

Wheatland News April 2026



Contents

Editorial	2
Reflections on a New Beginning	3
Brown Clee Benefice News	4
Bats in Churches	12
Daddy's Hat	12
Easter English Traditions	13
Brown Clee Community	14
Nature in rural Shropshire – pictures	19
Cleobury North French evening	20
Ditton Priors History Group	20
Ditton Priors Quiz Night	21
The Severn Valley Group of Parishes	22
April Fool	25
Stottesdon Group of Parishes	26
Willows Café Ditton Priors	28
Molecule of the Month	29
Telford	30
Moles in the Garden	31
Hot Cross Buns Recipe	32
Wheatland News Renewal Form	33
Sudoku	34
Clubs and Activities	35
The Back Page – Easter Eggs	36

**News from the Diocese of Hereford and the 17 Parishes around
Ditton Priors, Highley and Stottesdon**



Editorial

If you've given up anything for Lent, it's nearly over!

Have you ever wondered why Easter Day is a "movable feast", that is, it moves every year? It's guided not by the calendar alone but by the cycles of the Moon. The story behind how Easter is determined reaches back centuries, linking ancient calendars, the spring equinox, the Paschal Full Moon, and long-held tradition. The method used to calculate Easter dates was established in A.D. 325.

To simplify the process, the Christian Church fixed the spring equinox at March 21, even though the astronomical equinox can vary slightly from year to year.

This fixed date is known as the *ecclesiastical equinox*. As a result, the Paschal Full Moon used to determine Easter does not always coincide with the astronomical Full Moon closest to the true equinox. The Paschal Full Moon is defined as the 14th day of a lunar month occurring on or after March 21, according to a fixed set of ecclesiastical calendar rules. Easter Sunday is observed on the first Sunday after the Paschal Full Moon.

So now you know!

Whatever you're doing over the Easter period let's hope for some decent weather, especially if you have children or grandchildren, or even great-grandchildren at home and **have a very happy Easter**

If you currently receive a printed copy of the Wheatland News and haven't paid your subscription, this will be the last printed copy you will receive. please see details on page 33

Wheatland News Local Coordinators

Please send reports to your contact for your parishes listed below.

The deadline for getting your contributions for the **May 2026** edition of WN to the **Local Coordinators or the EDITOR** will be **noon on FRIDAY 17th April 2026**. Due to editing and printing deadlines, late submissions **CANNOT** be included and will be sent back to the submitter for inclusion in the following month's edition.

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Highley, Glazeley & Deuxhill, Billingsley	Revd David Poyner - D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk
Stottesdon, Farlow, Sidbury, Middleton Scriven, Cleeton St Mary, and Silvington	Julia Evans - juliaevans278@googlemail.com



TRACTORS ON THE ROADS

We live in a wonderful area surrounded mostly by farms and countryside, but we've all commented on it, it's been an incredibly wet start to the year. Whereas for most of us this means we haven't been outside as much as we would like, farmers are behind on their normal work and tractors and other farm machinery would have damaged the land if they had been driven across fields.

This means there will be a hive of activity as soon as it is dry enough to access the fields. Applying fertilizer, ploughing, re-seeding and other activities have usually started by now but have been delayed because of the weather.

Please be courteous to tractors on the roads, we all need to play our part in helping protect our food security. Most farm equipment is only being driven a few miles so please be patient when following them or meeting them on narrow roads. Thank you.

New Beginnings – a short reflective report by Revd Sally Wallace-Jones



New beginnings often arrive quietly, yet they carry profound significance. My arrival here as Rector in the Stottesdon Benefice marks one such moment a time full of hope, uncertainty, possibility, and grace. It is a threshold, an invitation to step into a shared future with openness and trust. New roles always bring fresh perspectives, new relationships, and opportunities to listen deeply to what God is doing among us.

Around us, creation itself is mirroring this theme. Spring is on the way, and the natural world is beginning to stir after the stillness of winter. Buds form, light lengthens, and the earth seems to breathe again. The lambs are arriving and this seasonal shift is a reminder that renewal is woven into the very fabric of life.

Even in the darkness and despair of this broken world, the light of God's renewal still shines through, quietly, steadily, and with a hope no darkness can overcome.

We are reminded of this as we also find ourselves in the season of Lent, a time traditionally set aside for reflection, repentance, and reorientation. Lent encourages us to examine our lives, to let go of what burdens us, and to set our feet on a new and refreshed path. It invites us to prepare our hearts for the greatest new beginning of all: the resurrection of Jesus at Easter. Lent is also a season of renewal not a time for punishing ourselves, but a chance to pause and reflect on how and where our lives may need refreshing. We do this knowing that *“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that the world might be saved through him.”* It is God's love, not guilt, that guides us toward change.

Easter proclaims that out of death comes life, out of endings come beginnings, and out of darkness comes the light no darkness can overcome. It is the ultimate reminder that God is always at work creating something new within us, among us, and beyond us.

St Paul reminds us “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”

— 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NRSV)

As we journey through this season together, may we embrace the new beginnings before us: in ministry, in community, in our spiritual lives, and in the unfolding story of God's love.

A Prayer for Renewal

Gracious God,

As we journey through this season of Lent, open our hearts to your renewing Spirit.

Where we are weary, bring us strength;

where we are burdened, bring us freedom;

where we are uncertain, bring us hope.

Help us to embrace the new beginnings you offer each day,

trusting in your love that makes all things new in Christ.

Guide us in faith, refresh us in spirit,

and lead us toward the joy of Easter's rising light.

Amen.

Sally

✠ Parish Services and Benefice News for April

Brown Clee group of Parishes



Brown Clee Benefice

Rector – Revd Joe Simons

The Vicarage, Ditton Priors, Shropshire, WV16 6SQ
01746-599217 07872-464276

St John the Baptist, Ditton Priors, and Holy Trinity, Wheathill and Loughton

CHURCHWARDENS:

Carole Smith Mark Smith: 01746-712394

St Michael & All Angels, Aston Botterell

CHURCHWARDENS:

Anne Preece: 01746-787237

Ben Upton: 07870-160039

St Giles', Chetton

CHURCHWARDEN:

Sheila Millington: 01746-789443

SS Peter & Paul, Cleobury North

CHURCHWARDENS:

Mike Bradbury: 01746-787676

Jane Bufton: 07716-877421

All Saints', Neenton

CHURCHWARDENS:

Dot Cartwright: 07854-559474

Brown Clee Services:

Wednesday 1st April

6.00pm	Stations of the Cross	Rev Joe Simons	Chetton
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Thursday 2nd April – Maundy Thursday

6.00pm	Passover Meal	Rev Val Smith	Cleobury North Village Hall
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Friday 3rd April – Good Friday.

6.00pm	Reflection	Rev Joe Simons	Ditton Priors
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Saturday 4th April – Easter Eve.

6.00pm	Compline Vigil	Rev Joe Simons	Ditton Priors
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Sunday 5th April. Easter Day.

10.00am	Group Holy Communion	Rev Joe Simons	Ditton Priors
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Sunday 12th April. The First Sunday after Easter.

9.30am	Holy Communion	Rev Val Smith	Ditton Priors
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11.30am	Holy Communion	Rev Val Smith	Chetton
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Sunday 19th April. The Second Sunday after Easter.

9.30am	Holy Communion	Rev Joe Simons	Ditton Priors
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11.30am	Holy Communion	Rev Joe Simons	Neenton
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6.00pm	Evening Prayer	Lay Led	Wheathill
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Sunday 26th April. The Third Sunday after Easter.

9.30am	Holy Communion	Rev Joe Simons	Ditton Priors
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11.30am	Holy Communion	Rev Joe Simons	Cleobury North
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Saturday 2nd May.

2.00pm	Memorial Service	Rev Joe Simons	Eudon Grange
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Sunday 3rd May. The Fourth Sunday after Easter

9.30am	Holy Communion	Rev Joe Simons	Ditton Priors
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11.30am	Songs of Praise	Rev Joe Simons	Aston Botterell
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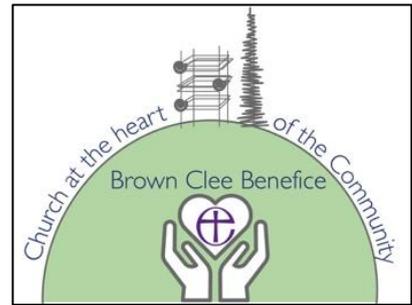


Brown Clee Benefice News

Benefice Vision Afternoon – Saturday 21ST February

A copy of Revd Joe's letter following on from our lively meeting:

"Firstly, thank you so much for participating in the Vision afternoon on Saturday it was very uplifting and shows how much we are aligned as a group in moving the church forward.



I will be spending the next couple of days working towards pulling the information together into some key themes and actions, so watch this space.

In the meantime, there are a couple of things I would like to try and move forward on:

- 1. I am very keen to move forward with launching a Benefice Prayer Group. The suggestion is that we meet together either once a week or every two weeks, ideally on a Thursday when we have the pavilion available. What I had in mind was a time for us to share with one another, maybe a passage of scripture, or something that has moved us during the week, possibly a short discussion or chat, followed by a time of prayer. The focus will be on pastoral matters, mission basically anything that lies on our hearts. There will be tea and coffee available. It is open to all but it is time for all of us to pray and reflect. Let me know if you are interested and we can pull the first meeting together and see how it goes.*
- 2. Keith spoke about launching the Pastoral Care Group and the Care Cafe. I suspect there is a deal of planning involved and I would be grateful if you could get in touch with me, if you feel this is an area of ministry that you are called to.*

In the fullness of time, I will be looking to pull together a Steering Group to help with direction and to ensure we prioritise activity.

