HOPE NEWSLETTER

November 2026

Remembering those we have lost

As I write, November is approaching—a time to remember those we have lost, both this year and in years gone by. As a Church, we mark this season with All Souls Day and Remembrance Sunday. Please join us at any of the following gatherings if you feel able.

- All Souls Day: 1 November at St Georges, Pontesbury, at 4 p.m.
- Remembrance Sunday: 8 November at Hope Church, at 9 a.m.
- Remembrance gathering: 11 November at the memorial in Bentlawnt, at 11 a.m., led by Rev Greg.

Looking back on summer

This season of remembrance also prompts me to look back over the past few months. I have enjoyed the long summer days, with their warmth and light. Yet I know that this summer's heat and drought have been a real challenge for many, especially those in our farming community and anyone who struggles with high temperatures.

Celebrating harvest and giving thanks

I am always amazed that, despite the challenges each year's weather brings—whether too wet or too dry—our farmers still manage to bring the harvest home. Across our benefice, we have held several services to celebrate the harvest and thank God for His provision.
Our annual harvest supper at the village hall was an especially enjoyable evening, and I would like to add my thanks to everyone who made it possible. I enjoyed meeting some of you for the first time and was touched by your warm welcome. My only regret is that I did not have the chance to speak with everyone.

With every blessing.
Rev Ian Williams.
Revian01@outlook.com

The Sabrina Mobile Library Visits Hope Village Hall on Route 3, alternate Wednesdays from 1pm - 1.50pm

Next Dates are: **11th & 25th November**

There is a map of all the routes and stops on Shropshire's website:
https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/libraries/mobile-libraries

Don't forget the Post Office Van calls at

Hope Village Hall

Every Thursday at 10.15am



Remembering Geoff Sambrook



Hope Village Hall and your local history group is honoured to pay respects to Geoff Sambrook, who must have been the oldest person in our community, who died on 1st September 2026 at the age of 96, and we are very grateful for his family for sharing the following, which formed part of the eulogy given at Worthen Church on 25th September.

He was born Richard Geoffrey Sambrook on 15th July 1930, into a farming family at Luckley, as the second son of Walter and Dora Sambrook and brother to Alan, Lucy and Amy. He attended Bromlow School and walked there and back twice a day (going home for dinner). Geoff said he didn't learn much at school; a bit about the weather and how to spell his name and Mississippi, and he left school 6 weeks before his 14th birthday, in 1944.

Geoff attended Meadowtown Sunday School and chapel services in the early years of his life and he was 9 years old when the war broke out. In the 1940s the family started attending Worthen Chapel, to prevent it from closing, and went on two Sunday School trips, one to Aberystwyth and one to Manchester Zoo.

Geoff saw a lot of changes in his 96 years. All of the years they milked on the farm it was Geoff who would take the milk churns down the mile long track from Luckley to meet the milk lorry on Leigh Road, but this ended in 1978 and then the farming changed to suckler cows and sheep. In his early days all of the farming was done with horses at Luckley but when Geoff was 18 the family's first tractor was purchased, a brand new Fordson Major, of which Geoff was to become the main driver. Other new tractors were bought over the years ending in 1978 with a new 4-wheel drive International. For some reason Geoff called it Ethel and it was his pride and joy and it is doubtful that his brother Alan ever got a chance to drive it.

It wasn't until 1960, when Geoff was 30, that mains electricity came to Luckley. Up until that time the cows were all milked by hand, with oil and tilly lamps used for lighting. Seasonal jobs such as harvesting and threshing corn with the help of neighbours and planting and lifting potato crops for selling locally kept everyone busy through the year.

All of the family loved singing and in 1951 Geoff joined the Pontesbury male voice choir on Tuesday evenings. Then in 1955, he also joined the Worthen choral society on Monday evenings and in the Autumn and Winter he sang with the Newtown choral society on Wednesday evenings, to be ready for the '1,000 voices festival' in May. Pontesbury male voice choir finished in 1959 but in 1961 the men joined with the ladies' choir and the name changed to, The Rea Valley Choir. They went out and about everywhere, giving concerts once a month in aid of village halls, Churches, Chapels and even raised funds for local football teams. Geoff stopped singing and focused on other duties for a while but was asked to return in 1982 and remained with The Rea Valley Choir until it disbanded in October 2004.

During this time Geoff had sung in over 60 different venues including:
Shrewsbury Castle, The Lion Hotel, The Gateway, both the Darwin and Pride Hill shopping centres and Rackhams store; and sang in over 200 concerts.

