

Shirenewton

Parish Magazine

December 2019

January 2020



The Church and Community remember the Fallen

Price £1:20

FROM THE VICARAGE
Julian E LI White

Let me start with a platitude I heard many years ago: '*The church exists as much for its non-members as for its members*'.

One often hears church-members (especially Vicars, it must be said) lamenting the fact that people are slow to support regular – and special – events in the ecclesiastical calendar, and it would seem, use the institution only when they need a baptism, wedding or a funeral. It is at times like this it is good to remind ourselves of the sentiment contained in the aforementioned platitude.

Speaking personally, I have lost count of the occasions marked in the church building by a congregation who take the venue for granted, never consider the historicity of their surroundings or have little intention of returning. No church exists on fresh air. To date Shirenewton Church has raised – resulting from the heroic efforts of its members – a sum in the region of £53,000.00 and the restorers paid £60,000.00. This effort is to benefit casual attenders and members alike.

It is only when 'their' church is threatened with closure that they start jumping up and down in outrage. What has been an insignificant appendage to their life rapidly assumes a major importance. What, I wonder, gives rise to this – sentimentality or a long over-due awareness of what this structure represents?

On a broad scale I have been ruminating on this as we stand at the close of another year and anticipate the future of Shirenewton Church as the programme of restoration to the fabric moves towards a conclusion.

I reflect on this as we come to the end of the annual calendar and consider both lay people and ministers we have lost along the way. Among the latter I mourn Rev. Don Wood from Caldicot and Rev. Rick Hayes who was becoming an established presence in the Church of Saint Thomas a Becket over recent months. May God grant them peace and their families consolation.

On a more uplifting note, it is good to report on arrivals as well as departures. For example, a few months after we had bid Bishop Richard Pain farewell we stand to welcome Bishop Cherry Vann as our new leader to

this diocese. Not only do we await her enthronement early next year with genuine optimism, but also she will be invited to rededicate the church early next year.

On a more local level, and as indicated above, we also look forward to receiving back our church following the upheaval of remedial works and the addition of certain material benefits. There has been a little delay in the programme but, I suppose, this is to be expected due to the specialised nature of the project. As a church (both people and building) we look forward to both greeting old friends and welcoming new arrivals. Perhaps it is of small consequence, after all, if among the latter is a mixture of those seeking a spiritual home and those who are just passing through.

Drawing to a conclusion, I wish to thank all those who, with due gravitas, observed the ceremonies associated with Remembrance Sunday both in the village and in the environs of the church. Your commitment is very much appreciated.

And so we draw near to one of our most significant ceremonies – Christmas. Let us, as part of our preparation, take the introductory season of Advent to heart. By deepening our life of faith, as this season encourages us, we can participate fully in the mystery and revelation which this unique period brings. Mention of special services for the season can be found elsewhere in this publication.

Julian E LI White (Rector)

St PETER'S CHURCH, NEWCHURCH

15TH DECEMBER CHRISTINGLE SERVICE 2.30 P.M.

24TH DECEMBER A SPECIAL CAROL SERVICE 3.00 P.M.

PLEASE COME TO A UNIQUE NEWCHURCH WELCOME



Shirenewton 800 events

Dates for your diaries – save the date

15 Feb 2020 at 19.30 – **Concert** in the church by St Woolos Sinfonia (the professional standard orchestra in the city of Newport) with special guest Philippe Schartz, Principal Trumpet of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales; £10 a ticket including a glass of wine (under 16s free) available from Jane and James Lenev (01292641271 jameslenev@btinternet.com) and Glynis MacDonald (01291641818) or on the door.

18 April 2020 – Strictly Shirenewton! At Earlswood Hall. With Monmouth Big Band. Get your dancing shoes on and come and sparkle!

“

Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in.

ANONYMOUS

Shirenewton Community Council

Community Councillors send good wishes for Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year to all members of the community.

Extracts from the minutes of the November 2019 meeting

Vacancies on the Community Council

There are two co-opted vacancies for members to represent the Shirenewton ward.

If you are interested in supporting the community and would like to join the Council, then please contact the Clerk (details below)

Planning applications considered:

1. DM/2019/01618 Pond Cottage, Usk Road, Shirenewton

Detached garage with office at rear.

Council noted that this application superceded the previously approved application DM/2018/01104. Council recommended approval of the application on the condition that it meets current bat regulations. Also that a planning condition is applied so that the garage cannot be used for residential purposes.

2. DM/2019/01614 Hill View Cottage, Shirenewton

Non-material amendments to planning consent DC/2012/00631 (appeal decision) - 2no. velux rooflights to outbuilding, 2no. slated canopies over front doors and 1no. slated canopy to side elevation over side entrance.

Council approved the slated canopies as it was felt that they improved the appearance of the properties, but recommended refusal of the velux

rooflights to outbuilding, 2no. slated canopies over front doors and 1no. slated canopy to side elevation over side entrance.

Council approved the slated canopies as it was felt that they improved the appearance of the properties, but recommended refusal of the velux rooflights on the outbuilding as it was felt they detracted from the visual appearance of the centre of the village, it being a conservation area. There are no other velux rooflights within the vicinity.

Other items of interest

Monthly police report -

There were no incidents to report during the last month and no calls from Brookacre.

Inspector Hassel has agreed to attend the Council meeting on 2nd December.