Again, thank you so much for all you do and will continue to do in the future as we seek to grow as disciples and to bring the love of Jesus into the lives of others.

Every blessing,

Joe"



Ditton Priors News *Marjorie Jones writes:*

We served about 32 at our **LENT LUNCH** on the 5th March. The home-made Soups were delicious and the fellowship we shared a bonus. A big 'Thank You' to all who provided the food and helped in any way.

We received donations of £150 for charity and the charity we have chosen this year we have a connection with through the granddaughter of our Church Warden, Carole. It is a charity in Birmingham called SIFA Fireside. They support homeless people by providing hot meals, clothing, arranging overnight stays in hostels, giving general advice and help with those suffering addiction.

It is a sad reality that there is a nationwide need for such centres, but every little help we can give counts. We pray that God will bless the work that they are doing.



Friday 3rd April. 6.00pm Reflection



Saturday 4th April. 6.00pm Reflective Compline & Vigil



Sunday 5th April. 10.00am Group Holy Communion



Sunday 12th April. 9.30am. Holy Communion



Sunday 19th April. 9.30am. Holy Communion



Sunday 26th April. 9.30am. Holy Communion



Sunday 3rd May. 9.30am. Holy Communion

FIRST SATURDAY COFFEE MORNINGS

Continue 10.30.am-12.30pm (please note time) in Church on 11th April (avoiding Easter), 2nd May, 6th June and 4th July.

EASTER COFFEE MORNING

Saturday 28th March 10.30am - 12.30pm at the Pavilion.

There will be an Easter Egg hunt in Church and also an Easter Bonnet Competition for all ages. Stalls, Raffle and the usual excellent Coffee and Cakes.

CHURCH FETE

Saturday 16th May 1pm - 4pm in and around the Church.

There will be a Barbecue, entertainment by the Saxophone Ensemble 'Black Eyed Susan's', a variety of stalls, games and the usual Raffle. Do come and join us - the Sun will shine ! If you would like to have a Stall, or to help in any way, please 'phone (01746 712 423).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Pam'sPlants	Sat.23rd May.	Opposite Church 10.30am. - Coffee in Church
Pimms & Puds	Sat. 4th. July.	5 - 8 pm. at the Pavilion, Ditton Priors.
Burwarton Show.	Thurs. 6th Aug.	Refreshments Tent
Teas in Ch/yard.	Thurs.20thAug.	Stalls, refreshments, etc.
Harvest Supper.	Sat 10th Oct.	7pm in the Village Hall.
Christmas Fair.	Sat. 21st Nov.	10.30am at the Pavilion Ditton Priors.

CLEANING ROTA FOR APRIL

- Sunday 5th April. Mr and Mrs Tony Brown
- Sunday 12th April. Mrs Jutta Langham and Mr Steve Allen
- Sunday 19th April. Mrs Carole Hancox and Mrs Maureen Lloyd
- Sunday 26th April. Mr and Mrs Graham Russell
- Sunday 3rd May. Mrs Shirley Wall and Mrs Anita Casswell

DITTON PRIORS CHURCH 100 CLUB.

Results for March

£20. Gill Severn

£10. "Boots" Bamford

£5 each to Rita Slater, Cecil and Jen Thomas, Pete Mathews

The 100 club starts its 38th year on 1st May 2026.

I hope that many of you who support this fundraiser would like to continue.

New members are always very welcome to join.

Subscriptions are still £12 per annum for 12 monthly draws of £20, £10 and 3x £5. Plus an additional £100 in June and December.

Please contact me if you would like any further information.

Shirley Wall. 07530 089808.

Wheathill and Loughton News *Marjorie Jones writes:*

The Snowdrops are flowering at Loughton - Spring is here!

Next Services



Sunday 19th April. 6.00pm (Summertime). Evening Prayer at Wheathill

Aston Botterell News *Anne Preece writes:*

We all enjoyed an afternoon tea celebrating Edens first birthday party at The Manor ... thank you Dan and Amber, lovely to have a happy event.

On another note not so good....we have had 2 large lots of fly tipping in the village which I cannot believe that people can do such a low life thing spreading disease and spoiling the countryside.

Potholes are becoming a real problem, please report them on ... (my street) they have gone past being filled in. We have reported them but they are getting worse .



Tuesday 31st March. 6.00pm. Evening Prayer



Sunday 3rd May. 11.30am. Songs of Praise

Dates for your dairies:

Friday 8th May. - We have a quiz and fish and chip night at The Boyne Arms at 7 pm. Please get in touch with Anne or Ben for tickets.

Saturday 30th May. Breakfast at The Boyne at 9 am. Please ring Anne on 07966459806

Saturday 27th June. Church Fete and Musical Day11am until 4 pm.

Anyone wanting to do a table top selling their goods and crafts is £10 a table .

We are looking for local singers and instrument players or similar to have a slot.

Teas and coffee, cold drinks, cream teas, light refreshments and ice creams .

Competitions etc. Making it a fun day .

Sunday 2nd August. Car treasure hunt ... find that clue. Start at 1pm from Middle House Farm, £10 each with light refreshments on return.

Last but not least...our Carol Service with The Brass Band and Father Christmas, mulled wine and illuminated church .. ready for Christmas.

Please get in touch with Anne or Ben for information.

Spring is round, the corner ..it doesn't get done on its own, so an early thank you to people keeping our church or village looking lovelyanyone is welcome to put flowers in or help however small the task.

Amber and Eden with the first spring lambs.



Thank you to Mike Vernon who delivers your magazines to you for £18 for the year.

Finally, can we say a prayer and give our support from Aston Botterell to all suffering from one thing or another. We are here to help or listen. Thank you everyone for all your support especially to Val, Joe, Karen and Andy, Charles and our choir. Happy Easter and lambing.

We have 3 barn conversions for sale by the church....not completed yet ..

Church lottery

£12 for the year. Drawn out every month, please support if you are able to it does help.

Results for the March draw as below:

£20 - Amber (Plank) - No. 254

£10 - Lee Preece - No. 264

£5 - Margaret Griffith - No. 22

£5 - Paul & Jan Doyle - No. 168

Neenton News *Dot Cartwright writes:*

It's been a fairly quiet time of year, but now, at least, the weather is improving, and we are looking forward to Easter.

There is an Easter coffee morning at the Pavillion in Ditton Priors on 28th March, with an Easter egg hunt, and an Easter bonnet competition starting at 10.30am.



Sunday 19th April. 11.30am. Holy Communion

The fund-raising group is going well, and if you want to join please contact Jo on 07885 671335.

There is an easy way to raise funds by registering with easyfundraising on the internet. All you have to do is go on the easyfundraising site and register for funds to go to All Saints Church Neenton, then whenever you shop through their site, the church at Neenton will get commission, at no cost to anyone. It a good and efficient way to raise funds with very little effort.

We send prayers to all those finding life difficult at the moment, through ill health or general problems. God bless you all.

The Duck Race and fete this year is on June 20th, and hopefully we'll have good weather. I'm sure we're all looking forward to a warm and sunny summer.

Chetton News *Shelia Millington writes:*



Wednesday 1st April. 6.00pm. Stations of the Cross



Sunday 12th April. 11.30am. Holy Communion



Saturday 2nd May. 2.00pm. Memorial Service (Eudon George)

Cleaning and flowers

Zena and Lisa.

Hundred Club

£15.00. Simon Phillips no 63.

£10.00. Francesca Ralph no 88.

In St Giles Churchyard signs of Spring are here at last. Daffodils are in bloom and it's such a treat to hear the birds after a long, wet winter. Joe has been out with the mower and after last year's tidy up, the grave frontals are weed free. Many Chetton folk joined Glazeley for their breakfast at the Down recently then several went on to the Vision meeting at Ditton Priors recently where Revd Joe discussed ideas for the future.

We have another Down breakfast on Saturday 28th March, 9am, please let Sheila know if you would like to join us. Charles and Lisa are hosting a coffee morning on Wednesday April 1st, 10am to

12.30pm, £5.00 entry for coffee/tea, home-made cakes & good company! We will have our usual bric a brac stall.

As mentioned in last month's news, we are holding a very special service on Saturday May 2nd, 2pm at Eudon George.

On September 7th/8th 1943, 5 crew members of an Operational Training Unit sadly lost their lives when their Wellington 111 plane came down in flames over Eudon George. All lost their lives and two of the crew were never recovered.

A memorial has recently been erected at the site and we are holding a small service of remembrance for them all. British, Australian & Canadian air forces were involved. We will be meeting at the site at Eudon George at 1.45pm. The service will be followed by light refreshments in Chetton Villlage Hall. If you wish to come along, can you please contact Sheila on 01746 789443 or email skm268@hotmail.co.uk as we need to know numbers for parking and catering.

Cleobury North and Burwarton News *Jane Bufton writes:*

At the Easter dawn may God Bless you at this special time.



Thursday 2nd April. 6.00pm. *Passover Meal (Cleobury North Village Hall)

* Please do let the Benefice Office know if you are coming to our Passover Meal for catering purposes. Any help you can give in setting up and serving/tidying up will be gratefully received.



