

Price: 50p

Shirenewton & Newchurch Parish Magazine June 2010



Photograph by Terry Walters

*Spring has sprung the grass is riz I wonder where the birdies is
The bird is on the wing but that's absurd the wing is on the bird
Anon*

Church of St. Thomas a Becket Shirenewton

Priest in Charge.	Revd. Dr. William Ingle - Gillis	424984
Curate	Rev. Nansi Davies	01633 400519
Church Wardens:	Sally Saysell	641369
	Andrew Baker	641925
	Mrs Susan Lenthall	Newchurch 626389
PCC Secretaries:	Jane Smith-Haddon	641525
	David Heritage	Newchurch 641549
PCC Treasurers:	Charles Eickhoff	Shirenewton 641716
	Enid Heritage	Newchurch 641549
Gift Aid Secretary	Ruth Savagar	641411
Church Maintenance		
& Safety Officer	John Nicholas	641368
Organists:	Karen Millar	650521
	Ruth Savagar	641411
	Kath Whittington	641600
Sunday School:	Jane Smith-Haddon	641525
Tower Captain:	Mike Penny	650653
Church Hall Booking Secretary	Glynis MacDonald	641818
Mothers Union Branch Leader	Rosemary Carey	425010
Mothers Union Branch Treasurer	Auriol Horton	641844
Child Protection Officer:	John Waters	641449
Church Flowers:	Maureen Moody	641524
Parish Magazine Editor	Terry Walters	641338
200 Club	Nerys Wilson	641935

Names to Note

Community Council	John Eede (Chairman)	
Clerk to Community Council	Carole Jones	641791
WI:	Claire Lewis	
Scouts:	Dave Richardson	620356
Guides:	Helen Cann	650835
Brownies:	Jackie Broughton	641797
Cub Scouts	Geoff Marlow	641407
Beavers:	Becky Lewis	650304
Police Contact:	P.C. Mike Cowburn	01633 838111
Rec. booking secretary:	Beryl Saysell	641637
Traidcraft:	Marion McAdam	641316
Local History Society	Shirley Bonsey	641362

Neighbourhood Watch Contacts

Community Police Officer	Michael Cowburn	01633 642068
	e mail: michael.cowburn@gwent.pnn.police.uk	
Shirenewton & Mynyddbach	Beverley Moore	641532
Earlswood	Sue Leat	641207

Please send your notes, & emails for the July magazine to Terry Walters "Bywood" Mynyddbach, Chepstow, NP16 6RW (01291 641338) or email to terencewalters@hotmail.com by 9.00am Monday 21st June 2010

Local Organisations

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Church Fete
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Cubs
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Earlswood Hope
Mrs Sybil Cullimore 01291 641563

Earlswood & Newchurch West
Memorial Hall
Glynis MacDonald 01291 641818
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Earlswood Valley Methodist Chapel
Avril Smith 01291 650733

Gaerllwyd Baptist
Mrs E Remnant
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Girl Guiding
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cann71@btinternet.com
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KAL (Kids Ad Lib)
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SODS (Shirenewton Operatic and
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Shirenewton Tennis Association
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Sunday Club
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glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com

Whist drive
Auriol Horton 01291 641844
auriol@btinternet.com

WI (Womens Institute)
Shirley Bonsey 01291 641362
shirley.bonsey@tiscali.co.uk

Dear Friends,

Watching the outcome of the election and the first days of the coalition government has been nothing if not interesting. However you voted, one thing's for sure: it looks like there are quite a few surprises ahead.

One phrase that, I hear, did not go down well on the doorstep during the campaign was the Tories' slogan 'Big Society'. I find that a shame. See, on the one hand, I refuse to be bound by any one party line: not the Tories', nor the Lib Dems', nor Labour's. Yet, on the other hand, political loyalties aside, I find the basic notion of a Big Society inspiring. The jury's still out on whether this government means the same thing by 'Big Society' that I do—but, at the end of the day, I am in no doubt whatsoever that Christ died and rose again, that God might start building a Kingdom for the well-being of his children—starting now, this minute.

What's more, I believe that he has given human beings—created as we are with mind and heart—the privilege and responsibility to start building that Kingdom, starting now. We are called to leave this world a better, more humane place than the one we arrived in—one where humanity thrives. To me, 'Big Society' means that, when you and I die, the world should be better off because we were in it.

This can happen in grand ways, of course. But sometimes faithfulness to the little things makes the biggest difference.

This morning, for example, I met with some of the ladies of Caerwent Church, who host a monthly lunch in the village hall—and have for a number of years. Through hard work and hands-on generosity, they have made a difference to the lives of their friends who come, provided hospitality, and served the needs of a community in a day and age when services are disappearing from British villages. This, in my book, is where the real Big Society is, precisely because these workers draw generously from the bigness of their own hearts. Likewise, I spent a lovely afternoon just a few weeks ago at a lunch in here in Shirenewton in support of Christian Aid—and, although I was, sadly, unable to attend an event the following week in support of the Velindre Hospital, nonetheless I know that it, too, is an important part of our community's outreach.