Council meeting with Mon CC Highways on 28.10.19 –

Cllrs P Butterworth, K Morton and L Brown plus the Clerk, met at the Recreation Hall with Mr P Keeble of Mon CC. The following points were raised by Councillors and discussed:

- Lack of white lines at Shirenewton centre - not being treated as a 'shared space' area,
- Confusing 20/30 mph signage,
- Speed of traffic through Shirenewton and Mynyddbach,
- Poor visibility when turning right at Shirenewton centre,
- Making 20mph compulsory speed limits through Shirenewton and Mynyddbach.
- Advice on setting up a Community Speedwatch scheme.

Mr Keeble to arrange a post review of the traffic calming scheme, to include a risk assessment on the lack of white lines at Shirenewton centre.

He also advised that Welsh Government will be introducing a compulsory 20mph speed limit in residential areas from early in the new year. Mon CC Highways will then hold a review of speed limits, Councillors requested that Shirenewton and Mynyddbach are made a priority. He also agreed to check visibility at the Old Cock a Roosting triangle and request G Kinsella to forward information on a Community Speedwatch Scheme to the Clerk.

Take a look at our new and improved website

www.shirenewtoncc.org.uk

Mobile Post Office - The request for a mobile service in Shirenewton seems likely to be successful, subject to an acceptable mobile signal in the rec hall car park. Cllr Butterworth has made a heat map of signal strength in various places in the Hall and there are only 2 suitable places. The Recreation Association has agreed to pay for equipment to upgrade the signal, and will install with Cllr Butterworth, in the hope of improving the signal in car park to allow the mobile post office to provide a service.

Future Coffee Mornings – Councillors will be attending the December Village Market on the 21st to talk to residents about the recent survey and five year plan, also to discuss any issues that local people raise with them.

Dates of future meetings – Monday 2nd December and Monday 6th January at 7.00pm at the Recreation Hall, Shirenewton Members of the public are welcome to attend and may speak with the Council for the first 15 minutes of the meeting.

Find more information in draft copies of the minutes on the Community Council notice boards. Previous, approved minutes of meetings can be found on the Council's website
www.shirenewtoncc.org.uk

**Contact the Clerk to the Community Council -
Mrs Hilary Counsell Tel: 01291 421307
E-mail: Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com**

SHIRENEWTON OPERA & DRAMA SOCIETY

proudly present

Jack and the Beanstalk



THU 23TH, FRI 24TH, SAT 25TH JANUARY 2020
7.30pm AT EARLSWOOD HALL

TICKETS ON SALE FROM 1ST DEC – TO BOOK YOUR SEAT...

Email: shirenewtonpanto@gmail.com

OR Call: 01291 641451

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It's Panto Time again. Oh, yes it is.

So what's the panto going to be this year? Well this is a big dark secret, so fee fie foe fum, you'll have to come along to find out. Also if you want to take part, let me know soonest, and I can email you the script as my printer isn't working. Yet again. If treading the boards isn't your thing but you'd like to be involved please let me know! We would be delighted to welcome new people for the refreshments, costumes props, publicity oh! the list is endless. Also could you let me know if you know of any Child Actors who would like to appear on stage. Glynis on 641 818 glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com



Chepstow Choral Society

Musical Director – Graham Bull

A Christmas Music Celebration....

SUNDAY DECEMBER 8th, 3.00pm

Please save the date!!!!

This year's Christmas music will take place on **SUNDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 8th, 3.00pm, at St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow** and will include a mix of well-loved carols, and include some choruses of Handel's *Messiah*, also seasonal readings.

CCS is delighted to be joined by pupils from **ST JOHN'S-ON-THE-HILL SCHOOL and also organist PETER COOK**. Tickets £8.00 u/18s/students FREE are available from choir members (01291 623310, 620414, 650472 and Chepstow Bookshop).

SUNDAY DECEMBER 8th, 3.00pm
St MARY'S PRIORY CHURCH CHEPSTOW

Peter Cook (organ), Richard Kubiak (Piano)
St John's-on-the-Hill School Chamber Choir
(Director – David Mitchell)
Musical Director CCS –Graham Bull

**Please view our website (www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk) for further information (contact details available). Chepstow Choral Society is affiliated to

Ty Cerdd – Music Centre Wales  and Making Music – The National Federation of Music Societies. Registered charity no. 1127098



@ The Huntsman Hotel

Shirenewton, Chepstow, NP16 6BU

01291-641521, TheHuntsmanHotel@Icloud.Com

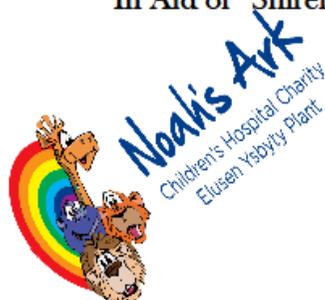
Saturday 30th November 2019

8.00pm till Midnight

Acoustic Music Evening

£8pp including Buffet

In Aid of "Shirefest" Supported Charities



Artists

Velvet Mangod

Fat Dad

Giles Norman



PUTTING THE CLIENT FIRST

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The value of pensions and investments can fall as well as rise, you may get back less than you invested.

Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage.

The FCA do not regulate Inheritance Tax Planning.

Please contact Dr Josh Lewis for a free initial consultation on:

Mobile: 07979 157259

Chepstow office: 01291 626373 | Abergavenny office: 01873 854488

E: joshlewis@thinkpositive.co.uk | www.iamfinancial.net

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**The PCC would like to wish everyone in the
Community a very Merry Christmas and a
prosperous and Happy New Year.**

BRING AND SHARE

The PCC started its popular Bring and Share evenings in the Saysell Centre on 8th November when Andrew Baker gave his fascinating talk about his time in Nigeria as an army doctor.

There will be a break in December 2019 because of all the Christmas activities that are planned – see Christmas activities elsewhere in this magazine.