Sunday 26th April. 11.30am. Holy Communion

We still need help with flowers and cleaning for the Church, do let Jane know if you feel able to give her a hand.

Last Friday of the Month Coffee Morning at Cleobury North Village Hall is on 24th April. Everyone is welcome to this happy gathering – from 10.30am to noon.

The road from Stottesdon to Ditton Priors, from just outside of the Stottesdon village sign to the turnoff for Duddlewick has been re-surfaced. Yes, you heard that right! The surface has been scraped off, pot-holes filled and a new top surface laid.

Hopefully this should last a reasonable amount of time now, where this has been done in the past we've had several years before any holes materialise.

If you're going to Ditton after you've crossed the B4364 there's still a couple of massive holes where cones have been put into them to show drivers where they are, but only the top of the cones are showing they are so deep. Please still be careful on this road, but at least some of them have been done now.

Bats in Churches by David Jackson

You may notice in your church an increase in bat droppings on tables and pews, a sign they are starting to wake up from their winter torpor.

Colder temperatures cause a decline in insect populations and with their food source depleting bats need to conserve their energy. This is achieved by a period of hibernation and typically lasts from October to April. They do not however sleep for the whole of that period, waking up every 10-15 days to feed, drink, use the toilet, move location subject to weather or simply 'shuffling their feet'. Whilst in a state of deep sleep bats may only breathe once an hour, have a heart rate of 10 beats per minute and a body core temperature of 2°C. This reduction saves energy and the bats actually choose to roost in colder locations so their temperatures remain the same as the environment around them.

Most insect species are active around 14°C and given the insectivorous nature of bats in the UK, they emerge from hibernation between April and May when temperatures become more suitable and their food source returns to the skies. With warming conditions pregnant females gather together forming maternity roosts where they have and nurture their young. Bats usually give birth to only a single pup each year and suckle for up to five weeks until the pups are ready to venture out of the roost to forage on their own.



All this nurturing and growing makes this time highly sensitive, with any major disturbances causing adults to disperse and abandon their young in the roost.

Younger flyers, and those roost-bound also tend to explore their environments and this can lead to an increased number of bats being found lost from their roosts and in need of rescue.

Warm, dry conditions are needed for the maternity roosts and church structures can often provide this safe haven for bats of all ages. Churches therefore provide a pivotal role in the bats community in addition to our own. Declining natural habitat will only increase the safety felt by bats in churches so our continued support can aid their survival.

In an ever changing world churches have an important role not only for us but also for bats because the church structure allows opportunities for both summer, and winter roosting. The decline in natural habitat increases this dependency so it remains essential that we can live in harmony with each other.

Daddy's Hat
brings the great
Saxon Fire
Plus **Richard Fox**
on keyboards
to **St Mary Magdalene Church, Eridenorth!**

Come and enjoy the music and the company!
Saturday 18th April
3:00pm - for about an hour
No tickets needed, just a donation to the Hat if you wish, to cover expenses and refreshments

April's 3pm free concert in St Mary Magdalene's Bridgnorth features rich saxophones, grand piano and classical 'cello, with our special friends; Liz, Harriett, Charlotte, Katie & Harry (Saxon Fire), Richard Fox and Benjamin Richards.

A poem written for the Queen Mother's 90th birthday by local poet, Rosemary Jones, now over 90 years of age herself will be read, and she received a personal reply from Clarence House, it so delighted the royal recipient!

Easter English Traditions – if you're after doing something different this Easter, there are some ceremonies you might like to see (or stay well away from – your choice!)

Easter Bun Ceremony

Each year on Good Friday, a Royal Navy sailor adds another bun to the collection held within a net hanging above the bar at the Bromley by Bow public house, The Widow's Son. Local legend has it that the tradition began upon the former site of an old widow's cottage where the current 1848 built pub now stands and that the woman's only son left to go to sea, possibly during the Napoleonic Wars, and wrote to her to say that he would return home at Easter and would like to have a hot cross bun waiting for him. Unfortunately he never returned, but his mother kept his memory alive by keeping a fresh hot cross bun every Good Friday for the duration of her life. Upon her death a collection of buns was discovered in a net hanging from the ceiling of her cottage. Each year a sailor adds a hot cross bun to the many that hang already in commemoration of a poor widow who baked a bun for her only son that never returned from sea.



Nutters Dance – Bacup, Lancashire

The Bacup Nutters Dance traditionally takes place on Easter Saturday in the small Pennine town of Bacup. Each year a team of folk-dancers with blackened faces dance through the town from boundary to boundary.

Hare Pie Scramble and Bottle Kicking

At Hallaton in Leicestershire, the Hare Pie Scramble and Bottle Kicking, an unruly rugby game between the village of Hallaton and Medbourne, takes place every Easter Monday.

World Coal Carrying Championship – Nr. Wakefield in Yorkshire

Also on Easter Monday, The World Coal Carrying Championship takes place in the village of Gawthorpe, in Yorkshire. Contestants run for one mile, carrying a 50kg bag of coal.

Hocktide Tutti-men

On The second Tuesday after Easter at Hungerford in Berkshire is the annual Hocktide festival. The festival dates from the 14th century when Prince John of Gaunt gave the rights of free grazing and fishing to local 'commoners'. It has celebrated the granting of commoners' rights for over 600 years.

The day begins with the Town Crier blowing his horn, calling together the Hocktide Court in the town hall. The court elects the Constable and other officers, and two "Tutti-Men". Each "Tutti-Man" carries a tall pole with a bunch of spring flowers (a tutti) tied to it with ribbons. There is an orange on the top.



While the court continues, the "Tutti-Men" with their florally decorated poles are led through the streets by the "Orange-Man" to collect kisses from all the ladies resident in the High Street. The ladies receive an orange in return.

Brown Clee Community

Brown Clee C.E. Primary School

Danny Harley, Head Teacher Writes:

Brown Clee School Animals - Written by Brooke & Libby

Following from last month's piece on school council, this month we'll be sharing some information about some of the animals we have at Brown Clee.

These mainly fall to as the responsibility of the Year 5/6 "chicken monitors".

At Brown Clee, we have:

- x7 Chickens (Bantams)
- x6 hens and x1 cockerel
- x1 axolotl
- Several cherry shrimp
- x2 giant African land snails
- Lots of stick insects

Chickens

There are six chicken monitors: Brooke, Libby, Sophie, Matilda, Max and Cooper.

We check on the chickens every day at break and lunch time. When we do this, we check for new eggs, change the water and fill up the food. We also take them for a short walkies around their pen (for a bit of extra exercise!). We quite often have to clean out their coop - which is often quite messy and smelly - by clearing out the mess and replacing with fresh straw.



Loki - the axolotl

Loki is our axolotl (which is a "neotenic salamander", which means he keeps his gills he stays in his early life stage so that he never lives on the land). We feed Loki every Monday and Friday. His favourite food is earthworms. Loki likes to eat, so we have to make sure he doesn't get too chubby. The cherry shrimp live with Loki in his tank.



Land Snails and Stick Insects

Our land snails live in Bees and the stick insects live in Scorpions. These need regular cleaning and feeding.

We love looking after the animals and really like the fact that we are trusted to take on these responsibilities ourselves.

Brown Clee Surgery Patient Participation Group. *Tina Ranson Writes:*

Looking forward to the next meeting of the Brown Clee Patient Participation Group (PPG) on Tuesday 21st April, when we will be joined by Dr Matthews and Dr Bravey, the two new female GP Partners. It will be good to hear about their ideas for the future, and to be able to ask them questions. We are hoping to learn more about how the Brown Clee Practice will respond to the requirements of the new NHS Contract (which comes into force from 1st April). One of the new Contract requirements is to offer 'same day' appointments to those in urgent need it will be interesting to know how 'urgent need' will be determined, and what impact this might have on 'routine' care appointments.

All Brown Clee patients are welcome at this meeting, and there is no obligation to come regularly. Doors open at 6.30 pm with hot drinks if you want one, and the meeting is 7.00 - 8.00 pm.

To contact the Brown Clee PPG at any time, email: browncleppg@gmail.com

Burwarton and District Gardening Club. *Bev Harris writes:*

A sad start to March's meeting.

March's meeting began with one minute silence for personal reflection following the sad news that Dr John Bell had passed away. John and his wife Pam, were members of the club for over 30 years, and John had held club officers roles since 1993. John and Pam were keen gardeners and had a

large garden in Clee St Margaret which they often opened to raise money for charity. The club's condolences have been sent to Pam and the family.