In the late 50s Geoff acquired a battery powered gramophone and had a wide selection of records, ranging from The Elizabethan Serenade, a light music composition, to the Laughing Policeman.

Geoff's biggest adventures were going, by train and ferry, to the TT races in the Isle of Man in 1951 with his friends Ken Gunnery and Colin Passant; and then again, for a week's stay in 1954 with his friend Stan Gough, riding pillion on his motorbike with no helmets. He was proud of the fact that since then he had always slept in his own bed for the last 72 years.

Through the 80s the farming continued much the same but with the thought of retirement looming the decision was taken to demolish and rebuild the old family home at Bromlow and this was completed in 1992. Thereafter Alan, his wife Ruby, and Geoff moved into the newly built house, meaning that Geoff retired at the grand old age of 62. With only a few sheep and 23 acres to look after Geoff had time to spare to help others, which he willingly did.

Geoff's elder brother Alan passed away in April 1999, leaving Geoff as man of the house and he cared for Ruby with the support of his niece, Miriam, until 2009. Since then, Geoff lived on his own, although he wasn't at home much, taking on his new role as egg packer up at Rowley. The fact that when he arrived there each day, he'd have a cup of tea and biscuits or crisps, followed by dinner at 1 o'clock sharp and then either sandwiches or beans on toast before he went home might have been the main reason he showed up 6 days a week. Then of course on Sundays he would always be ready for his Sunday roast that Miriam would bring him and this, along with her dedicated care and support, enabled Geoff to remain at his home until his passing on 1st September 2026.

Geoff was very proud to be Uncle to several generations of the family, but he was also known as 'Uncle Geoff' to many others. Geoff enjoyed trips out, with his nephew Roy, visiting the new Livestock market, going round the Wrekin, his trip to the Horseshoe Pass and, on his first time travelling on the M54, commented about how fast they travelled and what would happen if a wheel came off. He also enjoyed the family's horses in the field next to the house, making sure they had their Polos every day, especially Rupert, the little Shetland.

To sum up Geoff, despite his limited education was full of 'useless' information, remembering people's mispronunciations, was good at geography and prided himself on remembering many people's birthdays and ages. but most importantly he was a man who loved his God and worshipped Him as often as he could.

He will be greatly missed.

[This eulogy reflects a background that was common to the farming community of the area during the middle to late C20 and is an important social history record of the area.]

Come to the Gathering! An evening of Praise, singing and Christian Fellowsip
Third Thursday of the month at Marton Village Hall
7pm for refreshments and 7.30pm start - All Welcome

The Guitar Story

How Women Pioneered the Guitar

and how it became

the Worlds Most Popular Instrument

A presentation by Marko Ivanovic

The guitar's extraordinary journey

How it:

- ✓ Was saved from extinction
- ✓ Was superseded in Europe
- ✓ Suffered but overcame a massive drawback
- ✓ Was resurrected in spite of prejudice
- ✓ **Conquered the World**



Brockton Church Rooms

11th November 2026 at 7:30pm

£8.00 non-members which includes refreshments

Booking: Linda 01743-891744 or 07840-365474
Coral 01743-892959 or 07485-655992

Callow Club

Everyone is welcome!

WORTHEN VILLAGE HALL

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAYRE

SATURDAY, 28th NOVEMBER 2026

12pm till 3pm

Various stalls to help with your Christmas Shopping

Hot and Cold Light Lunches

Home made cakes

Raffle

Guess the Weight of the Cake

Entrance 50p



And your chance to win our friendly Border Collie

Charity No: 502406

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE WELSH CONNECTION

WITH EURWYN PIERCE JONES



We all know Sherlock Holmes – but what do we know about the man who created him? Join us to discover the fascinating and surprisingly varied life of **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**: author, doctor, pioneer of forensic science, sportsman, traveller and much more. Eurwyn explores Doyle's remarkable achievements, his diverse interests and his **significant connections with Mid Wales**

OPEN MEETING

Members & non-members welcome

Wednesday
18 November 2026

Time
2.00 PM

Minsterley Parish Hall
A488, Minsterley, SY5 0EH



Free for members • Visitors: voluntary donations welcome
Refreshments available

pontesbury.u3asite.uk



learn, laugh, live

u3a Pontesbury & Rea Valley

u3a Pontesbury & Rea Valley

We know **Arthur Conan Doyle** as the creator of **Sherlock Holmes**, but his life extended far beyond his famous fictional detective. Come along to this fascinating illustrated talk on **Wednesday 18 November at 2pm** at **Minsterley Parish Hall**, **Eurwyn Pierce Jones** explores Doyle's remarkable contribution to forensic science, his many and varied interests, and his **connections with Mid Wales**. Eurwyn also brings a Welsh perspective, having translated Conan Doyle's celebrated ***The Speckled Band*** into Welsh.