In January 2020 there will be a break for the Shirenewton Pantomime – book your tickets early! – see advertisement in this magazine

Friday 21st February 2020 – John Burrows will talk about Chepstow's six Grade One listed structures with special emphasis on the Castle and our Grand Knight William Marshall. He will be giving a similar talk to the Shirenewton Local History Society in October.

Friday 13th March 2020 – Jenny Bonner will talk about her Two and a Half Years on South Georgia

Friday 17th April – Mary Watkins will talk about her experiences in Rwanda developing rugby whilst working at a teacher training college, supporting women's cooperatives, helping young women set up in business, founding a nursery school and supporting former students, and training Rwandan volunteers and teachers.

The usual format is that we all gather in the Saysell Centre (Church Hall) by 7.30 on a Friday evening and we all bring some food and drink to share. We all fill a plate with food and settle down and the speaker talks for about 40 minutes and takes questions, and then we finish our food and discussions usually continue for a while.

THE BELLS

The ringing on this year's Remembrance Sunday was as usual half-muffled, which results in a distinctive haunting sound. To achieve this effect the clapper of the bell has a large leather pad (muffle) attached to one side to cover the point at which the clapper strikes the sound bow of the bell. For full circle ringing the bell rotates from the inverted position (mouth facing skyward) through 360° at which point the clapper strikes the bell, which is then followed by the bell back-rotating to achieve its original position when again the bell strikes. These are the two strokes of the bell known as hand-stroke and backstroke. The leather pad is attached to muffle the backstroke, thus the ringing results in first an open (normal) note from each bell which is then followed by a muffled note, giving an echo effect. The only other time half-muffled ringing is practised is at the funeral of dignitaries when specifically requested, and at the end of each year just before midnight on 31st December – to mourn the passing of the year. The muffles are then removed at midnight and open ringing occurs to celebrate and welcome the New Year. So if you wish to experience the sound of half-muffled ringing then come to Shirenewton church on 31st December around 11.45 pm for the aural and visual experience, because over the Christmas period, including Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, we ring the bells from the nave in full view and not from the ringing room above in the tower.

123456

213456 Meanwhile this is the method we will be practising for

231546 Christmas.

325146 It is a method fittingly called St Nicholas Doubles.

235416 There are 5 leads in a plain course, a course defined when the

324516 first number one bell starts the sequence. The bell 6 remains

234156 fixed.

321456 See if you can complete the 5 leads using the patterns of

312546 movement of the bells shown here. If you get it right the

132546 sequence will return to the very first sequence - 123456

135246

Mike Penney (Tower Captain).

HARVEST FESTIVAL LUNCH

Another huge thank you to all the people who made the Harvest Festival Lunch such a success. In particular, a big thank you to Jane Eickhoff for organising the food and the volunteers, Bob Millar for organising and running the bar, Paul Morecombe for conducting the auction, and to all those who sold raffle tickets. The event raised an amazing **£741** for St David's Hospice Care.

PARKING OUTSIDE THE CHURCH DURING SERVICES

Please could all those who park outside the Church, particularly during services, be careful not to block the entrances to lanes and houses in the vicinity, which can be very inconvenient to residents.

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Shirenewton Bible Study Group is a friendly group who meet on one evening a month in the home of one of our very hospitable members to study the bible.

We focus to the readings from the lectionary for the Sunday preceding our meeting, so you can come along at any time, you won't have missed anything! Although many benefit from attending regularly, there is no obligation to do so and many members come when they can.

Meetings in 2020 are scheduled for the following dates:

Thursday 2nd January
Thursday 27th February
Thursday 30th April
Thursday 25th June

Wednesday 29th January
Thursday 26th March
Thursday 28th May

If you would like to join the group or to be kept informed of the location of meetings, please ask to be added to our distribution group by contacting me via lem.shirenewton@gmail.com or calling 01291 641175.

Nerys's Natty Nosh

Good quality food and edible treats are among the most traditional and best loved aspects of Christmas, especially when shared with family and friends. For the cook however the whole event can be quite stressful. To alleviate this, preparation can start earlier by utilising the freezer. Many dishes can be prepared in advance, labelled and frozen. You can even have a shelf dedicated wholly to the Christmas feast.

Mincemeat cake has the texture of a light fruit cake and the taste of mince-pies and Christmas pudding, all in one.

Mincemeat Cake Serves 12



Ingredients

5 oz(125g) soft margarine,
Soya or butter
5 oz(125g) soft, dark brown
sugar
8 oz(225g) self-raising flour
1 level teaspoon baking
powder
3 eggs
1 lb (450g) mincemeat

Method

- 1** Preheat oven, 325F, 170C, Gas Mark 3.
- 2** Mix all ingredients together well.
- 3** Put into an 8" tin, lined and greased (or use non-stick cake tin liners).
- 4** Bake in the oven for 1¾ hrs or until a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean.
- 5** Cool slightly in the tin, then turn out on to a wired tray to cool completely. Store in an

airtight container. **Enjoy!**



Tips

To freeze: wrap, with greaseproof paper, and foil. Seal, and label. Use within in 3 months.

To serve from freezer : Whole cake -thaw on serving plate for 1½ hrs.

*Nadolig Llawen a
Blwyddyn Newydd
Dda.*

*Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year*

CHURCH SERVICES AND EVENTS AT SHIRENEWTON

All Sunday services are at 10 a.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Sunday 1 st December	11.00 Advent Fair – Saysell Centre
Sunday 8 th December	18.30 Carols round the Xmas tree – TA car Park (in Church, if wet)
Sunday 15 th December	10.00 Carol Service
Tuesday 24 th December	16.00 Nativity and Christingle, mulled wine
Wednesday 25 th December	10.00 Informal Christmas Day service



Update on repair works at the Church



THE CHURCH PROJECT

Readers will be delighted to know that the Church project continues to go well, and the end is in sight!

