



*The Newsletter for
Clungunford
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THE GUNNAS GAZETTE

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A Happy New Year to all our Readers

Pantomime and Hall Events and Covid

Unfortunately, due to the current Covid situation we have decided that we have to cancel the Saturday night dances until further notice and to postpone the planned pantomime, A Clungunford Christmas Carol.

We will resume events as soon as possible.

All events in the Hall will be subject to Covid regulations as they may change from time to time.

If you have any questions then please contact Simon or Elizabeth Lyster on 01588 660152.

A message from Rev Martin Quayle

At the time of writing, we are at the solstice, and the weather is vile. It is wet and hand-numbingly cold. The New Year is a week and a half away, and the knowledge that winter will be with us for a few months and several weeks to come, is not encouraging. In our national life, Coronavirus has returned, and the prospect of further lock-downs and restriction on our liberties is a less than cheerful prospect.

However, seasons are part and parcel of our world. We pass through the solstice, and the light returns. Days lengthen, the air will gradually warm, and we know instinctively and intuitively, that life returns to the fields and gardens which surround us. In the same way, good times follow bad. Metaphorically, day follows night. We will find times ahead when we will be happy, and there will be a glow of optimism, both in our communities and our homes.

One of the things which is endearing about our churches, is the realisation that as generations have come and gone, is that individuals and families have returned, week after week, season after season, to reflect, pray and to worship. Those things which are of God are eternal and last, and pass from generation to generation. Our church at Clungunford has stood for hundreds of years, and we are just 'passing through', and will hand over a legacy to those who follow.

Regardless of what we find as individuals inside these buildings, they remind each of us that we are small dots in the spectrum of time. Those events that may seem overwhelming to us, are possibly not so significant when compared to the trials and tribulations of former generations. Each of us has something to contribute, and equally, as we reflect when we are inside these remarkable buildings, each of us has something to receive back from them. They are monuments not just to God, but also to the human spirit, life and the endearing nature of our communities.

I wish each of you a healthy and optimistic New Year.

Martin

Probably the best Gazette photos of 2021!



Anthea, Debbie, Angus and Max turned out to sing carols to Paula Williamson. For those who may not know, Paula has single handedly been responsible for all our solus illustrations (i.e. the drawing at the top of page 1) since the first edition of The Gazette, which celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2022.



The Farming Notes

Christmas is over, decorations are down by Twelfth Night; of course, we don't want to encourage any bad luck!

Grandma is sat by the fire adding the holly sprigs to the already blazing logs and we are all convinced the chimney will catch fire. Well, there is a beam halfway up the chimney which surely must ignite anytime soon?

To our disappointment nothing so exciting happens, and Grandma calmly pokes away at the fire to encourage the holly to burn away quickly.

After the decorations have been packed away and the tree dragged outside, shedding its needles on the way, we then experience the fun of getting pine needles out of our socks for weeks.

Outside the farm work goes on as always, day in, day out, the animals still have to be fed and kept comfortable, the cattle are now inside, in the safety and warmth of the buildings. There is more work involved as all their food has to be taken to them and their bedding supplied. The sight of all the cattle settled down & snoring gently as they lie contentedly on a fresh bed of straw is a joy to see.

The cattle are fed hay & chopped mangolds and swedes, I used to love to help myself to some of the chopped swede. Clean off the bits of soil & eat the fresh and juicy swede – delicious!

The feed would be supplemented with chopped straw, made by pushing straw sheaves through a straw chopper – driven by a motor.

They also were given sugar beet pulp which came from chopped, shredded, and dehydrated residue from extracting the sugar from the sugar beets which were grown on the farm, sent to the factory by train to Allscott near Shrewsbury, then bought in.

Swedes were chopped with a swede chopper. The swedes were fed into a hopper and a blade revolved (much like a food processor with a huge cheese grater attached, but hand turned), this was too much for a small child to "help" with. When I was older, I wished I wasn't capable as it was such hard work!

The sheep stayed out throughout the year and their extra rations had to be taken out to the fields to feed them as the grass does not grow during the cold winter months. They were given hay in sheep cratches (a sort of mobile manger) and oats. As a small helper I had to be quick on my feet to get out of the way of the eager sheep rushing to be first at the troughs where the oats were poured from sacks. If you fell over then the sheep just trampled over the top of you pressing you deeper into the mud!

My grandfather kept 3 horses, two greys, one called Duke who had an impressive moustache and the other was called Dragon. The third horse was a smaller brown one called Tom. He was my favourite, and I was sometimes allowed to ride him home at the end of his days work, he was always gentle with me.

