

April 2023 Newsletter

Forthcoming Talk / Annual General Meeting (AGM) Monday 17th April



We hope that you will be able to join us for our brief Annual General Meeting (AGM) being held on Monday 17th April at Colwall Village Hall. Doors open at 19:00 and the AGM starts at 19:30. If you are a CVS member you should already have received a calling notice for the AGM by post or email.

The AGM will be followed by a talk by David Lovelace on the Colwall Parish Hedgerow Survey. David has been undertaking a survey of all roadside hedges in the Parish on behalf of the Colwall Parish Council. The aim has been to give an insight into the current state of the parish hedges and to allow future monitoring. He will tell us how the survey has been undertaken and how the results can be seen layered onto historic maps and aerial photographs.

Everyone is welcome to the AGM and talk regardless of whether they are members of the Society, but there will be a charge of £2 for non-members.

Membership of Colwall Village Society (CVS)

For the 2022/23 year we were delighted to have over 150 members of the Society. The Society would not exist without a loyal membership and the Committee members who help organise its activities.

Membership confers certain benefits such as receipt of this newsletter which we aim to publish quarterly, together with free admission to the CVS talks, usually three annually.

Annual CVS membership subscriptions for 2023/24 were due for renewal on 1st April 2023.

The subscription for Members who joined after 1st November 2022 will continue to run until 31st March 2024 without any further sum being payable. Otherwise, the annual subscription for 2023/24 is £5 per person and can be paid at the AGM or via the methods detailed in the membership renewal notice, a copy of which you should have already received.

Thank you to those of you who have already paid your membership subscription for 2023/24, and for your continuing support. It is very much appreciated.



COLWALL FOLK

Help up to keep the Society Running

For a society to run smoothly it needs a committee and new ideas. We would love to have more people on the committee. The work is not onerous and you can do as little or as much depending on how much time you have. The committee meet about 4 times a year. In particular we need a secretary, whose main job at the moment would be to take the minutes of our committee meetings. If you are interested please contact Liz Hill on [redacted] or speak to a committee member at a meeting.

Colwall Heritage Trail Walk Leaflet



In the autumn of last year we were contacted by Colwall Parish Council (CPC) who asked whether we could possibly help them in producing a heritage trail walk for the village. We were obviously delighted to assist, and the leaflet has now been produced and published.

The leaflet follows the 'house style' of CPC's excellent previous publications – *Colwall: Its Footpaths and Places of Interest Map*, together with *Colwall: Walks in and About the Parish of Colwall*.

The walk starts and ends at Colwall Railway Station and has a length of about 5 miles but can easily be divided into two shorter circular walks if required. The relatively flat route is on hard surfaces throughout and is centred around the Colwall Stone and Colwall Green areas of the village, but does also go to St. James the Great Church.

Along the way there are over 30 places of interest to look at, each with a photograph and some brief information. We hope that the leaflet will help to showcase our varied and interesting local heritage and attract visitors to the village.

Production of the leaflet has been a partnership between the CPC, CVS and Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Please keep a look out for the leaflet, copies of which should be available to purchase locally from various outlets including Colwall Post Office, Colwall Library, and Malvern Tourist Information Centre. The first editions will also contain a village picture quiz for youngsters to try to complete.

Water Quality in the Cradley Brook at Colwall by Andy Ball

It has been hard to avoid news of the dire state of the nation's watercourses in the last few months. The River Wye has been the centre of much attention and recently featured on the BBC Countrywide TV programme whilst the Welsh actor, writer, presenter and comedian Paul Whitehouse hosted a two part BBC programme – *Our Troubled Rivers* - highlighting issues nationally. This second offering prompted me to do some delving into the situation relating to our local main watercourse – the tributary of the Cradley Brook.

Nationally there are numerous issues with watercourses including:

- pollution from agriculture in the form of phosphorous and nitrogen leaching into rivers and streams causing algal blooms,
- excessive abstraction and the effects of climate change leading to watercourses drying up,
- untreated waste from sewage treatment works being released into watercourses at times when the treatment works are unable to cope with excessive demand on the drainage system.

The poor quality of our rivers and streams is further exacerbated by industrial pollution and by the materials that we, as consumers, add to the drainage system including discarded wet wipes and cotton buds, and microplastics from washing clothing.

Here in Colwall is the tributary of the Cradley Brook. This is fed by numerous springs in the west, south and east of the parish before flowing north towards Mathon, Cradley and Longley Green. From here it becomes the Leigh Brook near Alfrick Pound and passes through Leigh before becoming a tributary of the River Teme at Bransford. In Colwall the stream is most visible in the stretch from Brook House on Walwyn Road and heading north eastward towards Lugg's Mill and Colwall Mill Farm. In these areas it is a small brook or river that swells to a torrent at times of heavy rain. It's an attractive watercourse and I've previously seen a kingfisher at Lugg's Mill orchard, and nearby an otter was seen on trailcam footage.