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who have given their time, energy and effort, and in at least one case their clothing, to help keep the project on track and provide some of the volunteer hours that we need to demonstrate to the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of our side of the bargain to qualify for their grant. These faithful volunteers have shifted tons of rubble, dug trenches, filled them in again, painted plasterwork, drilled through the Church floor to install cable ducts and generally kept the contractors on their toes and kept them up to the mark.

Other volunteers are helping with the graveyard digitisation project, with the assistance of two classes from the school; producing their photographic record of the Church commissioned by the Shirenewton Local History Society; cleaning the Church on a regular basis to keep on top of the dust (and of course, helping with the special clean for a funeral); and organising the various Shirenewton 800 events that are planned.

The principal task left for the contractors to complete is to install the new heating system, complete the electrical connection to the new three-phase supply, and give the Church a final clean. We suspected that they were a little behind the curve because the internal scaffolding had to be removed and re-erected, and a recent email from the contractors to the architect confirms that they expect to complete the roofing works by Thursday 21st November and the heating by Friday 22nd November. This is only a week later than the original plan and the PCC are satisfied with this.

The contractor has also apologised for not taking down the rest of the scaffolding and cleaning the Church in time for Remembrance Sunday. Fortunately, apart from minor discomfort for those who attended the service, there was no harm done. It has emerged that the architect sent the email asking for this to be done to the wrong contractor: so, one



imagines that there is another church somewhere out there that has had its scaffolding taken down too soon. I think our predicament possible pales into significance compared to the predicament that the other church may find itself in!

Why not come and see the brilliant results of the project at the concert in the Church on 15th February 2020 at 7.30 pm by St Woolos Sinfonia (the professional standard orchestra in the city of Newport) with special guest Philippe Scharz, Principal Trumpet of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

Entrance £10 a head (including a glass of wine), under 16s free. Tickets available from Jane and James Leney (jamesleney@btinternet.com or 01291641271) and Glynis MacDonald (01291818) or on the door.

Charles Eickhoff and Janet Horton
Charles Eickhoff eickhoff@btopenworld.com
or Janet Horton 01291641783.

NEW OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

Foundation Phase classes have had great fun playing in their new tepee village, mud kitchen, shop and giant story teller's chair kindly funded by the PTA and supplied from Wood U Believe it in Abergavenny ...



SUPER SALMON SESSIONS



Year 1 and Year 6 took part in "Super Salmon" sessions learning many interesting facts about salmon including their life cycle, how high they can jump and how we can look after their habitat.

PLAYMAKERS

Year 5 have all trained as "Playmakers" and are looking forward to supporting our newly trained Bronze Level Sports Ambassadors in implementing some new sports activities and games at lunchtimes.

HARVEST FESTIVAL



Year 3 treated us to a wonderful rendition of the harvest mice story and the Reception class sang their "wheels on the tractor" song to a hall packed full of parents, grandparents and pupils ... very brave indeed! We were pleased to be able to donate all the harvest offerings to Caldicot Food Bank.

ENTERPRISE EVENT



Year 4 worked hard on their enterprise project making pumpkin soup, bird feeders, cup cakes, leaf stick boats and a delicious hedgehog cake which Scott was very lucky to win in the raffle draw! They made an overall profit of £71.60 ... thank you to all the parents who supported them by buying items from their stalls.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Please pop along to our PTA Christmas Fayre on Saturday 14th December 11am-2pm.

Canolfan Gymraeg Cas-gwent

Chepstow Welsh Centre

We need more help from Welsh speakers in the area to be engaged in the running of the new Welsh Centre and to support the Welsh Society in general. At present only the same relatively few people support events regularly. If you are a fluent speaker/advanced learner in the area please come and support the centre and the re-establishment of Welsh in this part of Wales.

For further information

www.cymgymcasgwent.weebly.com

Lynnedavies_home@btinternet.com

07889599948

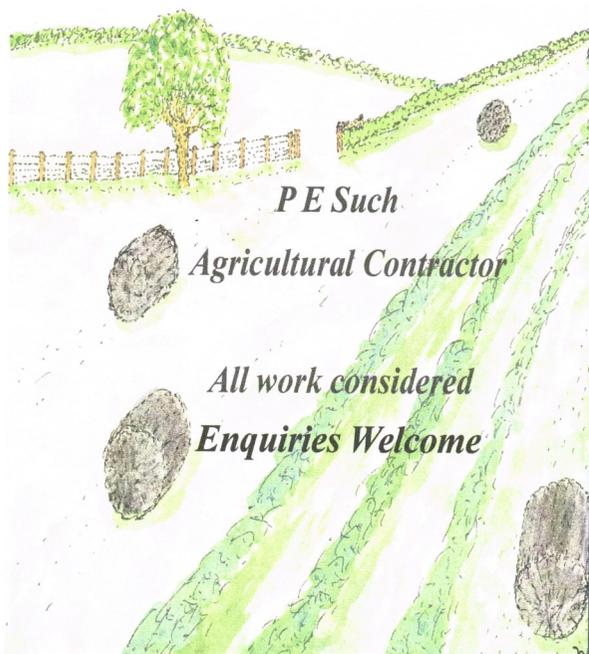
Congratulations to our 200 Club winners in November

J Montague

B Harper

S Cornwell

N Davies



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Shirenewton 800 events

Dates for your diaries – save the date

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18 April 2020 – Strictly Shirenewton! At Earlswood Hall. With Monmouth Big Band. Get your dancing shoes on and come and sparkle!