Our monthly meetings are just one part of Pontesbury & Rea Valley u3a. The u3a is all about staying active, curious, and connected if you are no longer in full-time employment.

We have over 25 interest groups - there's something for everyone to enjoy and explore at an affordable level! And new groups are started if there is sufficient interest.

- Art History
- Astronomy
- Board Games
- Creative Writing
- Cycling
- Dining Club
- Embroidery
- Family History
- Folk Music
- French Conversation
- Gardening
- Geology
- History
- Literature
- Local History
- Photography
- Pickleball
- Play Reading
- Poetry
- Table Tennis
- Tech Made Easy
- Walking (Long)
- Walking (Short)
- Wine Tasting
- Wood Carving

Interested?
Come along to an open meeting, visit our website or call **Steve** (Membership Secretary) on **07861 531 186**

pontesbury.u3asite.uk

TRADING POST

Open February to October
Saturdays 9.30am to noon

Old Station Yard
Station Road, Pontesbury

what3words location - makeovers.stub.darling

The Pontesbury & District Gardeners Association Christmas meal will take place at The Lowfield Inn, Marton on December 2nd at 7.00pm for 7.30pm

If you would like to join us, a copy of the menu with cost and booking details is available to view in the display cabinet at the Trading Post, Station Road.

Menu selection and payment is required, at the latest, by November 22nd

The Trading Post is now closed, re-opening in February 2027

Details of our range of seed potatoes will be made available in January 2027

Thank you for your support during the year

WestFest
CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

Saturday 28th November
Open 11am - 4pm
Hayford Farm, Westbury, SY5 9PF

Come and visit our fantastic local craft and gift stalls full of great ideas for Christmas!

We have tasty hot food, drinks and mince pies along with our legendary raffle.

Enjoy a mulled wine and a great Christmas atmosphere— it's a super event to support the WestFest summer celebration.

If you are a local crafter or small business, message us to find out more.

West Fest, Shropshire
westfestcommunityproject@gmail.com

Fantastic Fungi and where to find them!



As autumn settles across Shropshire, the county's ancient landscapes transform into a mycological wonderland. Cooler, damp conditions make this the perfect time of year to explore local woodlands and unimproved grasslands for spectacular fungal displays.

Pink Ballerinas, Toadstools and Fairy Rings

Venture out to historic estate grounds or short-turf pastures like the Natural England Blakemoor Cottages to find vibrant grassland fungi. Look closely in the grass for the rare pink ballerina—known as the pink waxcap—which sports a delicate, flared pink cap resembling a dancer's skirt. Nearby, you might spot fairy rings, so called magical circles of mushrooms generated by an advancing underground mycelium network.

If you prefer a canopy walk at spots like Poles Coppice or the Hope Valley Nature Reserve, look down through the leaf litter to uncover fascinating woodland fungi. The most iconic among them is the fly agaric, a classic crimson toadstool speckled with white warts, famously nesting beneath birch trees.

From hidden forest floors to open meadows, Shropshire's autumn canvas is alive with these spectacular structures and there's plenty to be found right on our doorstep!

Laura, RVCWG

Heather's Village Report October 2026

Park and Ride. Shropshire Council will keep Meole Brace Park & Ride running beyond 1st November, after identifying funding for a temporary extension to the service.

The original proposal to suspend the service followed a cut by the Labour government of approximately £200,000 in bus revenue funding compared with previous years, alongside rising costs for bus operators.

Faced with those pressures, the council had to prioritise protecting important inter community bus connections, particularly for residents without access to a car who rely on them to get to work, education and essential services. This was not an easy decision and we continued to work on saving this service knowing there were strong concerns from residents, businesses and visitors.

A review of additional income generated following changes to parking charges in November 2025 has now identified sufficient funding for a short-term extension of Meole Park & Ride. The extension will give the council more time to develop a sustainable long-term plan for Park & Ride in Shrewsbury.

Telegraph poles and poor service from utility companies. A few weeks ago a driver hit a telegraph pole outside Chirbury School severing all phone and internet connection, severely impacting on the childrens' education. Initially Openreach were suggesting it would take weeks to replace the pole. After a great deal of pressure from me I eventually got them to fix the pole pretty quickly.