Our speaker, Samantha Hopes, began her career as a geologist until she realised that she preferred plants to rocks. She became a student at Birmingham Botanical Gardens then moved her training to the RHS Garden Wisley, where she specialised in Rock and Alpine plants. After graduating she went to work alongside John Massey,



helping to look after his Hepatica collection at

Ashwood Nurseries. Samantha holds the national collection of Roscoea, hardy gingers, in her own garden. She explained that many plants have a story which was the focus of the talk, from where they were collected, how they are pollinated to folk law and



old wives tales. She began by telling us about Stromatalites which look like rocks; the first plants to photosynthesise around 3.2 billion years ago. Next an amusing explanation of Mare's tail, a plant unchanged for 400 million years, and how to defeat it. Samatha talked about Ginko Biloba and about Wollemia nobilis, a tree which is critically endangered in New South Wales, Australia and is so protected that not even David Attenborough is allowed to visit it. In the next section of Samantha's talk, she introduced us to three plant hunters; Frank Wingdon Ward, Reginald John Farrar and Ernest Henry Wilson. We heard the amazing and at times amusing stories of their adventures and their contributions to horticulture in the UK. We heard about plants that grow in dangerous places, like the Gladiolus flanaganii, the suicide lily, so named because of the steep cliff sides on which it grows. Samantha talked about pollination to seedlings and plants which 'come at a cost'. This included the 800 year old bonsai which sold for £1.3 million, and Galanthus 'Elizabeth Harrison' sold on ebay for £725 to Thompson and Morgan, who subsequently killed it. It is now possible to buy one single bulb for just £70. In the section of the talk, 'Plants with interesting names' sempervivum or Welcome - home -husband -however -drunk -you -be, was my favourite plant. Samantha finished the talk with examples of deadly poisonous plants; Aconites, Ageratina and Nicotiana. This was a fascinating, funny and informative talk and I have already booked Samantha to visit us again next year. If you would like to join us, please come along to Stoke St Milborough Village Hall where the door opens at 2.00pm and the meeting begins at 2.30pm. You are guaranteed a warm welcome, a nice cuppa and some delicious home bakes. If you would like more information about the gardening club, then please get in touch with me.

Bev Harris
Secretary

Burwartonanddistrictgardening@gmail.com

07933724728

Chetton Village Hall. *Sue Bayliss writes:*

Flicks in the Sticks.

Many thanks to Paul and Sarah for putting on the film 'Downton Abbey a Grand Finale' with lunch served beforehand, and thank you to those who helped. The hall was packed and everyone enjoyed the afternoon.

Our next film is 'The Roses' starring Olivia Colman and Benedict Cumberbatch, on Thursday 23rd April. The doors will open at 7pm for refreshments, with the film commencing at 7.30. Tickets £5.00. Bookings may also be made through the Art's Alive website.

The annual plants sale will be held at the hall on Sunday 17th May between 10am and Noon. Refreshments will be available. Thank you to everyone who has supported us in the past. This is a major fundraiser for us, we couldn't possibly keep the hall going without these events to top up the income from the hire of the hall which covers around half our expenses.

We hope to invest in new tableware, for which a grant has been applied, we will let you know the outcome.

All inquiries Sue on 01746 789239.

Chetton Annual Community Meeting

20th May in Chetton Village Hall from 7 pm. Talks on local topics, a special presentation and light refreshments.

From Rosie Buggins-Allsop

Friends of St John the Baptist Church Ditton Priors *Helen Groves writes:*

Thanks to everyone who supports the Friends.

There are several projects in progress at the moment including the installation of water and a toilet and improvements in the heating and lighting.

If you are interested in becoming a member at £10 a year, please contact one of our trustees.

We will be at the church fete on May 16th if you would like more information.

Debbie Lowe 01746 712368 07773 181877

Pippa Martin 07581 073474

Helen Groves 01746 712466 07969 526445

Marjorie Jones 01746 712423

Ruth Jones 01746 712029



Chetton Heritage Museum. *Shelia Millington writes:*

Don't forget the Chetton Heritage museum show in conjunction with the Midland Oil Engine Club on Sunday 17th May. A tractor run will start off proceedings at 10am. Proceeds to the Midlands Air Ambulance & St Giles Church, Chetton.

CHETTON HERITAGE MUSEUM SHOW 2026



**SUN
17TH
MAY**
9:30am to
4.30pm



**BRING ALONG YOUR OWN PRIDE
AND JOY - ON WHEELS OR WINGS**

REFRESHMENTS | FLY-INS | NEW EXHIBITS

Location:

Lower Cockshutt Farm,
Chetton, Bridgnorth,
Shropshire, WV16 6RF

What 3 words:

///repaid.syllists.tutorial

**£8 Public
Entry Fee**

Under 12s Free Entry

Cash Preferred

In support of



& St Giles' Church, Chetton

- ### Whats on
- Tractor run leaves at 10am
 - WW2 Rolls Royce Merlin engine start up - 1pm
 - Harrier Jump Jet start-up - 3.15pm
 - Aircraft displays and view of fly-ins
 - Museum open to the public
 - Refreshments, Hot Food, Ice Cream
 - Displays of running engines
 - Felix's Forge - live blacksmith demonstrations
 - Cars, bikes, military vehicles, craft stalls & bouncy castle

Tractor Run entry form, contact Tony Maiklem
Email: tonym789666@gmail.com
Late entries are accepted on the day



Contact us for more information

f @ChettonHeritageMuseum

info@chettonheritagemuseum.co.uk | 07971 535688

chettonheritagemuseum.co.uk



Scan the QR
code for all
entry forms and
to find out more

Cleobury North Village Hall. Sharon Jenkins writes:

March and April 2026

I am sure we are all looking forward to spring and seeing the sun again!! It is so nice to see the daffodils appearing, which gives hope of longer and brighter days to come.

March and April bookings include meetings; Burwarton Show Committee, Shropshire Community Health Trust, Brown Clee Football Club and several private birthday parties.

We have organized a special evening in honor of our late friend Bobbie, who loved everything about France on Saturday the 18th April 2026, from 7.00 pm. Tickets are £18.00 and can be obtained from Julia on 07790169358 and include a meal of coq au vin with crusty bread and music from Shades Of Grey. Vegetarian option will be available.

As we move forward to 2026, the Village Hall is looking to put on some local craft events, to support local crafters and makers and will continue to fundraise to ensure that the village hall continues to thrive. Also, we are looking at actioning an in-door car boot sale in the summer for local people. May I take this opportunity to thank all of our regular and new customers whose bookings help keep this vital service for the local community.

Remember if you wish to book the hall, please contact Sharon on sharonjenkins1605@yahoo.com or 07854538645.



Beautiful Magnolia by Stottesdon Church



Brown Clee from Burwarton show ground

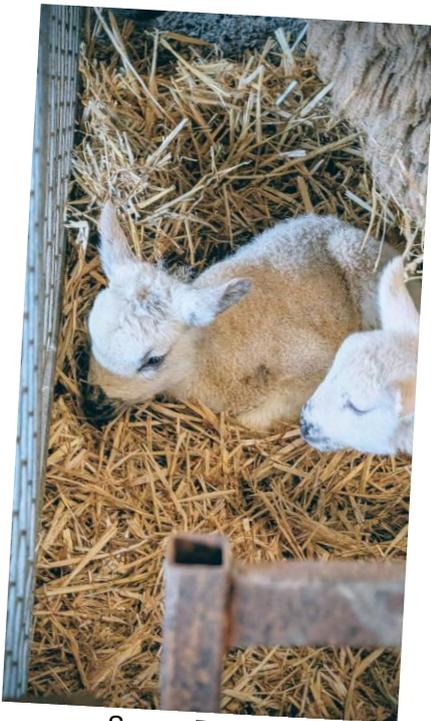
Nature in Rural Shropshire



George in the garden



Cleobury North church in spring sunshine



Sweet Dreams



The Cleees from Corvedale

Oh, là là!!

***Join us for a French inspired evening,
with live music from Shades of Grey***

Saturday 18th April

7.00pm till late

Cleobury North Village Hall



Tickets £18

***include meal of Coq au vin
with crusty bread
vegetarian option available***

****licensed bar***

****raffle***

tickets available from Julia

07790169358



Ditton Priors Local History Group. *Robin Greenwell writes:*

**The History Group's 2026 AGM will take place on Friday 17th April,
7.00pm, at Ditton Village Hall**

Please note: this is a changed date from the date advertised in last month's Wheatland News.

- This is not just any old AGM, we'll also be showing a 'Then & Now' presentation of photographs! This will feature buildings and places around the village as they were once upon a time, compared to how they are now. All welcome! * Members FREE. Non-members £4. (*Non-members will be unable to vote in the formal part of the meeting)

- Find out what's been going on with the Local History Group: Events, future plans and hear about all the work going on behind the scenes.
- We'll also have many of our new display panels on show for you to take a look at.
- If you're not already a member this is a great opportunity to join! New memberships will be taken at the end of the meeting, just £12 per person per annum - then all events are FREE throughout the year. (Free membership for under 18's too!)
- Members wishing to renew are asked to do so by bank transfer if possible before the AGM. (The Ditton Priors Local History Group, A/C No. 71395468 Sort Code 30-99-50)

Ditton Priors Halls Social Committee. *Louise Tyson writes:*



Ditton Priors Challenge Quiz Night

Friday, 24th April 2026
7.00pm
Ditton Priors Pavilion

Tickets £3.00 per person
 Available from Parker Motors
(Maximum 6 per team)
Pre-Booking Essential!