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Shirenewton Babies and Toddler Group

Thursdays 1.30 – 3p.m. (term time only)

Shirenewton Recreation Hall



Great toys, good company – everyone welcome

(please bring your Carers too!)

Contact Jackie Broughton (01291 641797)



Join us for our Christmas Fayre
Saturday 14th December
11am till 2pm

New Equipment Delivered



This October we received the delivery of our new outdoor equipment. This will provide the a lot of learning activities for the children of the school. Thanks to the money raised at events in the last school year, we were able to purchase a storytelling chair, three tee-pee's, mud kitchen, play hut and play table.

Thanks to Wood U Believe it, Abergovenny for producing and delivering this equipment.



@shirenewtonpta



Email: shirenewtonpta@gmail.com



This shows some of the new lighting in the chancel and the nave...
...and the filled in trench for the three-phase electricity supply



**SHIRENEWTON
VILLAGE
CHRISTMAS
MARKETS!**

16TH NOVEMBER 2019

21ST DECEMBER 2019

OPENING HOURS 10.30 -12.30

**YOUR MONTHLY MARKET DOES CHRISTMAS! TWO
DATES FOR YOUR DIARY TO SHOP LOCALLY FOR SOME
FABULOUS HOME GROWN, PRODUCED AND
HANDCRAFTED ITEMS.**

ENJOY COFFEE AND CAKE IN THE SHOP.

**GET YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFTS, GOODIES, DECORATIONS
AND TREE!!**





SHIRENEWTON VILLAGE MARKET

EVERY THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
FROM 10.30 TO 12.30 AT THE REC HALL.

YOUR MONTHLY ONE STOP SHOP FOR LOCALLY
GROWN, PRODUCED AND HANDCRAFTED ITEMS.
ENJOY COFFEE AND CAKE IN THE SHOP.

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If your interested in having a stall at our lovely friendly village market, please email:

bsaysell@hotmail.co.uk

Gardening Corner

I'm not quite sure where this year has disappeared to it seems like only yesterday that I was ordering seeds for next year. As I'm writing this, I'm looking at a pile of seed catalogues and thinking that I must get on and sort out what we want for next years growing season. Hopefully this will be better than the one we have just had as this swung from one extreme to another. As I look out of the window it is very grey and cold. It isn't raining which, the way things have gone the last few weeks is a miracle in itself! As a result, there isn't a lot going on in the garden, but I have made the most of every opportunity when a day or so of dry weather has occurred. I had cleared the one flower bed completely as this had not received any attention for several years. It had either been taken over by weeds, or a particularly rampant perennial called achillea 'The pearl'. It's an ideal plant for the flower arranger, especially if you are into miniature arrangements, but boy does it spread with a vengeance. I've tried to remove every last bit as any left behind will start to grow, but I see that I have obviously missed some! I had ordered a lot of new daffodil and tulip bulbs for this bed and my intention was to get these planted first and as they start to appear in spring start planting the main frame perennials and roses. With the wet weather I thought that I would be stuck, and have to plant the bulbs in pots instead, but two days dry was enough to allow me to get on the soil and get planting. This was soon completed and I was very chuffed with myself, especially as it started raining again not 10 minutes after I finished. I had ordered six new roses to go in the same bed, and these were meant to complement the rose bed the other side of the path. These were two of the latest varieties from David Austin roses and were bare rooted plants. This is not only a cheaper way to buy them, but the results I have had thus far, suggest that it is the most successful. I have planted out pot grown roses from the same breeder previously, but you never really know how long these have been in pots sitting at the garden centre and certainly some of them have been quite poor specimens when actually planted out. I'm pretty sure that the garden centres haven't bothered to re-pot them at any time. and the plants will have run out of nutrients some time ago. Bare rooted plants you know have come straight from the stock fields and always look very strong and healthy. I put the rose plants in a bucket of water when they arrived, so that they could re-hydrate. Ultimately, I don't think they really needed it as it was clear that they hadn't been out of the ground for very long. For some reason I decided to plant them that evening – by torchlight – yes, we do weird things out here in the country from time to time. I was dead pleased with myself afterwards though as the rain fell in bucket loads, so I knew the plants were getting a good watering in. We've also just taken delivery of an order of bare rooted raspberry plants. For now, I have earthed some in a spare

vegetable bed as it is too wet to plant them properly at the moment. The rest I have planted in flower pots so that they can at least start to grow new roots and get established. I'll keep them separate then when they are planted just to see what does best. It reminded me that I need to remove the bird netting off the top of the fruit cage- especially as we had a little snow the other morning. The last time I forgot to do this a number of years ago the entire fruit cage collapsed under the weight of wet snow and it took a number of years before I could get back around to clearing everything out and starting again.