Unfortunately, some utility companies have a poor reputation in rural areas like ours for addressing problems like this, often leaving vulnerable people unconnected. If you are having problems then contact me.

Grit Bins. The Council is starting to fill grit bins in advance of the cold weather. If your need to be refilled then drop me a line and put it on 'Fix my street'. Each grit bin should have a serial number.

New Bus Service! Shropshire Council, working with Powys Council, has established a new bus service (X81) using money largely from the Welsh Government. It will run 4 times a day and connect the station at Newtown with Craven Arms station and will run through Chirbury, Bishop's Castle and Clun.

Regards, Heather

EDITOR WANTED

We are looking for someone to take over the production of Hope Newsletter.
This involves liaising with Barry on content, monitoring emails, collating entries and adverts and sending to our printers each month.

You don't need any specific design skills but knowlege of or willingness to learn using Canva Pro is required. This is not an onerous task, it takes around 3 - 4 hours each month.

Please contact Sarah on 07790 100462 or email treasurer@hopevillagehall.org.uk

Thank you



Shropshire has a new preventative health service, open to all residents aged 18 and over.

Live Well Shropshire provides FREE support to help residents access the right support early, stay connected to their community and enjoy healthier, happier lives.

Delivered across the community, the service offers one-to-one wellbeing support, information about local groups and activities, social opportunities and practical help to support everyday living.

Our aim is to help people stay confident, connected and independent, supporting them to make positive changes to their health and wellbeing.

Here's what one of our service users had to say:

"I feel independent, I'm socialising and exercising again, and I have a positive outlook on life again."

Commissioned by Shropshire Council and the NHS, Live Well Shropshire is here to help you take steps towards a healthier future.

Find out more: Call FREE on 0800 612 9355 Email info@LiveWellShropshire.org

Visit LiveWellShropshire.org

Key Phone Numbers

Pontesbury & Worthen Medical Practice 01743 790325
Westbury Medical Centre 01743 884727
Bishop's Castle Medical Practice 01588 638285
Montgomery Medical Practice 01686 668217
Royal Shrewsbury Hospital 01743 261000
NHS Non-Emergency Helpline 111

Shropshire Council Customer Services 0345 6789000
Shropshire Council Benefit Support 0345 6789002
Shropshire Council Welfare Support 0345 6789078
Shropshire Highways (Report Problem) 0345 6789006
Shropshire Council Bereavement Support 0345 6783028
Shropshire Ci□zens Advice Bureau 0808 2787894
Shropshire Rural Support 0300 1232825
Shrewsbury Samaritans 0330 0945717
Keep Shropshire Warm (Energy Advice) 0800 1123743

Shropshire Mind (Mental Health Support) 01743 368647
Shropshire Domestic Abuse Service 0300 3031191
Age UK Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin 01743 233123
Alzheimer's Society Shropshire 01952 250392
National Grid (Fault Report/Status) 0800 6783105
Environment Agency (Incident Hotline) 0800 80 70 60
Severn Trent Water (Report Problem) 0800 7834444
Royal Agricultural Benevolent Society 0800 1884444
Farming Community Network 01788 510866
Samaritans Helpline 116 123
Universal Credit Helpline 0800 3285644
Child Benefit Helpline 0300 2003100
Pensions Helpline 0800 7310469
Business Support Helpline 0300 4563565
Barnabas Money Advice (Debt Advice)07507 663251
A4U (Disability/Carers Advice/Advocacy) 01743 539201
Just Credit Union (Low Cost Loans) 01743 252325
Christians Against Poverty (Debt Counselling)01274 760720





The Bog Visitor Centre CIC

A big thank you to our local regular customers for their continuing support. The centre recorded 10,000 visitors during the 2026 season, coming from all over the UK and around the world leading to many interesting conversations between visitors and staff. During the summer months the Shuttle Bus service was better supported this year bringing walkers and regular local visitors from Church Stretton. Hopefully the shuttle will run again next year, but remember, use it or lose it.

The centre reopens for the 2027 season Wednesday 17th March
Changes for the 2027 Season - Opening hours will be extended 11am – 4.30pm Wednesday through to Sunday with the centre continuing to be closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. We will return to opening on Bank Holiday Mondays.

Art and Craft Courses There are plans to run a series of these courses over the season on Tuesdays and perhaps even some evening sessions. There are a number of tutors covering a range of skills and materials including willow and fleece weaving.