Beer Buz MOBILE BARS

Gios Pizza Italiana **From 5.00!**

Fundraising for
 Ditton Priors Pavilion & Playing Fields



The Severn Valley Group of Parishes

Rector: Revd Kina Robertshaw - Revkinarobertshaw@gmail.com

www.stmaryshighley.co.uk/st-marys-highley

Revd David Poyner, Assistant Curate - email D.R.Poyner@aston.ac.uk,

Tel 0780-100-9693 (mobile) or 01746-861121

Revd Angie Foster – Assistant Curate (in training) revangiefoster@icloud.com

St Mary, Highley <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> Carl Hinkinson	St Mary, Billingsley <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> Vacant	St Peter, Chelmarsh <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> Vacant	St Bartholomew, Glazeley <i>CHURCHWARDEN</i> Vacant
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Severn Valley Benefice Services

Good Friday 3rd April

2pm	Veneration of the cross	Chelmarsh and then Billingsley
7pm	Meditation	Highley

Easter Day, 5th April

8am	Holy Communion	Billingsley
9.30am	Holy Communion	Chelmarsh
10am	Holy Communion	Glazeley
10.30am	Holy Communion	Highley

12th April

9.30	Holy Communion	Chelmarsh
10.30	Morning service	Highley
6pm	Evening Service "Music ever divine"	Billingsley

19th April

9.30	Morning Prayer	Chelmarsh
10am	Holy Communion	Glazeley
10.30	Holy Communion	Highley

26th April

8.00am	Holy Communion	Billingsley
9.30am	Holy Communion	Chelmarsh
10.30am	Informal worship	Highley

Chelmarsh News:

As I write we are anticipating the Benefice service on Palm Sunday. There was much discussion of this at the last PCC; we did consider getting a donkey but this was deemed impractical. A lamb would have been easier to organise but this was eventually rejected, partly on the grounds that it is associated with Easter, not the Sunday before and also that it is then normally served roast on the dinner table. As I write, before the service has taken place, we are thinking of the "liturgy of the palms". This is based around a procession into the church followed by the blessing and distribution of Palm crosses. It was recorded as early as the 4th century in Jerusalem and was very popular in the Middle Ages. The outdoor procession with hymn-singing is a strong witness to our belief that the house of God is the world outside of the church door.

On Good Friday, there will be a meditation on the cross in the church from 2pm. This is largely what happened last year but this year we may extend it to take in Billingsley, which has a medieval Easter Sepulchre in its walls (see Billingsley news). Traditionally, on Good Friday, the church cross was removed from the altar, wrapped in a shroud and laid in the sepulchre to be unveiled again on Easter

morning. The plan is to hold most of the service in Chelmarsh, then drive to Billingsley with those who wish to come, to lay the shrouded cross in the sepulchre.



All our April services are listed in the table above. We have agreed to hold the annual parish meeting on Sunday 12th April after the church service. This is when the new PCC is elected and reports are produced on our activities throughout the year. All are welcome, especially those on the electoral role, who can vote in the meeting. We are looking for a churchwarden; please consider if you could take on this role.

Work in the church over the last month has included tuning the organ. Even though this is rarely played at normal services, it is needed for weddings and funerals. This time it involved some gymnastics by the tuners to crawl under the small space beneath the bellows, but I am pleased to report the work has now been done. We have also asked for a price to repair the roof of the tower, where there is a leak. Once the weather is dry enough, we will clean the slabs in front of the church and repoint them.

Billingsley News:

We had some very sad news in March; Eveline Prescott, mother of Dave, died a few days before her 80th birthday following an accident in Bridgnorth. Although Eveline lived near Warrington, she was a true friend of Billingsley. She loved to attend services and events whenever she was visiting Dave and Amanda; I will always cherish the memory of her wearing a Union Jack bowler hat to keep the sun off her when we held the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in the orchard next to the church. She was also a staunch supporter of the church through the 100 Club. Her last visit was for our Christmas Day service. We send our condolences to Dave and Amanda. Eveline, rest in peace and rise in glory!



Those who read the Wheatland News cover to cover will have seen that on Good Friday, we should have had a joint service with Chelmarsh, culminating with the laying of a shrouded cross in the tomb niche for the Easter Sepulchre at Billingsley (photo opposite). The cross will then be unshrouded at the 8am Easter Morning service at Billingsley and placed back on the altar.

By the time this appears, we will have had the first Daddy's Hat concert of the year, in Billingsley with guitarist Jonny Owen and his friends. However, our next big event is the first of our monthly evening services, which we hold from April to September, to coincide with the lighter evenings. We start on Sunday 12th April at 6pm with "Music ever divine". This is an hour of sacred music to move and uplift the spirit: like poetry, music speaks of God much more powerfully than any amount of words from a vicar. The selection has been put together by Michael Timms from Lincoln Fields, a former chorister at Lichfield Cathedral. I have heard some of his selection and it is stunning. After the service, we will have our usual refreshments.

We are continuing to organise our June local history exhibition in the church combined with a bric-a-brac sale and offering refreshments. If anyone has old photos of Billingsley and would allow us to copy them, please contact me (David Poyner).



Glazeley News:

By the time this appears, we will have had our March Service, which coincides with Mothering Sunday. This is the first time for some years we have been able to celebrate Mothering Sunday at Glazeley. It is a festival that has many guises. It is the 4th Sunday in Lent, also known as Refreshment Sunday. Refreshment Sunday originated as a kind of bank holiday to give some relief from the rigours of the Lent; a day off from fasting and horsehair shirts. As part of the break in Lent, it became the custom to give house servants the Sunday off. As such, they would return home and, because that is what everyone did in those days, they would go to their home church on the Sunday. This

was their mother church, the church that senior clergy liked to think had nurtured them and brought them up safely in the faith. The senior clergy so liked this idea that they were very happy to go along with it becoming a church festival; Mothering Sunday in honour of the church. Meanwhile, the home coming servants knew which side their bread was buttered and made sure they had a posy of flowers for their actual mothers, who had really brought them up and would be feeding them this day. Today it is an opportunity to those who have been mother-figures to us and also to remember the female side of God, who is both our father and also our mother.

Our services in April are in the table on first page of this section; please note we have Communion at 10am on Easter Day.

Our next breakfast at the Down will be on Saturday 18th April at 9am. All are welcome. The cost is £8. Please let Marion know if you want to come (07918 559043, marion.corfield@talktalk.net).

In Praise of Grave Diggers:



Yes, seriously... I have to say I have never really given our grave diggers much thought; at a funeral I turn up to find the grave dug and get on with service, with perhaps only the briefest word to the person who actually dug it. Possibly Sid Mullard, my grandfather and verger at Glazeley in the 1920s might be awaiting me to have words about this. One of his duties was to dig the graves, which he did by hand. He once told me the only time he had been really scared around the church was one summer day when he was digging a grave, only to feel he was being watched. He turned round to see a figure, hunched over the grave, staring at him. Then he realised; it being summer, he had taken his jacket off and hung it over the cross-shaped headstone of the grave in the next plot.

Today, I assumed with mini-diggers, it was all much simpler. Perhaps on good ground, in good weather it is. But our graveyards are heavy clay, where the water table is near to the surface. Recently, just before a funeral, I saw a spade moving in the grave. Approaching it, I saw the grave digger at the bottom, in shorts, standing in several inches of water, shovelling out a pile of clay where the side of the grave had collapsed. He assured me that there would be no problem; he could clear the collapse, put boards on either side of the grave and fill the bottom with straw. This was a simple job for him; the last time I had seen him before a funeral I asked him about the water and he pointed to a pump, neatly hidden under a turf sheet.

We rely on our local grave diggers. Pause and be thankful for the essential work that they do with good humour and no little skill. I also look at my grandfather in a new light.



April Fool by Clive Jackson

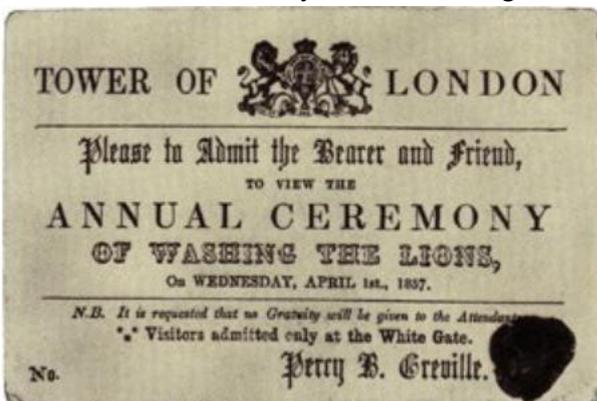
All Fools' Day, better known as April Fools' Day, is a time for the traditional playing of pranks upon unsuspecting people, with the victim being known as the April Fool. Now as you can imagine, having my birthday on April 1st meant that growing up I opened no end of wrapped up presents to find an empty box or similar. But how did All Fools' Day start?

It's generally believed the tradition can be traced back to the 16th century in France, when the beginning of the New Year was originally observed on April 1st. This was celebrated, as now, with parties and dancing and probably (knowing the French) with just a little wine. In 1582, however, during the reign of King Charles IX of France, Pope Gregory introduced a revised calendar for the Christian world and New Year fell on January 1st. Since it took some time for many people to hear word of the change, New Years Day continued to be celebrated on the first day of April in many areas. The more stubborn simply refused to accept the change.

People who had accepted the change played tricks on those who had not and referred to the victims as "April Fools". In France April 1st is known as "Poisson d'Avril" and the traditional trick is to stick a paper fish onto the victims back.

April Fools pranks migrated to Britain in the 18th Century and was introduced to the American colonies by British and French settlers.

One of the best pranks took place in Victorian times when unsuspecting gullible folk were invited to view the annual ceremony of the washing of the



lions at the Tower of London. They would make the trip to the Tower only find that, of course, there was no such ceremony and they had been sent on a fool's errand.

Some people may remember a famous April Fool prank from 1957, when the BBC program 'Panorama' apparently showed Swiss farmers picking spaghetti from spaghetti trees. The BBC received so many enquiries from viewers asking where they could buy a spaghetti plant that they had to own up to the hoax the following day!