The bottom line is that people make a difference, whether they have the vision to do big things, or whether they have simply the willingness to do small things. And, not only that, but making a difference is fundamental to the Gospel. Quite frankly, if every single one of us did one little thing—committed ourselves to one little thing—the world would be enriched for it, and we'd be that one step closer to the Kingdom that God is building.

Doing lunches and charity meals may not be your thing. But, I beg you, don't let that stop you from finding out what, in fact, is—and then doing it. For I do not believe that humanity was meant to exist in the isolation to which our modern culture tends. I believe God created us to be creatures of society, and then redeemed us to be creatures of big society.

Blessings,
Fr. Will

**SHIRENEWTON CHURCH FETE
SATURDAY, 12 JUNE 2010**

Fun for all the family.

Grand Prize draw.

Loads of activities, stalls, good refreshments and plenty of
entertainment.

Floats and Parade leaves The Tan House at 13:45.

Once again its cake, biscuit etc. making time.

A slight change this year

would you kindly attach a sale price to your cake. This will save an enormous amount of time for our brilliant helpers who will be calling on you on the evening of Friday 11 June to collect your cake.

Alternatively you can deliver your cake to the Recreation Hall which will be open from 7pm that evening.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING & AGM

Monday 4th may 2010.

From your own correspondent Glynis MacDonald. And a bonus bumper edition for you this month

For the full report go to www.shirenewtonchurch.com

Annual Meeting 2010

The outgoing Chairman of the Community Council, John Ede gave his annual report. Achievements for the year have included better communication with the community with the annual newsletter, the setting up of a directory of groups and a stand at the Shirenewton Church Fete. This will continue next year. A rolling program of repairing the village notice boards is taking place, there are now 'Take Care, Horse and Rider' signs up in Earlswood, the Community Luncheon Club at the TA is a success, and Shirenewton won the Best Kept Village last year and the prize money has been spent on a floral display in the road outside the TA. On the less successful front, it was noted that the provision of allotments at Blethyn Close continues to be fraught with problems, (something of an understatement) the village shop project has been unsuccessful in obtaining grants (so far) and the regular problem of the speeding, noisy bikes which speed along the Usk Road from Abergavenny to Chepstow continues to annoy.

And finally, on a positive note, Cllr Ede thanked Mrs Carole Jones on behalf of the council for all her very hard work as the Clerk to the Council. (And I'd like to say thank you to Carole, because we have now got a lovely new yellow grit bin outside the church for when the snow and ice comes)

Cllr McCombe was then elected this year's Chairman of the council. A full list of all the other posts filled can be found in the usual place.

The AGM then finished and the regular monthly meeting began.

The main bulk of the meeting was taken up with a discussion over one of the planning applications. Namely :

1. DC/2010/ 00253 Brook Acre, Earlswood

Change of use of existing dwelling house to four placement children's home

29 (!) members of the public were present at the meeting to express their views about this application. Normally 15 minutes are given over for members of the public to speak – but this application took nearly an hour and a half... And feelings were running high. There were also three members of the 'Care UK' team who would be responsible for the running of the home who came along give more details of the proposals and to

answer questions. It would seem that a maximum of 4 children could be housed with ages ranging from 10 – 18. These are children who have been removed from their own homes for their own safety. But concern was raised by some of the people from Earlswood as to the integration (or not) of these youths, the issue of there being little to do in the evenings, the lack of transport, and how these urban youngsters would fit in and respect country ways of Earlswood. People were alarmed that boredom would lead to the potential for damage, arson, vandalism and violence. The spokesman for 'Care UK' tried to reassure everyone that the youngsters would, of course, be properly supervised and that youngsters who had had a bad start in life should be allowed to experience and enjoy living in the countryside. However, the mood of the meeting was definitely against the proposal. The council voted to recommend refusal.

There were two other planning applications.

2. DC/2010/00167 The Willows, School Hill, Mynyddbach

Formation of conservatory over garage.

Recommend approval

3. DC/2010/00343 Latimer Farm, Earlswood

New agricultural livestock and storage building (revision of M/6268)

Refusal recommended because of the height, the apparent humungous size, the lack of info about slurry and so forth. And the fact that this proposed stone-built, two storey building would seem quite an inappropriately luxurious palace for just a few cows.

Items of local concern

Vehicles using the Green Lane down by the Rec. and the width of the opening Adam French, a representative from Coombe Farm came to the council meeting to find out if there were any problems – but it was agreed that a green lane can be used by vehicles other than farm vehicles. It was also agreed that by using the green lane, some of the heavy-duty farm equipment didn't then need to rumble and squeeze itself muddily through the centre of the village. And that a wide opening is needed for getting the big machinery in. And out. It was suggested that Thanks be given to David Adams as he cuts and generally keeps a lot of the hedges including the church hedgerows in good order. It was also suggested that perhaps Mr Adams may not know that the judging for the Best Kept Village will take place sometime in June...