Hiring the centre Next season the centre will be available for groups to hire in evenings and on Mondays and Tuesdays when there are no art and craft sessions.

Access for All Grant It is hoped that the project to create a digital recreation of The Bog Mine circa 1888 can be completed through the DEFRA Access for All Grant which is administered through Shropshire National Landscape. In addition to the digital interpretation, it is hoped to install information panels on the mine site.

Staffing The Bog For the 2027 season the staff team needs to be increased. Usually, staff work one or more shifts a week and after a number of voluntary hours they can choose to be paid at the minimum rate or continue as a volunteer. The current team of staff numbers 14.

Teenage age staff over 15 have proved a real asset to the centre and have the opportunity of weekend and holiday shifts.

www.bogvisitorcentre.com Secretary Lin Brown 07808 792314

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF HIRING HOPE VILLAGE HALL?

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@ £8 per hour

Enquiries and bookings are made with Debbie on 01743 891414

A leaflet is available with informa□on about the facili□es. You can also find out more online at hopevillagehall.org.uk

HAVING A CLEAROUT?

If you have any clean, unbroken bits and pieces that you are considering taking to a charity shop or that might otherwise end up in landfill Including old, unwanted CD's, Viynl records or cassette tapes we can take them to raise funds for Hope Village Hall.

Bring to the hall on a Wednesday lunchtime (have tea and cake at the community café while you're there), Thursday's 6.30-8pm or call Debbie on 01743 891414 or Joyce on 01743 891901

There will be a 'Warm Welcome' in Pontesbury library this winter.
This includes warm drinks and a chance to browse the current Which magazine.
Other magazines and books avaliable.
Keep an eye out for more details on posters and facebook.com/pontesburylibrary
Funding comes from the Central Government Crisis and Resilience Fund

Your Safer Neighbourhood Team Are

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Senior PCSO Stephen Dunn-Brown
PCSO 6160 Shaun Cullis

SGT 0642 Jenni Price
PCSO 40516 Calvin Brown

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Sunday: CLOSED

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Email: poochparloursalon@hotmail.com

Pilates Class

When?: Mondays

Time?: 6pm-6:45pm

Class?: Mat Pilates

Where?: Hope Village Hall

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HOPE VILLAGE HALL ACTIVITIES

THURSDAY EVENINGS
6.30 TO 8PM



Table Tennis

(2 tables available)

Or Darts



We have bats etc., available but bring your own if you can. Small charge to cover refreshments.

HOPE VILLAGE HALL REGULAR ACTIVITIES

Monday Evenings

- 6 – 7pm Pilates with Ruth

Wednesday Lunchtime

- Noon – 2pm Community Café
- Mobile Library Van alternate weeks

Thursdays

- 10.15 – 11.15 am Mobile Post Office
- 5.30 - 6.15pm Barre Class with Natalie
  Mobile: 07957 346709
- 6.30pm Table Tennis & Darts

Friday Mornings

- 10.30 - 12.30 Tai Chi with Elfy Attitude

There are lots of other one-off events which are advertised in the Hope Newsletter or on the Village Hall website www.hopevillagehall.org.uk

The Hall is also available to hire for private functions at reasonable rates.

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Tuesdays 9.30am—10.30am at Minsterley Parish Hall

Thursdays 10.00am—11.00am at The Pavilion Community Hub, Pontesbury

Booking is essential.

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or danlewisfitness@btinternet.com

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Make the most of life, join our u3a

Our u3a is part of a worldwide charity which helps retired and semi-retired people come together and learn for fun and friendship:

- 20 plus interest groups in our local u3a; something for everyone
- start at any level
- a warm welcome
- meetings are in person or by zoom, depending on the group
- new groups are formed when sufficient members express interest

- Art History
- Bridge
- Café Society
- Cinema & Social
- Creative writing
- Cycling
- Family History
- Folk Music
- Gardening
- Geology
- History
- Italian
- Literature
- Local History
- Painting & Drawing
- Photography
- Pickleball
- Play reading
- Recorded music
- Short Tennis
- Table Tennis (Minsterley)
- Table Tennis (Pontesbury)
- Walking (long)
- Walking (short)



learn, laugh, live

Contact
Steve Anderson
steve.anderson.u3a@gmail.com
07861 531 186

u3asites.org.uk/pontesbury-reavalley

u3a
Pontesbury & Rea Valley

ENTERPRISE HOUSE

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