M.E.B.

Sister B adds another ancient remedy:-

How to Cure Colic in Medieval Times.

“To void wind that is the cause of colic, take cumin and anise, of each equally much, and lay it in white wine to steep, and cover it over with wine and let it stand still so three days and three nights. And then let it be taken out and laid upon an ash board for to dry nine days and be turned about. And at the nine days end, take and put it in an earthen pot and dry over the fire and then make powder thereof. And then eat it in pottage or drink it and it shall void the wind that is the cause of colic.”

(sounds a bit long-winded to me!!!)

In the Garden

A cloudy, drizzly day in Clungunford, and as my plans for the Yule Tide celebrations have been put on hold by the latest manifestation of Covid, I'm at my computer, musing on the ways people used to celebrate the season instead.

Perhaps it's time for a return to some of the customs carried out for centuries, but ignored in modern times, which people used to believe ensured the correct turn of the seasons and the balance with nature which seem to be missing these days. Beginning with the celebration of the passing of the shortest day, perhaps.

The Romans called their week-long mid-winter feast, Saturnalia, after the vegetation god, Saturn, they dedicated it to, and it was from them that the custom of decorating homes with evergreens was inherited.

The practice was later adopted by the Christian Church, but with reservations. Holly, considered to be the home of woodland spirits, was not allowed into the house until Christmas Eve, when it was made into wreaths with other accepted evergreens such as ivy, yew or rosemary. Sometimes the four would be combined into 'kissing bushes' suspended from the ceiling if mistletoe was scarce.

Even older than Saturnalia was the Scandinavian sun festival they called Yule, which lasted twelve days and celebrated the passing of the shortest day.

The Yule log, often the trunk of an ash tree, was brought in from the woods and lit in the farmer's hearth with a piece of tinder saved from the previous year's Yule fire to conserve the continuity of the flame. Sometimes an ashen faggot, made of ash twigs and small branches bound together with withies, and as much as eight foot long and weighing over a hundredweight, was substituted for the Yule log. As the withies snapped in the flames drinks were handed round and divinations made. Often people would go outside to look up at the sky, hopeful for a glimpse of Woden, principal god of the Norse people, who was believed to hurtle across the sky at night in his chariot, bringing gifts to his faithful followers during this season.

In the garden, on Christmas Eve, if you're out there looking for Woden anyway, why not take a moment to

also look out for the very unseasonal fragrant white flowers of *Myrrhis odorata*, Sweet Cicely, which another legend tells us blooms for a very short time on that day.

Brian Taylor

Flicks in the Sticks at Clungunford Parish Hall

Friday 21st January 2022 at 8pm

Ammonite (cert 15)

Mary Anning, an acclaimed fossil hunter, is forced to care for a rich visitor's sick wife, and the two develop an intense bond that forces the two women to re-examine their relationship.

Starring: Kate Winslet, Saoirse Ronan, and Fiona Shaw

Director: Francis Lee

Romance-Drama

Friday 18th February 2022 at 8pm

Finding Your Feet (cert 12)

After Sandra learns about her husband's affair, she escapes to her sister's house in London where she meets new people who help her cope with the situation.

Starring: Imelda Staunton, Celia Imrie, Timothy Spall, and Joanna Lumley

Director: Richard Loncraine

Comedy-Romance

Entrance £5.00 Adults £3.00 Children

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

Tel: 01588 660781 (Maureen)

(maureenrooney2012@gmail.com) or 01588 660159

(Keith) for bookings and enquires.

We now show all our films with subtitles

We advise booking, and request cash only at the Box Office.

Card payments accepted at the bar. Please wear a mask on arrival, and when seated for the film

Parish Church News

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

The planned Services for St Cuthbert's Church, Clungunford in the Middle Marches Benefice for January and February 2022 are as follows:

Sunday January	9 th	10.00 am	Family Service
Sunday January	16 th	10.00 am	Morning Prayer
<i>Sunday January</i>	<i>23rd</i>	<i>11.00 am</i>	<i>Holy Communion with the Revd Martin Quayle</i>
Sunday February	13 th	10.00 am	Family Service
Sunday February	20 th	10.00 am	Morning Prayer
<i>Sunday February</i>	<i>27th</i>	<i>11.00 am</i>	<i>Holy Communion with the Revd Martin Quayle</i>

The above services are planned based on the covid restrictions at the end of December. There are hand sanitising points in the Church and masks are provided for those who may have forgotten to bring one. During services the windows are open, and doors left ajar to enable maximum ventilation. Guidelines may change and we will review these precautions in the light of the latest guidelines. We are following every measure to make visiting and worshipping in St Cuthbert's Church safe and accessible to all.