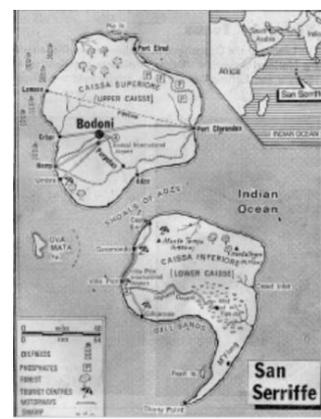


The BBC do enjoy a good prank and in 1965 they were at it again, with another famous hoax: smell-o-vision. A trial was announced whereby smells were to be broadcast along with the regular TV shows. Apparently many viewers declared the trial a great success!



Then in 2008 the pranksters at the BBC reported that during filming for their natural

history series 'Miracles of Evolution' they had captured footage of flying penguins. Presenter Terry Jones of Monty Python fame was shown walking with the penguins in Antarctica, and then following their flight to the Amazon rainforest where the penguins would "spend the winter basking in the tropical sun." The video went viral on the internet.



Front Page of the supplement

The Guardian newspaper got in on the act on 1st April 1977 with a seven-page supplement on the entirely fictitious island nation of San Serriffe.

And in this new digital world, let's not forget the internet giant Google with its annual April Fool's Day jokes. Unfortunately this was cancelled during Covid and has not resumed.

Stottesdon group of Parishes

St Mary, Stottesdon CHURCHWARDEN Clare Tibbits: 01746-718007	St Giles, Farlow CHURCHWARDENS - VACANT – please contact the key holder, Pam Phillips – 01746-718475	Holy Trinity, Sidbury CHURCHWARDEN – vacant – please contact the key holder, Andrew Sierakowski - 07934- 714149
St Mary, Cleeton St Mary CHURCHWARDEN Sue Dolphin: - 01584-890583	St John, Middleton Scriven CHURCHWARDEN - vacant – so contact Parish Rep Ann Constable 01746-789420	St Michael, Silvington CHURCHWARDEN - vacant – so contact Parish Rep Katie Hickman

Rector – Revd Dr. Sally Wallace-Jones. Email: revsamwj@gmail.com Phone: 01746 599057 / 07999 482107

Services in Stottesdon in April

Sunday, 05 April		Easter Sunday	
9.00am	Holy Communion	Revd Dr Sally Wallace-Jones	Farlow
10.30am	Holy Communion	Revd Dr Sally Wallace-Jones	Stottesdon
10.30am	Easter Celebration	Ann Constable	Middleton Scriven
Sunday, 12 April			
9.00am	Holy Communion	Revd Dr Sally Wallace-Jones	Cleeton St Mary
10.30am	Morning Prayer	Revd Dr Sally Wallace-Jones	Stottesdon
Sunday, 19 April			
10.30am	Informal Worship	Revd Dr Sally Wallace-Jones	Stottesdon
11.45am	Holy Communion	Revd Dr Sally Wallace-Jones	Sidbury
Sunday, 26 April			
9.00am	Holy Communion	Revd Sarah Lupton (TBC)	Silvington
Sunday, 03 May			
9,00am	Holy Communion	Revd Dr Sally Wallace-Jones	Farlow
10.30am	Holy Communion	Revd Dr Sally Wallace-Jones	Stottesdon

Readings for month

Thursday, 02 April 2026 Maundy Thursday	Red or White (Red if HC)	Psalm 116:1-10, Exodus 12: 1-10 and 11: 23-26, John 13: 1-17 and 31-35
Friday, 03 April 2026 Good Friday	No hangings	Psalm 22, Isaiah 52:13-53, Hebrews 10:16-25, John 18:1-19
Sunday, 05 April 2026 Easter Sunday	Gold (and White)	Psalm 118:14-24, Jeremiah 31:1-6, Acts 10: 34-43, John 20:1-18
Sunday, 12 April 2026 Second Sunday of Easter	White	Psalm 16, Exodus 14:10-end and 15:20-21, Acts 2: 14 and 22-32, John 20: 19-end
Sunday, 19 April 2026 Third Sunday of Easter	White	Psalm 116:1-7, Zephaniah 3:14-end, Acts 2: 14 and 36-41, Luke 24 13-35
Sunday, 26 April 2026 Fourth Sunday of Easter	White	Psalm 23, Genesis 7, Acts 2:42-end, John 10:1-10

News from Stottesdon



Writing on this most spectacular of spring days its easy to forget the trials and tribulations of winter. Until ofcourse there is a rude awakening when hitting a pothole. Locals are experienced 'weavers' as they shimmy around known potholes and stay on high alert for new ones. Is there no end to the skills learnt by the locals? It is rumoured that the lurking police officer is more likely to stop those driving in a straight line as opposed to the experienced and accomplished weaver. Ironically there is more than a thread of truth in this.

This is an interesting season as we experience Lent in the Christian church but also respect our Muslim neighbours who are observing Ramadan and looking forward to Ede later this week (maybe the 19th or 20th March) whilst the Christian calender looks forward to Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

The discipline of the Muslim fast, between dawn and dusk, is leant from earliest years and achieving this is a step out of childhood and into the adult world. The Chrisitan faith and many other faiths observe denial and abstinence and in this we seek a time of reflection and prayer as do our Muslim brothers and sisters. Many parts of the world are tearing themselves apart at the moment, but in faith, whichever route one takes, there are links and walkways to a better understanding of the world we all share.

The Stottesdon Benefice as a whole is continuing to celebrate the arrival of Revd. Sally as she and husband John settle into the Rectory at Stottesdon. It is hoped that she will be making contributions to the Wheatland News as time allows and all those pesky boxes get unpacked, so watch this space. A sincere welcome to them both.

Please note all Christmas wreaths will be removed from Stottesdon churchyard on the 2nd April.

News from Farlow

Caroline Bilson writes:

FEBRUARY 100 CLUB WINNERS:

Hilary Bentley	43	£20
Richard Jones	65	£10
Bryan Phillips	100	£10
Sue Henderson	93	£5
Pip and Steve Tolley	47	£5

MARCH 100 CLUB WINNERS:

Sarah Howells	51	£20
Elsie & Geoff Jordan	35	£10
Jen Lewis	80	£10
Jackie & Chris Derricutt	77	£5
Ted & Shelia	24	£5

We are pleased to welcome our new Vicar, Sally and her husband and looking forward to our Easter Service on Sunday 5th April 2026 at 09:00. Everyone welcome.

Stottesdon and District W.I.

February's meeting was cancelled due to the dreadful weather.

The next scheduled meeting in April is on Wednesday 15th April - Mystery Tasting - Chorley Village Hall

Debbie Haynes

07780113869 (debbiehaynesflp@hotmail.co.uk) - President of Stottesdon and District WI

News from Middleton Scriven

Ann Constable writes:

Middleton Scriven celebrates 9 years since the re ordering was completed giving our community the vital community space inside our little rural church. This parish no longer has a village hall and now all our events take place here.

So far this year we have held a Burns Night dinner complete with the traditional addressing the haggis. Thank you to everyone who attended this event in January and to all those who made it possible.

Then in February there was a first for Middleton Scriven community events: Souper

Saturday. We have had regular monthly coffee mornings and this was a trial event for cold winter days serving homemade soup alongside teas, coffees, cakes and biscuits.

Thank you to everyone who supported the event from our extended community. It was great to see the tables full. A massive thank you to the Souper chef Kate Teagle for delicious soups and to her and husband Alan for running the event in church.

We will aim to repeat this event again in the autumn. Watch this space for further information!



The Willows Country Cafe in Ditton Priors is looking forward to re-opening its doors again soon under the new ownership of its long-standing staff members Amanda Liddle and Karn Duvalier. The exact date of re-opening is to be confirmed pending work being done to the building.



Before then then, we're excited to be offering our lovely, supportive community real continuity of service by providing breakfast, lunch and afternoon tea and cakes at our "Pop -Up Cafe". This will be at The Pavilion in Ditton Priors, Vicarage Road, WV26 6SW every Thursday and Friday between 10-3pm until we reopen in our usual location in Station Road.

You'll always find a warm welcome and delicious, freshly baked wholesome food here with us. Please bring your friends and family and come along and say "Hello" both old and new customers alike!

All the best

Amanda & Karn

Molecule of the month; CAR-T therapies by David Poyner

I am writing this against the background of a story on the BBC news of the success of a very small trial of a new treatment for leukaemia. The news is certainly good; 82% of the patients showed significant improvement, 64% were free of the disease. Before going for the full three cheers I would want to see the results of a much bigger trial with follow-up over many years. However, the results are certainly very encouraging and are part of a much bigger story.

The trial is just the latest to exploit a number of new technologies using molecules called “chimeric antigen receptors” (CARs). An antigen receptor is a protein found on the surface of a white blood cell; its job is to detect potentially harmful proteins in the blood and neutralise them by activating the body’s immune system. This is how we normally fight infection; the antigen receptors direct the immune system to kill harmful bacteria or viruses. Sometimes it can go wrong; in hay fever, the antigen receptors recognise pollen resulting in running eyes and noses. However, the system is very important for life.