With the wet weather still prevailing I've been looking to catch up with other jobs. I've just started on cleaning out all of the greenhouses and tunnels to get them clear for next year. I've had a lot of trouble in the large tunnel with one particularly nasty little moth. I think it is the Carnation tortrix moth – according to my pest and diseases book! A grand name for a nasty little pest. It eats a lot of the plants leaves, but will also ruin the fruit as well. It doesn't seem that fussy either as it has attacked the fruit trees and blueberries, as well as tomatoes and peppers, so I think war will need to be declared this coming season as the damage has got beyond acceptable now. I'll need to clear away all of the old leaves and anything else where they pest might hide and while away the winter months. There are still a few crops that are producing, but they are very much in the last throes. We have some cauliflowers that are still looking good and producing one or two meals a week. The tomatoes have all but gone, but there are some in the large greenhouse which were protected a little from the recent frosts. The fruits will probably not ripen now, so I'll pick them off and we'll make chutney out of them. There are still a few early potatoes that never got dug up either, but I might leave these until Christmas as they may still look and taste like new potatoes. Apart from the covered growing areas, the hedges are receiving a good deal of attention. Usually I am all behind in getting our hedges cut, as I still cut a few hedges for other people as well. But with the terrible weather, any half hour spare and I've shot out with the hedge cutter to do a bit more. We are getting to that sort of age where you start to look at either moving house, or changing things to make tasks less onerous. At the moment I'm acting on the latter, so one or two of the hedges are losing their tops, so that in future they can be cut from ground level, rather than having to climb a few rungs of a ladder to reach them instead. WE have three separate paths entering into the main flower bed and vegetable bed areas. When we planted the hedges over twenty years ago, I trained them to form an arch over each path. These were a nice feature but I needed an extending ladder to reach the top. On a side slope, this was not the easiest or probably the safest of tasks to do. They were always a struggle to cut so with the advice of the assistant head gardener ringing in my ears I decided to

decapitate the arches and so we are now just left with gaps in the hedge. This has made it a lot lighter into the garden, and will in future make cutting the hedges much easier. Fortunately, all of our hedges were planted with British native species – not a conifer in sight anywhere. As a result, they are much more forgiving when it comes to being cut. They will literally grow from a stump if cut back really hard. I have managed to put the bees to bed for the winter at long last. I was starting to panic as the wet cold weather had meant I hadn't been able to open the hives up and to remove the queen excluders ready for winter. Once the temperature goes down low the bees form a cluster, with the queen in the centre and then they gradually move around inside the hive consuming the food supplies as they go. The cluster temperature is maintained at about 25 degrees – the warmth being generated by a number of bees exercising their wing muscles. They will increase the temperature to around 30 degrees if they have young brood, but by this time of year the queen should have virtually stopped laying any eggs. The cluster will never leave the queen behind as she is obviously too valuable, hence why the queen excluders must be removed to allow her free access to anywhere in the hive. Fortunately, the sun came out just enough one morning to make it warm enough to open the hives up, remove the excluders, and put everything back together again. This 'putting to bed' task was finished with placing wire netting around the hives to keep them safe from green woodpeckers, which turn their attention to beehives when the ground is frozen hard and they can't find their usual food source. They can soon make light work of a wooden hive, and once they have a large enough hole, they can use their long, sticky tongue to remove both bees and grubs. The netting also hopefully helps to deter badgers from tipping the hives over and demolishing the contents of the hive. The last chore was to put mouse guards over the entrance. Any hole smaller than 8 mm. is a gap big enough to let a mouse inside, where they build a nest and gradually eat bees, grubs and honey over the winter. I have opened up a hive in spring to find dead mice, where the bees have stung them to death, but they can make a lot of mess before the bees prevail.

Here's hoping that you all have a good Christmas and that winter is kind to us this year. By the time I write to you again, the snowdrops will be in full flower and hopefully there will be other signs that winter is on its way out. Happy gardening until next month, but merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all.

Happy gardening until next time. *Steve and Felicity Hunt.*

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 1090167

We held our Annual General Meeting in October, the business part of the meeting was soon over Our Chairman agreed we had, had another successful year with plenty of interesting talks and visits to suit all our members. Financially, we are keeping our head above water and our membership is keeping steady but we are always looking for new members. The existing committee were voted back and we look forward to another busy year.

Our October meeting was standing room only, our speaker for the evening was John Burrows who gave an excellent talk entitled 'Chepstow's Six Grade 1 Structures' with emphasis on the castle and the medieval knight William Marshal 1147 – 1219. We are so lucky to live in an area so rich in history. We must thank John for his excellent research, enthusiasm and delivery, much appreciated.

Dates for your Diary:

Tuesday, 26th November

Meeting at the Huntsman Hotel 7.30pm
Talk entitled '18th Century Smugglers'
given by Colin Andrews

Monday 9th December

Archive Meeting at the Recreational hall
2.00pm - 4.00pm

Tuesday, 17th December

Visit to St Mary's, Rogiet. Talk and tour
of the church 7.00pm
Afterwards, mince pies and mulled wine
Supper at the Tredegar Arms

Friday, 27th December

Walk up to Grey Hill, to see the sunrise on
the Winter Solstice. Meeting at **7.30am**,
Sunrise **8.10 am** (approx). Back to the
Tredegar Arms for breakfast 9.00am

2020

Monday 13th January

Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall
2.00pm – 4.00pm

Tuesday, 28th January

Meeting at the Recreational Hall, a film &
talk entitled 'Repairing the Pyramids'
given by Peter James

It was wonderful to see the Village Market so busy yesterday. A small group of dogged individuals work incredibly hard to publicize it and to run the whole affair. It has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere.



From the Fairtrade perspective I was delighted to make quite a few sales, mostly gifts. BUT of course what I'm really trying to promote is regular, everyday purchases – rice, nuts, dried fruit, sugar, rubber gloves, olive oil, cocoa, tea, coffee, pasta, quinoa etc etc! Why NOT choose Fairtrade when the benefits are so overwhelmingly obvious? I simply cannot understand it! What civilized person could object to paying workers a fair wage or object to promoting environmental sustainability?

Traidcraft is a leader in ethical trading. It is also now putting climate change and environmental justice at the heart of its campaigning. Here are a few thoughts from Traidcraft's current catalogue:

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'Our mission today is to hear the voice of future generations. Millions of young people are waiting for a response. Most decision makers are not hearing. Many are not even listening. Few are acting. We are.'