In the past, that section of the Cradley Brook between the village and Colwall Mill Farm bore evidence of a lot of Colwall's former industrial activity. In particular there were corn mills at Upper Mill, Lugg's Mill and Colwall Mill Farm; there was a gas works near what is now Colwall Village Garden and close to Brook House there was once a tannery site which would have undoubtedly created pollution in the Cradley Brook.

The health of Cradley Brook in Colwall today is affected by the local sewage treatment plant located between Lugg's Mill and Colwall Mill Farm. Using data published by The Rivers Trust charity on their sewage map which is available to view online at <https://theriverstrust.org/sewage-map> it's possible to get an idea of what's been going on. Their map (using data from credible sources) shows where the sewerage network discharged treated sewage and outflows of untreated sewage and storm water into rivers in England and Wales in 2021. The data is based upon Event Duration Monitoring (EDM) which is the timing of release of sewage into watercourse using automated sensors.

Severn Trent Water has the following two permits to discharge treated and untreated sewage into the Cradley Brook, and for each they must record the number of discharges.

Colwall Combined Sewer Overflow (storm overflow) (Severn Trent Water)

Permit number: S/09/20392/O

In 2021, this sewer storm overflow spilled 84 times for a total of 610 hours, discharging into the Tributary Of Cradley Brook.

Cowall Sewage Treatment Works (Severn Trent Water)

Permit number: S/09/55757/R

In 2021, this sewer storm overflow spilled 141 times for a total of 1756 hours, discharging into the Cradley Brook.

That's a lot of sewage getting into the Cradley Brook.

Many citizen scientists in the county are monitoring pollution levels to provide valuable data to evidence the problem, notably on the Wye and the Lugg. One of them has kindly offered to do some water quality testing at a couple of locations on the Cradley Brook locally so it will be interesting to find out some more.

In the meantime, The Rivers Trust website is a very useful source of general information about this issue and what ordinary people can do about it. More detail can be found at <https://theriverstrust.org/>

Colwall Library Community Hub: Meet the Colwall Village Society, and find out more about 'Aunt Alice' Saturday 15th April – 10:30 a.m until 12:30 p.m. at Colwall Library, Walwyn Road, Colwall

Colwall Village Society's aims are to protect and improve the village environment as well as to research and record village history. We are pleased to support the Colwall Library Community Hub initiative in the Millennium Room at the library.

On Saturday 15th April please drop into the Millennium Room any time between 10:30am and 12:30pm for an informal chat to find out more about the Society.

We will display the history of the Colwall village clock, known locally as 'Aunt Alice', located at the front of the library. There will also be the rare opportunity to look inside the clock tower building.

Provision of a public clock for Colwall was first proposed as early as 8th May 1897 in an extract from 'The Malvern Gazetteer'.

'Colwall Village News'

ROYAL COMMEMORATION

A Discussion on Queen Victoria's Jubilee Celebrations

Appointment of Committee

Mrs Cave, Mrs Reginald Cave, Mrs Ballard, Mrs Broadbent, Mrs Custance, The Reverend Black, Messrs F. Ballard, E. Condor and H. Meates.

A Celebration dinner and a party for children is suggested.

An independent project for the setting up of a Public Clock on some convenient site at Colwall Stone has been set afoot and is receiving considerable support. Mr T. Pedlingham has 37 subscribers towards one from 2/6d each to £5.'

That project never reached fruition and Thomas Alfred Pedlingham (1856 - 1938) commissioned the clock and tower in memory of his wife, Alice Louisa (nee Bunn) (1863 – 1930), in 1931.

'Aunt Alice' was built by staff from W James Builders and Contractors, Upper Colwall and a series of wall mounted plaques inside the tower commemorate the builders.

The construction of the tower is of Malvern stone with ashlar dressings and a flat concrete roof. The interior is concrete block and brick.



The 'Aunt Alice' turret clock mechanism is marked with serial number 9417 and was made by Gillet & Johnston from Croydon. They have traced its manufacture to 25th August 1931.

Their technical description is as follows:-
'No. 1 strike unit with dead beat escapement, one second wood rod pendulum which drives four 3'6" diameter opal dials. It strikes the hours on an 18" dia. 1 cwt bell.

The clock is hand wound and there is no night silencing. '

In 1994 the Parish Council took over responsibility for the management of Walwyn Meadow and library from the Walwyn Educational Foundation. At the same time the council took over responsibility for the Pedlingham Clock Trust.

The clock was substantially repaired in 2008 and further work was done to one clock face in 2021.

It's an interesting building and clock and well worth a look at if you are free on the morning of the 15th April.

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