Continued on Page 8

Quarry excavations near Mynnders Farm

Concerns have been raised by the extensive quarry excavations near Mynnders farm and that at least 30ft of hedgerow had been ripped out and during nesting season. But apparently it's only some rather large landscaping.

PC Cowburn was unable to be at the meeting but here is a list of the incidents from April 10th – 7th May.

Sat 10th April Electric fence stolen at Earlswood.

Mon 12th Theft of a trials bike from a garage at Shirenewton.

Fri 16th Report of fly tipping at Great Barnets Wood.

Sat 17th Window damaged by a football at Shirenewton.

Mon 19th A suspicious yellow pickup vehicle at Earlswood.

Fri 23rd Accidental 999 call from a child at Earlswood.

Sat 24th Report of 2 motorcycles at Cadira Beeches.

Mon 26th Attempt break in at Shirenewton at 02. 30. Alarm set off. Intruders fled, possibly in a Ka.

Thurs 29th Another accidental 999 call this time from a child at Shirenewton.

Fri 7th May Burglary in Shirenewton. 2 males entered a garage. Both described as 6 ft tall and in their 20s. Possibly using a white Ford Escort.

But P C Cowburn reported that there have been some positive results which have followed from help from observant members of the public. Several people have been arrested in the Caldicot area and drugs and stolen property have been recovered. Three scrap metal dealers have been arrested in Cardiff.

Best Kept Village.

As mentioned, the judges will be coming round on an unspecified day in June, so tidy your lawns, Hoover your drives and weed, weed, weed. Annoyingly, at this tense time, the mole problem has raised its head again. The molehills get caught in the mower blades apparently. Various solutions were suggested including cricket bats, cyanide and French Poisoned Worms. Sonic prods though were ruled out as children might fall over them. Perhaps if you have any ideas you could mention them to the councillors at the Community Council Stall at this year's Church Fete. I am sure they would be pleased to hear your suggestions.

WELSH ASSEMBLY REFERENDUM

Are you prepared for the proposed Welsh Assembly Referendum concerning the Government of Wales Act 2006?

Do you want to know more about the Welsh Assembly's current powers and other powers the Assembly might have following the proposed referendum?

Nick Ramsay A.M.
will be at
Shirenewton Church Hall
on July 12th at 7.15 pm
to explain and answer questions.

BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2010

Just a reminder that judging will take place at anytime during June and the judges pay particular attention to public places. Anything you can do will help towards Shirenewton retaining the Best Kept Village award.

DOG FOULING ON THE RECREATION FIELD

Shirenewton Recreation Committee is receiving many more complaints about the amount of dog 'poo' on the field. These have ranged from the sports people that use it to the parents whose children have picked it up on their shoes or clothes.

The field is for the recreational use of all residents and this is being spoilt by a few unthinking dog walkers. Many people do pick up after their dogs - we are asking ALL dog walkers to do this please and also to take it away and not leave it in a plastic bag on the field. It may be helpful if responsible dog owners could make other dog owners aware of these concerns.

SHIRENEWTON MOTHERS' UNION



On May 11th we were hosted by members of Mathern MU for the annual Netherwent Deanery Festival service at St Tewdric's, followed by wonderful refreshments. Nine branches were represented by some 150 participants.

The service ended with a thought provoking meditation. . .

Take time for solitude, contemplation, reflection,
Develop mindfulness, awareness,
Listen Listen Listen,
Practice daily discernment.

In the July magazine we will give details of a course to be held on the "Importance of Listening".

Meantime, Church or no, all are invited to the open evening on Wed June 9th 7.30 p m in Shirenewton church room on Food and fair trade issues which need our daily discernment. (See more information on Page 17)

Hope to see you, and a friend with you, there.

Our MU Summer Fundraising is for the WHEELS APPEAL. So may we begin to make and sell cakes etc at every opportunity raising funds to provide a means of transport for MU workers worldwide.

Rosemary Carey: MU Branch Leader

SHIRENEWTON TENNIS ASSOCIATION

The lock has now been changed on the tennis court and if you wish to renew your membership or join for the first time then new keys are available from Newton Lodge Shirenewton tel.no.01291 641376

Cost of membership remains at £30

MESSAGE FROM BOB O'KEEFE

My sincere thanks again to all that have kindly sent me cards and greetings during my recent long stay in hospital. Thanks also to the offers and lifts for Wenche in coming to visit me. The kindness we have received has be quite overwhelming.

Many thanks — Bob O'Keefe

SHIRENEWTON WI



Thursday 13 May was the WI's Annual Meeting when a new committee and president are voted in. Unfortunately only half of the members were present and they missed the lovely cake and sherry we drank in honour of Mrs May Adam's 90th birthday.

Diana Such was not able to be present at the meeting but she left a letter thanking the committee for their help and assistance during her first year in office, also stating that if a new committee was formed she would like to be nominated for president.

As Diana Such and Auriol Horton were the only members willing to be on the committee, our WI Adviser informed us that all members are on the committee and that all decisions are up to all the members. Auriol agreed to remain as treasurer and Shirley Bonsey and Claire Lewis agreed to continue their work as minute and correspondence secretaries respectively, until the end of the year when their jobs will be taken up by other members. If the positions are not filled then the WI could close.