Cancer is a difficult disease to treat because it is caused when our own cells go wrong and start to multiply out of control. Leukaemia is where it is the white blood cells in our blood that are the problem. If untreated, many forms of the disease are fatal. The cancerous white blood cells do have their own unique markers on their surface, the antigens. However, because we are producing them ourselves, the particular class of white blood cells (T-cells) that could potentially recognise and kill these are programmed not to respond; antigen receptors should not recognise proteins that we ourselves make. This is where modern technology now steps in.

It is possible to change the structure of the antigen receptors that are found on the T-cells so that they do recognise the cancerous cells. This is done by a technique called “base-editing”. A blood sample is taken from the patient and the white blood T-cells are isolated (Figure 1 part 1). The antigen receptors that these make are

controlled by their DNA; the “blueprint” molecule that tells any cell exactly how it should make a protein such as an antigen receptor. By

using a technique called CAS-CRISPR (Figure 1 parts 2,3,4), we can change the DNA

blueprint so that it directs

the T-cells to make a modified antigen receptor that will now recognise a target protein on the cancerous white blood cells. This modified antigen receptor is the “chimeric antigen receptor”. The T-cells that have now been reprogrammed to produce this are put back into the patient (Figure 1 part 5). Not only will they immediately start to attack the cancer cells; they will also reproduce themselves within the patient and so will always be present to maintain the attack on the cancer cells. This should ensure that the cancer cells are completely eliminated.

This is known as CAR-T therapy; chimeric antigen receptors in T-cells. The latest reports relate to its use in just one type of cancer. It has been successfully used for a number of years in other cancers and is a major advance. This fact sheet has more information: [Chimeric antigen receptor \(CAR\) T-cell therapy | Blood Cancer United](#)

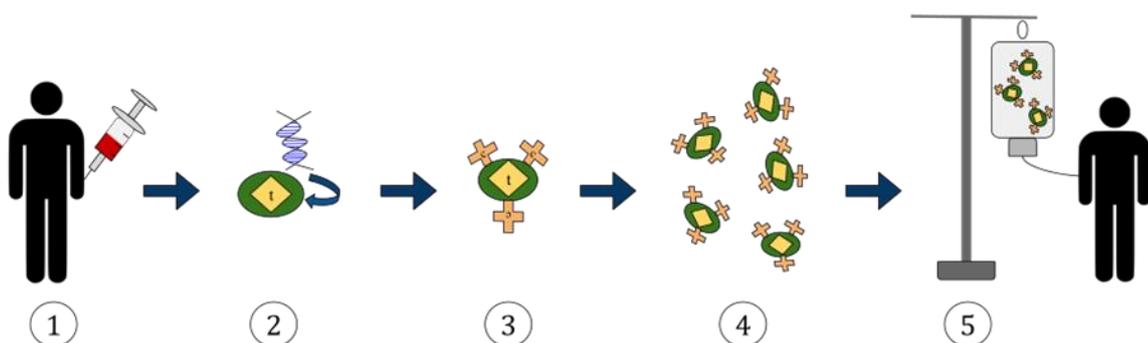
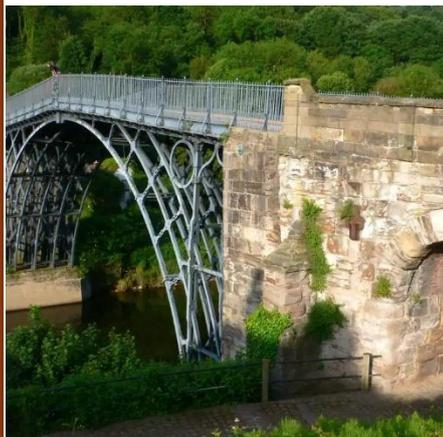


Figure 1 The process of CART therapy (Reyasingh56, CC BY-SA 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons)

Telford by Anni Holden Calver



By the time you read this I will have moved house and hopefully will be settling into my new home in Telford. Yes Telford! I add the exclamation mark because generally the surprise of friends when I mention Telford is just that. "Why are you moving there? You're joking? Telford? Now I know it's a new town but I did not realise how negative are the feelings of many Shropshire people towards this still growing town. I am going to live near my younger daughter and her family. We are down-sizing and it is going to be different from the very rural place we are leaving behind.

So what has Telford done for Shropshire in its 57 years? Is it all as bad as many people think? I discovered lots of fascinating and positive things about Telford as we searched for a home. First is the road system. Once you have the hang of it, then it's great. And for the whole county, building meant we got a little bit of motorway, the M54, connecting us to the network via the M6. One of the roads that brings in visitors to our beautiful county.

Telford is home to a World Heritage Site which I think even the most cynical person has to admit is an amazing place. Ten different sites make up the whole. The Ironbridge Gorge is more than just a bridge, being the first solid piece of iron uniting 2 banks of the River Severn. It's the longest river in the UK, meandering through our county on its way to the Bristol Channel - all 220 miles of it.

The Heritage Site marks the places that saw the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, which changed not only our country but most of the world. Abraham Darby (1678–1717) revolutionised the iron industry by using coke to smelt iron ore in a blast furnace, in Coalbrookdale. This innovation dispensed with charcoal, enabling the mass production of affordable cast iron and laid the foundation for the Industrial Revolution. Coalbrookdale church is open to visitors again after some work in the building by the way.

And there is more history in what is perceived as a 'new' town. On February 29th 1244, King Henry III signed Wellington's first market charter. It was amongst the earliest awarded in Shropshire and as a town that still boasts one of the busiest markets in Shropshire 800 years later. It's a lively market today and currently Wellington Town Council are improving the space, inside stalls and outside. Well worth shopping and eating your way around on a Saturday.



The original villages that formed the beginnings of Telford still exist, their centres being small shopping centres and entertainment places. The churches range from the medieval remains of the monastic settlement founded in 1135 in Wombridge, the building in Stirchley has Norman origins, while Madeley has a church designed by Thomas Telford himself in the late 1790s and still going strong. Many more churches were built in the 1800s as the population grew. I think I could grow to like this place a lot.

Anni Holden Calver, Secretary, Shropshire Churches Tourism Group(SCTG)

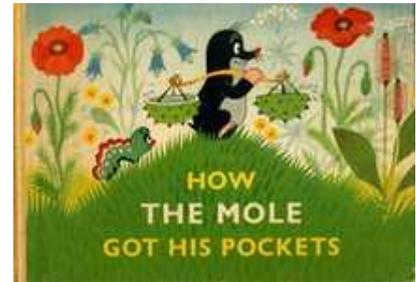
www.discovershropshirechurches.co.uk

Trustee of Caring for God's Acre and Churchyard Task Team cheerleader!

www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk

Moles in the Garden

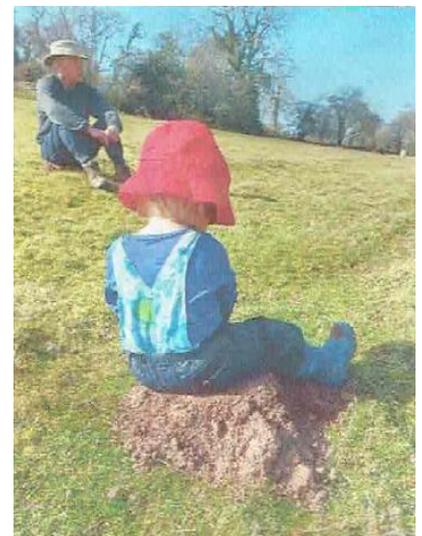
Moles are very cute small furry black creatures with remarkably human-like 'hands'. They often appear as characters in children's books, but you are unlikely to ever see one, as they are so secretive. Being fiercely territorial it is likely that the molehills you see in an average sized garden are the work of one solitary mole. They can dig up to 20 metres of tunnel in a day using their forepaws to breaststroke their way through the soil, pushing 10 kgs of soil or 100 times their bodyweight in 20 minutes. The tunnel network is designed to catch invertebrates, particularly earthworms. If left undisturbed and food is plentiful, moles will not need to make new tunnels, but they will do repairs and retreat further underground if the soil is frozen or very dry. They are active in the spring while searching for a mate and if successful a small, snug nest will be made at the end of a tunnel.



Before moving to Shropshire, we had a nearly perfect lawn and were at war with moles for 26 years. We tried various sonic repellents all to no avail. Here, we gave up the fight, but the interesting thing is that while our grass is sometimes covered with molehills, the number and activity varies considerably but there are always a few molehills that we have learned to use to our advantage.

10 Benefits of Moles in the Garden

1. Be comforted in the knowledge that your soil is healthy and full of invertebrates
2. Moles mix the soil layers and naturally enrich the soil
3. The network of tunnels naturally aerates the soil, improving lawn and beds
4. The tunnels also help to drain the soil
5. Moles feed on invertebrates which damage plants, such as leatherjackets, carrot fly and slugs
6. The crumbly, fine soil of the molehills are brilliant in acting as a mulch and a weed-free compost for planting and potting
7. When you've used the soil, the bare patches of old molehills make excellent nesting sites for solitary bees
8. Molehills are great for children with spades digging for treasure
9. They are great for small children to sit on when they have dried out a bit!
10. You never know when you might see a mole at work



Rebent

FULL FIBRE BROADBAND COMES TO STOTTESDON.