Fairtrade products are available from Traidcraft and Ethical Superstore and elsewhere on the internet. In Chepstow Oxfam sells a growing range of Fairtrade goods and there is also a stall in the café in the Methodist Church Hall (opposite M&S). Or contact me for info or orders.

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p.s. I love Christmas!

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SHIRENEWTON WI

In a change to our published programme, Alison Nicholls of Chepstow WI came along to instruct us in the art of Christmas Decoration making, using a soft (Artista) paste which dries to the consistency of foam.

Alison has 30 years' experience in the art of sugar crafting and has transferred her creative skills to this new medium.

A great deal of fun was had by all as we channelled our inner creativity to conjure up some interestingly beautiful decorations.

Our next meeting is our annual Christmas Meal which is at the Tredegar Arms on 12th December at 7:15pm. Our first meeting of 2020 will be on Thursday 9th January when our programme for the year will be published. Look out for the programme on the "What's On" page of the Shirenewton Community Council website.

If you are interested in joining our friendly group then please contact Diane Ashton Smith (01291 628838) or Jane Butterworth (01291 641704) for further details.





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Come Along to the
Shirenewton Church Sunday Club
Advent Fair

Sunday 1st December
 In the Church Room
 11:00 - 12:00

Jams, Jellies, Mincemeat, Marmalade,
 Cakes, Cookies and Biscuits
 Christmas Crafts and Cards
 Coffee and of course, mince pies!

The members of Sunday Club have chosen to sponsor a child through 'Compassionuk.'



Carols Around The Village
Christmas Tree!

with The Chepstow Town Band!
 Sunday 8th December at 6:30
 In the Tredegar Arms carpark
 (or in the candle-lit church if it's raining)

Collection to:
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All are Welcome to Our
'Christmas Praise' Service
 in Shirenewton Church

on
 Sunday 15th December at 10 o'clock
 With poems, carols, readings and
 'Recollections',

Followed by coffee, cake and possible a mince
 pie in The Church Room

Shirenewton Church
Our Nativity and Christingle Service
Christmas Eve
Tuesday 24th December at 4.00



What a lovely way to start Christmas!
 If you have ever wanted to be an Angel or a
 Shepherd or whether you just want to be part
 of the crowd waiting to welcome the Baby
 Jesus, come along to our Nativity and
 Christingle Service on Christmas Eve at 4:00.
 And this year, we can accommodate 'families'
 joining the journey.
 With, of course, Mulled Wine and Mince Pies
 afterwards in the Church Room

Spanish Lessons



Are you thinking of taking a few lessons for your holidays?
Do you need to improve your skills as a Spanish speaker?

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SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS



Sunday newspapers are available by pre-order for collection from the Saysell Centre (also known as the Church Room) between about 9.45am and 11.15am most Sundays.

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STARGAZING

In the evening to the southeast, the constellation Orion is a glorious sight – three bright stars make up his belt; two stars are his shoulders, and two more make his legs. Orion was the great hunter of Greek Mythology who boasted that he could kill any creature on earth – but he met his match in the scorpion, which stung him in the heel and killed him.



The bright blue-white star in Orion's right leg is Rigel, an extremely powerful star but at great distance, it is at least 60,000 times more luminous than the Sun. The bright star at Orion's left shoulder is Betelgeuse (pronounce it "beetle-juice" and you'll be close enough). Betelgeuse has a reddish colour – it is a vast red super-giant star, large enough to contain the entire path of the Earth round the Sun. Hanging from Orion's belt is his sword. One of the stars in the sword appears fuzzy compared with other stars and is well worth looking at through binoculars. This is the Orion Nebula and is a huge cloud of gas and dust. It is one of the most intense regions of star formation visible in our galaxy.

The brilliant planet Venus can be seen in the south-west in the evening in January. It is joined by the crescent Moon on 12th January. In the early morning sky, the orange-coloured planet Mars lies to the south-east. On the 23rd December the crescent Moon is on the left of Mars.

You may see some shooting stars on 14th December. These are the Geminid meteor shower. They should appear in the eastern sky later in the evening.

We reach the Winter Solstice on December 22nd. The Sun reaches its lowest point in the heavens as observed in the northern hemisphere. This gives the shortest day and the longest night.

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Date	Sunday Service	Readers	Sidespersons
1 st December	First Sunday of Advent	James Leney Aileen Doggett	Aileen Doggett
8 th December	Second Sunday of Advent	John Montague Ruth Savagar	Claire Lewis
15 th December	Third Sunday of Advent	Mark Broughton Diane Marlow	Mark Broughton
22 nd December	Fourth Sunday of Advent	Chris Sturke Margaret Sturke	Chris Sturke Margaret Sturke
24 th December	11.30 pm Midnight Mass	TBC	TBC
25 th December	Family Service	TBC	TBC
29 th December	First Sunday of Christmas	Group Service	At Mounton Church

Sunday 1 st December	Jackie and Mark Broughton
Sunday 8 th December	Kerry and Andrew Baker
Sunday 15 th December	Gilly and Graham Lambert
Sunday 22 nd December	Ruth Savagar and Aileen Doggett