The WI is such a pivotal organisation in the local community, where work is often carried out unacknowledged behind the scenes of quite a few events. Members also help at local schools, community council, and fund raise for local charities.

Our next meeting is Thursday 10 June, 7.15pm at Shirenewton Recreation Hall - speaker is Lt Col Dr Andrew Baker o 'Life in Afghanistan'.

Visitors are always welcome.

Shirenewton Community Luncheon Club

Please book early to secure your place for lunch on Wednesday
June 23th 2010

Tredegar Arms, Shirenewton
Telephone 641274

1ST SHIRENEWTON CUB PACK



We have had another exciting May:

We started this month with a camp crafts evening in one of Matt fields, the cubs were split up into teams and then had to collect wood for their camp fires. Having dug the fire pits the fire was lit and the sausages were burning, sorry I meant cooking!! The cubs also had to make camp gadgets to help them in their cooking areas. The leaders also noticed that the cubs had decided to have a unofficial " who can have the biggest fire" I sure Matt was able to stay up very late that night as one of the camp fire was sure to continue burning long into the night.

I am pleased to report that Ollie Lewis, Jacob Lawson, Harry Connell, Julian Roland and Nia Williams have now been invested and we welcome as full members of the pack.

Two teams made up from thirteen cubs and three scouts took part in the Gwent Area Cub/Scout competition in Pontypool Park having to hike for four miles just using a map and compass plus face challenges at ten staging points on route. I am pleased to say that we came a very respectable fourth and eighth out of fourteen other teams.

There is lots of excitement within the pack as we are off to the PGL Activity Centre at Ross on Wye on the Bank Holiday weekend where we will all be having a go at archery, shooting climbing, canoeing and many more challenging activities. Report more on this next month.

Future Cubs Activities for 2010:

Sunday 4th July, Cubs	Hike and adventure day, Around Shirenewton's old golf course.
Fri/Sat/Sun 27th Aug	Cub Camp Botany Bay
Saturday 16th October:	District Rugby tournament
Saturday 20th November:	District Swimming Gala, Newport

1ST SHIRENEWTON GUIDES



Girlguiding UK

The Guides have been very much in touch with the local community over the past couple of weeks. Dorothy and Shirley came and told the girls something about the history of the village and allowed them to inspect the huge archive of photographs and information. This was followed the next week by an "aerial" view of the village from the top of the church tower. The girls thoroughly enjoyed the trip up the tower – even the scary bit to come down. John Nicholas was a very informative and tolerant guide and even saw the funny side of the clock festooned with parachutes (I think)! Both Guides and Brownies were responsible for that – with help from the ever changing wind. The Guides then spent time in the church yard finding the final resting places of people they had learned about the previous week.

We are now looking forward to our Centenary camp where we will be joining 800 – 1000 other Girlguiding members in mid Wales – I bet there will be queues for the loos! Unfortunately this clashes with the fete so we will not be providing Welsh cakes but I know there will be fresh snacks available of a more oriental nature.

Now a plea for help. Are you, or do you know anybody who would be interested in helping Girlguiding in the village or in Chepstow? Due to work commitments and house moves we have **four** units in urgent need of help. Full training and support is available for volunteers. If anyone would like to find out more (no obligation) then please contact any Guider.

Yours in Guiding,

Kestrel Helen Cann 01291 650835

Kitten Amanda Turner 01291 650763

Panda and Koala

200 CLUB MAY DRAW

No. 102 Carol Jones £40

No. 153 Jane Leney £30

No. 212 Amanda Jones £20

No. 113 Gareth Davies £10

SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

Here are the dates for the Summer Term we look forward to seeing you again. Numbers are sliding to a critically low level again, so we may have to finish the term early, if you know of any children that might like to join us, please bring them along

Date		Time	Venue
6	June		Half Term—No Sunday Club
13	June		Matins - No Sunday Club
20	June	9.30 am	Sunday Club - Church Room <i>Little and Large</i>
27	June	9.30 am	Sunday Club - meet in Church Room <i>Summer by the Brook..bring coat & wellies</i>
4	July	9.30 am	<i>Sunday Club - Church Room</i> <i>Best Friends</i>
11	July	9.30 am	Family Service - Church

Shirenewton Sunday Club welcomes
All children from 3 years. Do come and join us
Jane Smith-Haddon 641 525
Glynis MaqcDonald 641 818

CHRISTIAN AID PLOUGHMAN'S LUNCH

Glynis and Jane would like to thank everyone who supported the Christian Aid Lunch on Sat 8th May. Despite the cool weather, everyone had a good time eating bread and cheese and swigging glasses of wine. Altogether we raised **£315.00** which is fantastic.

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Our April meeting was well attended and the speaker for the evening was Ann Mansell who gave a talk with pictures and artefacts relating to the Gwent Rural Life Museum in Usk. The museum is undergoing alterations with a large extension to the existing building, to enable to exhibit the many artefacts that have been collected by the museum.

