All profits go towards relieving poverty, protecting the environment and enabling people. Please drop off at any of our sites or for a large donation Tel: 01584 877788 to arrange collection. For information on our sites: [www.furniturescheme.co.uk](http://www.furniturescheme.co.uk)

### CONTACTS

**Email:** [theparishpost@gmail.com](mailto:theparishpost@gmail.com)  
**Website:** [www.theparishpost.org](http://www.theparishpost.org)  
**Phone:** Sue Hill 660355  
or Lin Brown 660578  
or Gisèle Wall 660561

### Events Diary for MARCH 2015

Sun 1	11.15am	Morning Prayer	St. Swithin's, Clunbury
Sun 1	7pm	Songs of Praise in four-part harmony. Tel 661171 for info.	Kempton Village Hall
Mon 2	9-11am	Parent & Toddler Group-every Mon in term time. Just turn up	Clunbury Village Hall
Tue 3	Mobile Library: Clunbury Bridge 10.10-10.30am, Clunton 10.40-11.00am, Obley 12.45-12.55pm		
Tue 3	7.30pm	Flicks—Boyhood	Lydbury North Village Hall
Wed 4	7pm	RSC—Loves Labours Lost	SpArC
Wed 4	8pm	Bishop's Castle Film Society—Selfish Giant	Three Tuns, Bishop's Castle
Wed 4	evening	Quiz for CRY	Kangaroo Inn, Aston on Clun
Thu 5	10-11.30am	Clunbury Café	Clunbury Village Hall
Fri 6	7pm	Women's World Day of Prayer Service	St. Mary's, Hopesay
Sun 8	4pm/7pm	Clun Young Farmers' Pantomime	Clun Memorial Hall
Sun 8	6.30pm	Joint Evening Prayer	St. Swithin's, Clunbury
Mon 9	7-9pm	Monday Night Club-free help with using computers	Kangaroo Inn, Aston on Clun
Tue 10	7pm	Flicks—Mr. Turner	SpArC
Tue 10	7.30pm	The Future of NHS Services in Shropshire	Clun Memorial Hall
Thu 12	7pm	NCT Live—Behind the Beautiful Forevers	Aston on Clun Village Hall
Thu 12	7pm	NCT Live—Behind the Beautiful Forevers	SpArC
Thu 12	7.30pm	Tools For Self Reliance South Shropshire AGM	Clun Methodist Church
Fri 13	7.30pm	Borderlines Film Festival—Before I go to Sleep	Bedstone & Hopton Castle VH
Sat 14	7pm	Murder Mystery Evening/Bring & Share Supper	Clunbury Village Hall
Sat 14	7.30pm	Ludlow Choral Society Concert	St. Laurence's Church, Ludlow
Sat 14	7.30pm	Flicks-Waking Ned Devine	Clun Memorial Hall
Sun 15	4pm 5pm	Mothering Sunday Tea Mothering Sunday Service	St. Swithin's, Clunbury
Mon 16	2-4pm	BC & District Carers Group-Shropshire talking Newspapers	Boars Head Hotel, BC.
Tue 17	Mobile Library: Clunbury Bridge 10.10-10.30am, Clunton 10.40-11.00am, Obley 12.45-12.55pm		
Tue 17	7.15	Royal Opera House Live—Swan Lake	SpArC
Wed 18	9.45am	Tim's Travels—And Then There were None—640506	Malvern
Wed 18	8pm	Bishop's Castle Film Society—Le Passe (The Past)	Three Tuns, Bishop's Castle
Thu 19	10-11.30am	Clunbury Café	Clunbury Village Hall
Thu 19	8pm	Clunbury Parish Council Meeting	Kempton Village Hall
Sun 22	11.15am	Joint Holy Communion	St. Mary's, Clunton
Tue 24	7.30pm	Kemp Valley Community Wildlife Group Annual Public Meeting	Powis Arms, Lydbury North
Wed 25	7.30pm	SWSGC—'The Restoration of Attingham's Walled Garden'	Lydbury North Village Hall
Wed 25	9.15pm	Live Acoustic Folk Music	The Crown Inn, Clunton
Thu 26	7pm	NCT Live—A View from the Bridge	Aston on Clun Village Hall
Fri 27		Clunbury School—Last Day of Spring Term	
Fri 27	7.30pm	Spanish Fiesta—660424	High Town Community Room
Sat 28		16th Anniversary Party with Live Music	Kangaroo Inn, Aston on Clun
Sat 28	7.30pm	Flicks—Mr. Turner	Aston on Clun Village Hall
Sun 29	10am	Joint Palm Sunday Service	St. Mary's Hopesay

If you (or family or friends living outside the parish) would like to receive The Parish Post by email please contact us at [theparishpost@gmail.com](mailto:theparishpost@gmail.com)  
The editorial team does not accept responsibility for any opinions expressed by contributors and reserves the right to edit contributions if deemed appropriate.