OPENREACH HAVE NOW FINISHED INSTALLING A FULL FIBRE NETWORK WITH SPEEDS UP TO 900MB (CURRENTLY THE AVERAGE IS AROUND 70MB). TO TAKE UP FULL FIBRE A NEW CABLE WILL NEED TO BE RUN TO YOUR HOUSE, AND A FAIRLY SMALL BOX, A BIT BIGGER BUT SIMILAR TO NORMAL TELEPHONE BOX WILL NEED TO BE FITTED INSIDE YOUR HOUSE. WHICH DOES REQUIRE A SMALL HOLE FOR THE CABLE TO BE DRILLED. CONTACT YOUR NETWORK PROVIDER IF YOU WANT TO TAKE UP FULL FIBRE.

Notes

Recipe: Hot Cross Buns by Steve Lacey

Ingredients:

500g Flour (plain or bread flour)
70g Sugar
60g Butter
20g fresh yeast OR 7g of dried yeast
1 Egg
1 Teaspoon Salt (keep this well away from the yeast)
300ML Warm Milk
Zest of 1 Lemon
1 tsp Cinnamon
1 tsp Mixed Spice
150 g Dried Fruit (of your choice)



Instructions:

Mix into a nice soft slightly sticky dough, a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook is ideal for this. Mix for about 12 mins. The dough will firm up a little once the fruit is added.

Once nice dough is formed, add the fruit and mix for a couple of minutes to clear the fruit.

Tip onto a lightly floured surface and lightly shape into a round, place in a bowl, cover and put in a warm place for 45/50 minutes or until doubled in size.

Tip out onto lightly floured surface, gently knock out the air and divide into 12 equal pieces. Cover and leave to rest for a few minutes.

Gently shape into nice smooth round buns and place on baking tray, cover and put in a warm place for 50/60 minutes or until doubled in size.

Whilst the buns are proving make the crossing mix by putting 70g of flour with sufficient water to make a nice smooth paste.

When the buns are ready, pipe a cross onto each bun and place in a preheated oven, 190c (fan) for 18 to 24 minutes or until a lovely golden colour. (May need to turn the tray round during baking)

Whilst the buns are baking, put a couple of spoonfuls of Apricot jam with a drop of water in a bowl, mix together and brush on top of the buns immediately from the oven and allow to cool.

Spice levels and fruit level may be increased but using too much will have an impact on the yeast and standing times.

If you don't know Steve from Ditton Priors, he is a wonderful baker. I've been lucky enough to have tasted several of Steve's cakes and pastries, last year he also won first prize at the Burwarton Show for his soda bread. He works part time at Steeles bakery in Church Stretton and when he makes his Eccles cakes they are often broadcast on several community pages and it doesn't take long for them to sell out!

If you follow Steve's instructions, you're sure to get tasty hot cross buns.

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Bridgnorth, WV16 6UF (CharlesEGill@aol.com) or contact your Distributor if known

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If you do not currently receive a printed copy, please consider asking for a printed copy, we do get some economies of scale when printing. This helps to price to a reasonable amount. Thank You.

					7			
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			9					

Simple: Target 30 mins

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Difficult: Target 1 hours

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2	7				4			
				1				
		9	3					1

Fiendish: Target 2 hours

Brown Clew Shrops Councillor	George Hollyhead - george.hollyhead@shropshire.gov.uk . – Shropshire Council.
Brown Clew Surgery PPG	Brown Clew Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) - email BrownClewPPG@gmail.com , or call Chair Tina Ranson on 01584-878707.
Brown Clew Walkers	Meeting Place for walks - Ditton Priors Church. 01746-712662
Burwarton & District Garden Club	Meets on the 2 nd Thursday of each month from October to June at 2:15pm at Stoke St Milborough VH. Contact burwartonanddistrictgardening@gmail.com , or Sec Bev Harris on 07933-724728
 Chelmarsh Bowling	Outdoor bowling in summer (Tuesday evening & Wednesday afternoon), indoor in the winter (Tuesday evenings 7:00 – 9:00pm) at Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Contact from Stan Chapman, 01746-862424
Chelmarsh Games Group	Mainly Canasta and Scrabble! Thursdays at 2:00pm in the Parish Hall. Contact Sue Jakeman on 07531-008876.
Chelmarsh Jubilee Club	Meet at Chelmarsh Sports & Social Club – contact Shell Russon on 07903-162408 for more information
Chelmarsh Parent & Toddler Group	Every Tuesday during term time 9.30 – 11.30 Chelmarsh Parish Hall. Contact Pam Baker 07846-692323
 Chelmarsh Parish Hall	Available for hire - booking@chelmarshparishhall.co.uk
Chelmarsh Walking Group	Contact Jen Everitt on 01746-862858 for more information.
Chetton & Glazeley WI	Meets in Chetton Village Hall on the 2 nd Wednesday of the month 7.30pm. For enquiries re trying a session or two and membership please contact Elisabeth Buggins, Secretary - Phone: 07855 018288 Email: elisabeth@buggins.com
Chetton Village Hall	Enquiries - Sue on 01746-789239
 Chorley Village Hall	Available for Hire (fully equipped kitchen, digital projection equipment and large screen) contact 07726-763883
Cleobury North Village Hall	Enquiries and Bookings – NEW CONTACT - Sharon Jenkins - Tel no: 07854-538645 or 01746-787220
 National Centre for Domestic Violence	https://www.ncdv.org.uk/contact/ Call 08448-044999. Website gives advice and other means of getting help.
Daddy's Hat Music & Poetry	Contact on 01746-787419 – leave a message and you will get a call-back!
Ditton Priors Art Group	Village Hall Wednesday morning (except Christmas) 9.30 – 12.30pm all welcome Various visual art forms eg Water Colour, Oils & Acrylics. Contact Gloria Blair on 07794-225532
 Ditton Priors History Group	Please contact paul.wilson8992@gmail.com
 Ditton Priors Ladies' Friendship Group	Please contact Jo on 07837-048525
Ditton Priors Village Hall	Bookings - 07766 392 105 - dittonpriorshalls@gmail.com
Knowle Sports Club	Second hand sales held every first Saturday of the month, 7.30am – 11am proceeds to Children's Football Field 01584-890644
 Little Explorers Pre-School Ditton Priors	Open Monday to Friday 9.00am – 3.00pm. Contact 01746-712506 littleexplorers.ditton@gmail.com
 Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride	Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride Transport Services https://www.shrewsbury-dialaride.co.uk – 01743-450270 Mon-Fri 09:30 – 15:00, Corvedale Buzzard – 01584-700907
 Short Mat Bowling – Ditton Priors	Ditton Priors Village Hall Every Tuesday afternoon 2:00 – 4:00pm Wednesday 7:30-9:00pm. Everyone is welcome - try at no charge. Contact Clive Jackson on 01746-718046
 Stottesdon & District W.I.	Meets in various venues on the third Wednesday in each month details from Helena Hale 01746-718012 or Clare Tibbits 01746-718007
 Stottesdon Gateway Nursery	Pre-school, holiday club and wraparound sessions. An integral part of Stottesdon Primary School, Contact 01746-718769
 Tae kwon-do	Eardington Village Hall Thursday, 5:15pm. Contact Neil Morris 07969-996055

The Back Page

Many of us will be buying Easter eggs. The giving of Easter eggs, also called Paschal eggs, can be traced to early Christians of Mesopotamia, and from there it spread into Eastern Europe and Siberia through the Orthodox Churches, and later into Europe through the Catholic and Protestant Churches. Additionally, the widespread usage of Easter eggs, according to mediaevalist scholars, is partly due to the prohibition of eggs during Lent after which, on Easter, they are blessed for the occasion



The practice of decorating eggshells is quite ancient with decorated, engraved ostrich eggs found in Africa which are 60,000 years old. In Egypt and the early cultures of Mesopotamia and Crete, eggs were associated with death and rebirth, as well as with kingship, with decorated ostrich eggs, and representations of ostrich eggs in gold and silver, were commonly placed in graves of the ancient Sumerians and Egyptians from 5,000 years ago. These cultural relationships may have influenced early Christian and Islamic cultures in those areas, as well as through mercantile, religious, and political links from those areas around the Mediterranean.

Chocolate eggs first appeared at the court of Louis XIV in Versailles in 1725 by filling empty chicken eggshells with molten chocolate. In 1873, J.S. Fry & Sons produced the first hollow chocolate egg making a smooth paste that could be poured into egg moulds. Manufacturing their first Easter egg in 1875, Cadbury created the modern chocolate Easter egg after developing a pure cocoa butter that could be moulded into smooth shapes.



In Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Russia, Ukraine, and other Central European countries' folk traditions, Easter eggs are carved from wood and hand-painted, and making artificial eggs out of porcelain for ladies is common, but the best known (and by far the most valuable) artificial eggs were made by the Fabergé firm for the two last Russian Tsars and are regarded as masterpieces of decorative arts. Most of these creations themselves contained hidden surprises such as clockwork birds, or miniature ships.



Easter egg hunting is now popular where chocolate eggs are hidden for children to find, Egg rolling is also a traditional Easter Egg game played with eggs at Easter. This tradition was taken to the New World by European settlers, and continues to this day with an Easter egg roll on the White House lawn first performed in 1878 with the presidency of Rutherford Hayes. Now come on everyone, who wouldn't like to see President Trump rolling an easter egg, I'm sure he would be "the greatest easter egg roller ever"!

While I certainly wouldn't say no if someone offered me a Fabergé egg, I'll hopefully be getting at least one chocolate egg at Easter.

Have a happy Easter everyone!