It was a very well presented and interesting talk with plenty of participation from our members, with some interesting suggestions of the use of some of the objects displayed!

On Rogation Sunday as is the tradition we walked the bounds of the parish, eighteen people set out, ages ranged from a few months to quite a few years!! It was a very pleasant walk the weather was good and we completed the western boundary and around 4 miles. We returned to a welcome cup of tea at the church room and all agreed to continue this tradition again next year.

Dates for your diary:

Tuesday, 25th May

Meeting at the Huntsman Hotel at 7.30 pm

Solemn Sabbaths and Faraway Sunday

Given by Peter Strong

Monday, 14th June at the Recreational Hall, Shirenewton

2.00pm – 5.00pm (A drop in session)

Resource Meeting

Everyone welcome

Tuesday, 29th June

Meeting at the Huntsman Hotel, Shirenewton at 7.30 pm

The Aust Ferry

Given by Tim Ryan

EARLSWOOD AND NEWCHURCH WEST MEMORIAL HALL

On Saturday 8th May, over 60 people enjoyed dancing and listening to the Monmouth Big Band playing music from the 1940s onwards. The hall was brightly decorated with Union Jacks flags and bunting to celebrate the 65th Anniversary of VE Day. Thanks to all that came to the event or helped with the organisation and food.

Simon Stanley

Chairman Earlswood and Newchurch West Memorial Hall

FAIRTRADE NEWS



Traidcraft still needs your support!

I know you can buy some fairtrade products more cheaply in the supermarket - but where does the profit go?

To shareholders.

Buy from Traidcraft and you are supporting an organisation which exists to fight poverty through trade; a company which measures its success, not by profit but by its volume of purchases from the developing world. The 3 billion people living on under \$2 a day have hope in the Traidcrafts of this world which work to bring the benefits of trade to those who need it most.

Supermarkets play a role by growing volumes of purchases to existing fairtrade producers - but these fairtrade groups would not exist at all if Traidcraft and similar organisations had not invested in and worked with them. Supermarkets generally only take up well established products and the Traidcraft catalogue has a much wider range of products on offer. Today Traidcraft works with more than 100 groups in over 30 countries. There are millions more which still need this chance.

Marion McAdam 641316 msm316@gmail.com

ST MARY'S PRIORY & PARISH CHURCH, CHEPSTOW LUNCHTIME CONCERT SERIES

WEDNESDAY JUNE 16th 2010. 12.45pm

"A MUSICAL PICK AND MIX"

Moira Fraser-Hook (recorder)

Roger Martin (Baritone)

Marjorie Duerden (piano/keyboard)

A wide-ranging selection of musical delights
To include items by Schubert, Warlock, Barsanti and van Eyck
....with a dip into a box of some unexpected goodies...

ADMISSION: FREE (Any donations for selected charity).
Refreshments available

Where does our food come from ?

The Supermarket ? But where from ?

How far has it travelled ?

Do we know what's in it and how it was produced ?

Do we know how nutritious it is ?

Do farmers get a fair price ?

How are the employees treated ?

Can we trust the information on the packaging ?

You are invited to an open evening of
information sharing and discussion with

JOY CAREY

On Wednesday 9th June at 7.30 pm

In the Church Room Shirenewton

For further information phone 01291 425010

Joy Carey, former Head of Local Food and Market
Development with the Soil Association Bristol, now
works independently as a freelance consultant on
sustainable food systems



SAMFAL

Here we are approaching midsummer and I would imagine most of us are pleased that the weather is a good deal warmer and drier than of late and we can sit outside and enjoy our environment. I heard the cuckoo on the last day of April, and what is more satisfying saw it as well; it flew out of the alders adjacent to the Spout, up the hill and over my head in the garden; I could not have stage managed it better.

At this time of year I often get people bringing me young birds or nestlings which have fallen from the nest or have been taken by cats. No one likes to see things suffer but in most cases the chick is best left alone where its parents can feed it, but in the case of heavy cat population it is already doomed. In my experience if a young bird has been picked up by a dog, as long as it has nothing broken and gets over the shock of being mauled there are good chances of survival; but if it has been taken by a cat and has been punctured by claws they more often than not succumb; the sheaths which the claws retract into contain all sorts of nasty bacteria which poison the blood.

The last week in May should see the contractor finishing off the fencing and improving the drainage into the stream and flattening out the ruts and gullies. Those of us who walk the meadows will have noticed the variety of flowers now showing; buttercups, (field and bulbous,) pignut, hairy field sedge and birdsfoot trefoil, as well as bluebells, and I am pleased to see an abundance of orange tip butterflies which is heartening as over the country generally moths, butterflies and other insects are in decline.

During the rest of the summer we will be organising a "Bio blitz" on the fields which means teams of experts will be turning up to study and log what we have around us and anybody who is interested or requires further information is advised to contact Mike Sayce, or better still, come and see us at our stall in Shirenewton Church Fete and have a chat with one of our friendly and helpful volunteers. We will be there giving advice and information and hopefully recruiting new members; our target is to achieve 100 supporters this year which will bring in a much needed source of income. For further information, please feel free to contact SAMFAL, telephone numbers and emails listed in the parish magazine.
Mike Gambold.