Don't forget St Cuthbert's Café

Cakes, tea and coffee continue in 2022!

Just a reminder of the dates for St Cuthbert's Café in the Village which starts at 10.00 am and runs through until 12.00. The dates for January and February are:

- Thursday 13th January
- Thursday 27th January
- Thursday 10th February
- Thursday 24th February

The intent of the café is to provide a meeting opportunity. Everyone is welcome in the comfortable surroundings of the Clungunford Village Hall.

Many thanks to those who joined us in observing two minutes silence on Remembrance Day. In total we raised £70 for the ***Poppy Appeal***.

Rob Rees and Sara Giffen have taken on the responsibility of organising the café but all help is appreciated by providing a hand on the day or baking cakes! If you would like to help please contact Rob or Sara.

Please come along and enjoy the company.

Christmas Events

Thanks to all who supported us over the Christmas Season!

The Great Clungunford Christmas Tree Celebration

What an event! Such creativity! Such talent!.....and the winner chosen by vote on the day was the Rectory Court Tree with the theme of Paula Williamson's memories. Well done to the team who created the masterpiece.

It was a wonderful afternoon with the decorating of Christmas trees and children's activities accompanied by a fine selection of cakes, savouries, teas and coffees. Around ninety villagers and friends passed through the door to view and participate. One of the most welcome guests was Father Christmas who showed his appreciation by distributing sweets to the children.

Thank you to all who participated and helped to make this a lovely village occasion.

Twelfth night is on Wednesday the 5th January. ***Please can all those who dressed a tree collect their decorations on or around the 5th***. If you are unable to do this, please can you let one of the Church Wardens know so that they can 'undress' the tree and return the decorations and lights to you.

The Christmas Concert

The Christmas Concert was a great opportunity for many of us to experience some wonderful music live for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic. Robert Bunting brought together a choir and group of musicians to fill the Church with a selection of music based on English rural tradition. Robert was joined by Alistair Auld playing two pieces on our celebrated Binn's organ. Our thanks go to all the performers and especially to Robert.

The profits from the concert went to support the ***Food Bank*** in Craven Arms.

The Christingle Service

A Christingle is an orange with a red ribbon tied around it, four cocktail sticks with fruit on them stuck into the orange, and a candle stuck in the middle. Christingle Services came into popularity in the 1960's as a way of raising money for the Children's Society. The service can be run at anytime during December through to February, and we held our service on the 12th December. The collection of £55 was sent to the ***Children's Society***. Thank you for your support.

If you would like to know what the parts of the Christingle represent – come along next year to the service and help support a very worthy charity!

A Christmas Poetry Special and Christmas Carols at the Village Hall Bar Night

Anna Dreda worked her magic in a candlelit Church with fellow poetry enthusiasts who read a wonderful selection of Christmas poetry. Complete with the Christmas trees and decorations, it was a lovely occasion made more so by mulled wine and eats.

The Ludlow Band joined us in the Village Hall for Bar night and to lead the singing of Christmas Carols. The evening exercised not only the Band's talents but also the vocal chords of villagers and friends. Our thanks to Ludlow Band for helping us celebrate Christmas.



Anna Dreda at the Christmas Poetry Special

The Slow Ladies

Friday 21 January. A local walk via Rowton, Aston-on-Clun and back over the hill to Clungunford.

If you feel you may be hungry, bring a coffee and/or snack which we could eat/ drink at the picnic table behind A-on-C village hall. Meet at 10am in Clungunford car park.

Friday 4th February . Lingen - Brampton Bryan

We will walk start at Lingen, climb up Harley's Mountain and then walk through the Harley estate back to Brampton Bryan where we can have refreshments at Aardvark Books. Cars will be organised nearer the time.

Please email Pauline to express an interest to help with organisation, thanks (paulinemattison@aol.com). *Hope you can make it! Hilary White*

All are welcome to join us. *Pauline Mattison* (01588 660596)

Postcard from Africa

Reading through the *Postcard* that I wrote at this time last year, with slight tweaking, I could repeat it here and it would still be largely relevant. Two overarching issues continue to challenge the continent: climate change and Coronavirus, with very little signs of any kind of progress made to mitigate against them.