SAMFAL AGM on Sun 16th May.

Chair Stu Dutton welcomed members to the meeting and gave an outline of the progress that had been made.

Treasurer Gary Williams presented the accounts for members information. The board of directors were re-elected on block as there were no additional nominations.

Members had the opportunity to look at photographs of the fields through the various stages during the recent changes.

All members were thanked for their support over the last year.

STARGAZING IN JUNE 2010

The constellation of Leo the Lion, shaped rather like a reversed question mark, can be seen in the west. The bright star which forms the dot at the bottom of the question mark is called Regulus, and is a useful planetary pointer this month.

The orangish Mars starts the month to the right of Regulus and by the end of the month has moved to the left of the star. On the 17th, the Crescent Moon is just below and to the left of Mars. Very bright Venus starts the month just below the twin bright stars Castor and Pollux, in Gemini. At the end of the month Venus is to the right of Regulus. The 4-day old crescent Moon is on the left of Venus on the 15th. Saturn lies in the South-West in the evening sky. The First Quarter Moon is below and to the right of Saturn on the 18th.

Sometimes it is possible to see satellites in the night sky. The International Space Station, carrying a crew of astronauts orbits the earth regularly. It is particularly bright since it is about the size of a football field. The web-site <http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/realdata/sightings/index.html> gives up-to-date information on where and when to look for it. You can check a satellite is not an aeroplane – planes carry their own lights so provided it's clear it should be possible to follow a plane to the horizon. Satellites can only be seen when they are in sunlight – so they appear and disappear well above the horizon quite abruptly as they leave and enter the Earth's shadow. The time zone used on board the Space Station is [GMT](#). The windows are covered during night hours to give the impression of darkness because the station experiences 16 sunrises and sunsets a day.

Dave Thomas

WHIST DRIVES

Once more 27 players joined us for the Whist drive held on Polling Day and had an enjoyable evening. The next Drive is on Thursday, 3rd June (no special occasion this time but we can hope for a fine dry and warm summer evening!!) at the Recreation Hall at 7.30 p.m. New players are made welcome, please join us, our Table fee is £1. per person which includes light refreshments. We also have a Raffle which raises funds for the upkeep of the Hall. In July we shall be playing on the 1st, same time, place and conditions.

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NERYS'S NATTY NOSH

Cupcakes or fairy cakes are now one of the most popular sweet treats in the world, and there are many bakeries dedicated solely to making them. Some brides choose to have cupcakes as an alternative to the traditional fruit cake as their wedding cake.

The making of cookies started in ancient Egypt with a mixture of flour and water that was baked on both sides on a griddle, resulting in a flat, hard cake. To this mixture, leaveners were added to make the cake rise, and then sugar to sweeten it. Wood-burning and coal-fired ovens were developed, and from these humble beginnings, cookies and other treats such as cupcakes, muffins and pastries have evolved. Today every country has its own favourite recipe.

The main ingredients are caster sugar (it dissolves easily), butter for its flavour, self raising flour to help it rise and eggs to bind it together.

If I were a cupcake what flavour would I be

Chocolate or vanilla swirled marble maybe.

The choices are endless. This is a recipe for the basic cupcake.

Iced Cupcake

Ingredients for 16 cupcakes

100g (4oz) butter softened or margarine

100g (4 oz) caster sugar

2 medium sized eggs (room temperature to prevent curdling)

100g (4 oz) sifted sponge self-raising flour

Topping

200g (8 oz) icing sugar sifted

About 2 tbsp warm water

Decoration e.g. chocolate drops, flake, cherries sugar flowers etc

Method

1 Preheat the oven to 190C, 375F, Gas Mark 5.

2 Line bun tins with 16 paper cases.

3 Place the butter and sugar in a large bowl or mixer and beat together until light and fluffy.

4 Gradually add the beaten egg to the mixture.

5 Sift in the flour and fold gently into the mixture (do not use your electric mixer when adding the flour).

6 Spoon the mixture into the paper cases.

7 Bake in the preheated oven for 15- 20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

To make the icing.

1 Sift the icing sugar into a bowl and stir in just enough warm water to mix into a smooth paste that is thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon.

2 Carefully spread the icing over the cold cup cakes and decorate.

Did you know?

When baking cupcakes and muffins, try to resist the temptation to open the oven door during the first half of the cooking as cold air can cause the mixture to sink in the middle.

Cup cakes are the perfect choice for a mid morning coffee, afternoon tea at a children's party or at the Shirenewton Church Fete. Enjoy!

CADW — FREE ENTRY FOR PENSIONERS AND CHILDREN LIVING IN WALES

CADW have not made this easy to obtain. The main CADW site only mentions a reduced membership for pensioners and Children. It does not mention the free membership if you are living in Wales. In order to obtain free membership you need to go via another route

In your internet search engine type "Chepstow Castle", it will return several site locations, the one to look for is "**Chepstow Castle - Cadw**" or in your internet browser type: <http://www.cadw.wales.gov.uk/default.asp?id=6&PlaceID=50> .

In the left hand column down at the bottom you will find an item called "Free entry for pensioners and children living in Wales", click on this link and you will be directed to a page with the heading:

"Free entry for pensioners and children living in Wales"

If you are resident in Wales and aged 60 and over or 16 and under, you can apply for a pass that will entitle you to visit Cadw sites free of charge.

First download and complete the form on the right i.e. the heading under Resources. Then send it freepost at the address below with a valid form of identification: these are listed on the form.

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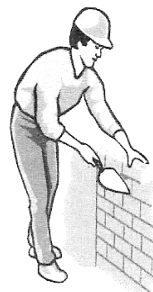
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SUNRISE ON PEN Y FAN

SUNDAY 11 JULY

See the sun rise over Wales from the summit of Pen y Fan.

Join us for a sponsored walk up the highest mountain in the Brecon Beacons. To make it special, we're going up at night. Weather permitting, you will be rewarded with a memorable experience, good company, and a magnificent sunrise. It will be well worth the early start.

The aim of the walk is to raise money for Shirenewton Church extension and for local African charities. It is a joint project with the group from the village that is attempting Kilimanjaro and who plan to reach their summit - a mere 19,340 ft, or 5,985m – at around the same time.

Led by Mike Peckham, an experienced and qualified Mountain Leader, the 1 ½ to 2 hours walk will start at 3.00 am and climb 1500 feet to the 2,907 ft (886m) summit of Pen y Fan. Completed by starlight and head torches, we'll welcome the 5.09 am sunrise with tea and biscuits at the summit and enjoy the spectacular views over Wales. We will descend by the same route.

Mike Peirce is kindly hosting a breakfast of bacon butties and Bucks Fizz at Cae Pw Cella on our return to Shirenewton. To register for this tremendous experience, for details of the charities your sponsorship will support and for information on the walk, please contact:

Hugh James 641722. E mail hvjames@tiscali.co.uk

Geoff Marlow 641407. E mail geoffmarlow@btinternet.com

Only those registered in advance will be able to join the walk.

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GARDENING CORNER

I maintain that I did hear the cuckoo on that Sunday as predicted in last months' tome. Admitted it was at the very end of the day and it was only one quick flurry of cuck-ing and coo-ing. The assistant head gardener didn't hear a thing and therefore there was lengthy debate as to whether it counted or not as "officially the first time"! It was to be a whole further week before we heard him again, but after that it was steady all the time. One, or at least that's what is claimed, flew literally over the top of the garden, before settling in a large ash tree alongside us. I called it one up-manship, but the assistant stands by her claim, and I'm not brave enough to argue! It was to be some time later that the house martin's put in their appearance. I had been fishing down at Wentwood and had noticed that the swallows were working well taking insects off the water as they hatched. I assumed it wouldn't be long before the martin's arrived, and there was one solitary arrival swooping low as I arrived home. Within a week all 8 of our nests were filled, and they are currently sitting on babies. There's nothing more I like to hear than the martin's talking to each other first thing in the morning, or last thing at night, as they no doubt discuss events of the day.

It has remained cold now for far too long. I wanted to get to look at the bees, but every time I had time, the wind was cold and steady from the North-east, so not the time to open the hives up and see how things were. Things have warmed up enough this week however to see how they have faired. All seven hives have come through the winter, although a couple are looking a bit on the weak side. The one in particular is slow and the queen isn't laying many eggs. It can be frustrating at times this bee-keeping lark. The hive in question has been in use some time, and when the bee inspector came out last year, he said that the wax was too old and so the queen was reluctant to lay eggs. He suggested what needed doing, but due to the poor weather I couldn't do anything at the time. However a few weeks ago, I lifted all the old insides of the hive up, and put a brand new brood chamber of wax on ready for the bees to draw the honeycomb out and for the queen to move in and start laying in earnest. I fed sugar syrup in order to give them the necessary help to do

this task. However, when inspected, most of the syrup had gone, they had made no attempt to draw out the wax, and the queen and her entourage, had stayed stubbornly put on the old wax! There's no helping some things! I'll leave it on for now and keep my fingers crossed that things change, otherwise I'm not sure what to do. The bulk of the other hives are starting to look quite well, with all queens laying at a good rate. Obviously the more eggs she lays the more worker bees there will be, and hopefully more honey by the end of the year. It can of course go horribly wrong though if the numbers build up to a high level and then we get bad weather, as the bees then have to eat the early stores, resulting in no honey to be gathered at the end of the year! This happened a couple of years ago, so hopefully we won't get a repeat this year.

Things are really in full flow in the garden now. I have concentrated on the vegetable growing as usual, as the flower areas can always wait a little longer. You can't eat flowers after all! But then some do, but that's for another day!