One aspect of climate change that experts agree on is that globally we will all be experiencing more extreme weather "events". The wildfires in California, the tornado that caused so much damage in Haiti and the typhoon that recently devastated some of the islands of the Philippines are evidence of this. Europe was not spared either, with enormous damage done by heavy summer rains in Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium. Parts of Africa are suffering from similar extremes: Zambia, Mozambique and Angola, have experienced three years of continuous drought and subsequent crop failure. More than 10 million people, many of them children, are facing food insecurity and will be counting on relief assistance for their survival. Meanwhile, in neighbouring South Africa, torrential rain in the Eastern Cape region has recently caused serious damage and forced thousands of people to abandon their homes. A similar contrast exists in East Africa: Ethiopia has experienced six years of continual drought while in neighbouring South Sudan, huge damage has been done to people's livelihoods through a second year of heavy rain and flooding.

Just two months ago, the world came together, in Glasgow, to try to "fix" the climate crisis. Many civil society delegations from countries most vulnerable to climate change attended but the decisions were made without their voices being heard. They represented the people who will be directly affected on a daily basis by changing weather patterns, by the impact of continuing deforestation and pollution arising from industrialisation. The overall objective of COP 26 was to reach agreement on limiting the global temperature rise, expected to take place between now and 2050, to 1.5^o C. Even if that can be achieved, which is very doubtful, the impact of that modest rise in temperature will still be a threat to the lives and livelihoods of tens of millions. An adequate response strategy to prolonged droughts, floods and rising sea levels has yet to be found.

Parallel to this is the challenge to find an adequate response to Coronavirus that is accessible to poorer countries. Scientists say that the answer is quite simple: vaccinate everyone, because "no one is safe until we are all safe". There is an adequate stockpile of vaccine globally, but distribution is far from equitable. While the UK government boasts that around 90% of the population here have been vaccinated, the figure is less than 10% in much of Africa. WHO reported in September that they were short of 400 million doses of vaccine to reach their target of 40% of the African population in 2021. If the emergence of new variants such as omicron is going to be prevented in 2022, there has to be a greater willingness to share vaccines than has been apparent in 2021.

One piece of very good news for Africa that has emerged in 2021 is that a vaccine against malaria in children has been developed and approved for use. Malaria is still one of the most common causes of infant mortality in Africa and although administering the four doses that are required to achieve immunity will be

difficult, it is the first major breakthrough in tackling the disease that has been made for many years.

And finally, on a very sad note, in recent days the death was announced of Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, a charismatic figure in the struggle against apartheid. A jovial man by nature, he spoke out very forcefully against injustice, no matter who was the perpetrator. There are few individuals from Africa remaining now who command the same kind of respect internationally that the Archbishop, and before him, Nelson Mandela did, and the continent of Africa is poorer for it.

Rob Rees

The 100 Club

Winners for November:

1. (£60) Sally Price
2. (£30) Sophie Cook for Cressida
3. (£15) Susanna Rocke

Winners for December:

Special £100 prize draw: Isabel Jones

1. (£60) Julia Gell
2. (£30) Owen Bywater
3. (£15) Neville Rollason

If you would like to join (£5 per month by cheque (minimum 6 months) or even better by standing order), phone Maureen Rooney (01588 660781) or Mike Jones (01588 661145) or Jim Bason (01547 540782).

The Gunnas Gazette by email

We are making genuine progress in reducing the number of printed copies of *The Gazette* delivered.

However, there is still more that can be achieved, so if you can receive your Gazette by email, please sign up to do so by sending an email to gunnasgazette@aol.com.

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

The Parish Council

There is little to report from our meeting of 10 November. The vacant parish clerkship was discussed, and subsequent discussions give us hope that we may be able to make an appointment soon.

At a supplementary meeting of the planning sub-committee a week later we gave our consent to the removal of two ash trees at Rectory Court, adjacent to the site of the new build house. The residents of Rectory Court had previously intimated their lack of objection.

Our next meeting is on 12 January 2022 at 7pm. This meeting will be held live in the Hall. Interested members of the public, as ever, are welcome to attend. Parish matters before (or after) the meeting may be raised via clungunfordparishcouncil@gmail.com or directly with me. *Jonathan Roberts*, Chairman (01588 660673: jonathan.roberts@morgoedestates.com).

The latest spike in Covid 19 on the back of the Omicron variant came too late for discussion, but it goes without saying that if restrictions are imposed and you (or anyone you know) has difficulties because of them, the Parish Council will be ready to assist in any way it can in the same way as during the initial lock-down.



The Crib Service at St Cuthbert's



Christmas Poetry



The Great Christmas Tree Battle

Top left: the winning tree in course of preparation

Top right: quiet, understated confidence!

Left: ebullience, bordering on over- confidence

Bottom: going for it flat out