The big greenhouse and tunnel are now fully planted up with the more tender crops (tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and melons). There was a bit of a panic last week with frosts forecast, but we covered everything up with horticultural fleece and all survived OK. I've planted the ground up between the tomatoes with calabrese. These are looking well and the first heads are the size of golf balls. Hopefully within a week or so we will be cutting the first heads, and the stumps can then be removed ready for the tomatoes to expand into. This is the first time I have tried this, so all experimental in an effort to maximise output. Last year I tried squash plants in amongst the peppers, but it was a little like the Triffid takeover! Instead, this year, the squash have been planted in a bed outside and will be surrounded by sweet corn instead. The corn will create a dappled shade, and hopefully the squash will not run riot this time. The peppers and aubergines have been planted in the tunnel and I am looking into inter-planting with something, so I may try a quick crop such as lettuce. These should mature before the peppers get too large, and cover over the space. I have previously tried melon's in between, but these didn't thrive. So far I have managed to make sure that there is a successional sowing of the crops every fortnight or so, and touch wood things look to be

Continued on Page 34

Continued from Page 33

progressing well. If it works then a steady trickle of crops is secured, but all you need is for one sowing to fail due to excessive heat, or it rots off through "damping off", and suddenly best laid plans go awry!

Out in the vegetable garden proper, the raised beds have now all but been cleared of weeds or over-wintering crops. The last purple sprouting is all but finished and this will be the final bed to get the makeover treatment. The initial crops are looking well despite the cold weather. Although some have sat there for a little time not going anywhere, the last few days of warmth have got things moving. The beds for the climbing beans are ready and the sticks are in place. I was early getting the seed in this year, and the plants were looking really well. I was tempted, along with the sweetcorn, to get them planted up outside, but I thought better of it. The frost would have certainly sorted them out. Instead I moved them into larger pots and they are now looking very well indeed. With the month moving on I will aim to get these planted out next week, so hopefully we have seen the back of cold nights. I have already got some more seed coming on in the propagating house, but these were meant to be for a slightly later crop, so that we can keep cropping going on well into the autumn. This seems a long way off, but as with most gardening decisions, you are looking at the longer term, so planning is important. I had identified a couple of beds to be planted with over-wintering greens. It wasn't until I checked my records that I realised that both beds were infected with club root, so a quick change around was needed. Instead the beans are going in these beds and the greens where the beans were destined. Again this demonstrates the benefit of forward planning and having enough raised beds to go around, allowing you to rotate crops. Still time to go and pull up that old purple sprouting! Happy gardening until next month.

Steve Hunt.

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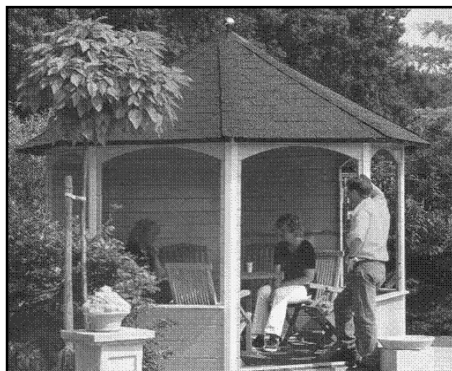
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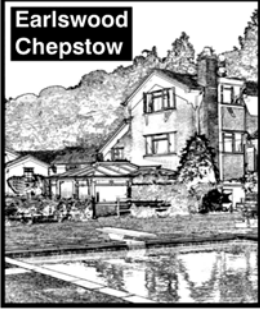
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SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

For further details see inside the magazine.

3rd June	Whist Drive at the Recreation Hall
7th June	Community Council Meeting at the Recreation Hall
9th June	Mothers Union Open Evening at the Church Room
9th June	"Where does our food come from " Mothers Union Talk
10th June	Shirenewton WI Meeting at the Recreation Hall
12th June	"The Singing Bones" at Itton Village Hall
12th June	Shirenewton Fete on the Recreation Ground
12th June	Future of the Welsh Assembly meeting at the Church Hall
14th June	Shirenewton History Society meeting at the Recreation Hall
16th June	"Musical Pick and Mix" St Mary's Church Chepstow
29th June	Shirenewton History Society meeting at the Huntsman Hotel
30th June	Chepstow Choral Society Summer Festival
4th July	Cubs hike around Shirenewton Old Golf Course
11th July	Sunrise on Pen Y Fan walk
27th Aug	Cub Camp Botany Bay
16th Oct	Cubs District Rugby Tournament
20th Nov	Cubs District Swimming Gala

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH - READERS AND SIDES-PERSONS ROTA

DATE	SERVICE	READER	SIDES-PERSON
6th June	First Sunday after Trinity Holy Eucharist at 9.30 am	Richard Grosvenor Bob Grattan	Richard Grosvenor Bob Grattan
13th June	Second Sunday after Trinity Mattins Service at 9.30 am	James Leney Kevin Bounds	James Leney Kevin Bounds
20th June	Third Sunday after Trinity Holy Eucharist at 9.30 am	Andrew Baker Sally Saysell	Andrew Baker Sally Saysell
27th June	Fourth Sunday after Trinity Holy Eucharist at 9.30 am	Jean Jones Peter Jones	Jean Jones Peter Jones

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