LOCAL DIARY DATES

DECEMBER 2019	Event	Location
Sun 1 st 11.00-12.00	Advent Fair	Saysell Centre/Church Room
Sun 8 th 6.30 pm	Carols round the Christmas Tree	TA Car Park
Sun 15 th 10 am	Christmas Praise Service	St Thomas à Becket Church
Tues 17 th 4 pm	Shirenewton School Christingle	St Thomas à Becket Church
Sat 21 st 10.30-12.30	Christmas Village Market	Recreation Hall
Sun 22 nd 6 pm	Service of nine lessons and carols	Caerwent Church
Tues 24 th 4 pm	Nativity and Christingle	St Thomas à Becket Church
Tues 24 th 5 pm	Mulled wine and mine pies	Saysell Centre/Church Room
Tues 24 th 11.30 pm	Midnight Mass	St Thomas à Becket Church
Wed 25 th 10 am	Family Service	St Thomas à Becket Church
JANUARY 2020	Event	Location
Thurs 24 th – Sat 26 th 7.30 pm	Pantomime	Earlswood Hall
Sat 25 th 1030-1230	Village Market	Recreation Hall
FEBRUARY 2020	Event	Location
Sat 15 th 1030-1230	Village Market	Recreation Hall
Sat 15 th tbc	St Woolos Players – S800	St Thomas à Becket Church
Fri 21 st 7.30 pm	Bring and Share – John Burrows (see article)	Saysell Centre/Church Room
MARCH 2020	Event	Location
Fri 13 th 7.30 pm	Bring and Share – Jenny Bonner	Saysell Centre/Church Room
Sat 21 st 1030-1230	Village Market	Recreation Hall
APRIL	Event	Location
Fri 17 th 7.30 pm	Bring and Share – Mary Watkins "Rugby in Rwanda"	Saysell Centre/Church Room
Sat 18 th tbc	Monmouth Big Band and Strictly Shirenewton – S800	Earlswood Hall
MAY 2020	Event	Location
tbc tbc	Something Sultry concert – S800	Saysell Centre/Church Room
Events marked S800 are part of the Shirenewton 800 Celebrations		

LOCAL CONTACTS

*If you know of any changes or omissions please contact the Editor Bill Clark
Telephone 01291 641783 or email parishmagshirenewton@gmail.com*

Church of St Thomas à Becket, Shirenewton

Rector	Revd Julian White Jel.white@btinternet.com	01291 622317
Parish Priest	Revd Nansi Davies CBE	01633 400 519
Lay Eucharistic Minister	Gilly Lambert	01291 641 175
Parish Visitor Coordinators	Revd Nansi Davies CBE Diane Marlow	01633 400 519 01291 641 407
Church Wardens – Rector’s – People’s	Sally Saysell Andrew Baker	01291 641 369 01291 641 925
PCC Secretary	Bill Clark	01291 641 783
PCC Treasurer	Graham Lambert	01291 641 175
PCC Members	Aileen Doggett Charles Eickhoff Janet Horton James Leney Jane Smith-Haddon Frances Gray Paul Morcombe Kevin Bounds	01291 641 459 01291 641 716 01291 641 783 01291 641 271 01291 641 525 01291 622 465 01291 641 671 01291 641 818
Gift Aid Secretary	Ruth Savagar	01291 641 411
Organists	Karen Millar Ruth Savagar James Leney	01291 650 521 01291 641 411 01291 641 271
Sunday Club	Lynn Morcombe	01291 641 671
Tower Captain	Mike Penney	01291 650 653
Saysell Centre Booking	Glynis MacDonald	01291 641 818
Safeguarding Officer	Andrew Baker	01291 641 925
Church Flowers	Maureen Moody	01291 641 524
Parish Magazine Editor	Bill Clark	01291 641 783
200 Club	Aileen Doggett	01291 641 459

Church of St Tewdrics’s Mathern

Secretary	Jen Marendaz	01291329422
Church Warden	Elsbeth Morlan	01291627538

MP/Monmouth CC & Community Council Representatives

Community Council Clerk	Hilary Counsell	01291 421307	clerk@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
Shirenewton Ward:	Dr James Grose	01291 641690	james.g@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
Chair	Philip Butterworth	01291 641704	philip.b@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
	Mrs Jane Smith-Haddon	01291 641525	jane.s@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
	Vacancy		
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Mynyddbach Ward	Louise Brown	07598979719	louise.b@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
	Jayne McKenna	01291 691774	jayne.m@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
Earlswood Ward	Ken Morton	01291 650268	ken.m@shirenewtoncc.org.uk
	Bryn Price	01291 641217	bryn.fopstonfarm@btinternet.com
Newchurch West	Ian Martin	01291 650014	ian.m@shirenewtoncc.org.uk

Police Neighbourhood Watch Contacts

Neighbourhood Police Officer Matt Scree matthew.screen@gwent.pnn.police.uk
Neighbourhood CSO Andrew Jones Andrew.jones@gwent.pnn.police.uk

Other Local Organisations

Beavers Julie Hitchcock 01291 650548
Church Fete
Earlswood Hope Mrs Sylvia Jeremiah, Mr Raymond Jeremiah 01291 641726
Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall
Glynis MacDonald 01291 641818
glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com
Earlswood Valley Methodist Chapel
Avril Smith 01291 627677
Gaerllwyd Baptist Mrs E Remnant Brooklands, Usk Road NP16 6SA
Ranger Guides Helen Cann 01291 6628534 cannhelen@gmail.com
Recreation Association Gordon Hughes 01291 641356 gordon.hughes3@tesco.net
Recreation Hall booking Beryl Saysell 01291 641637 bsaysell@hotmail.co.uk
St Peters Church Newchurch
Enid Heritage 01291 622708
enidheritage@gmail.com

Shirenewton Local History Society

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Shirenewton and Mynyddbach Fields Association Ltd (SAMFAL)

Neil Fuller 01291 641324

Shirenewton & Mynyddbach Initiative for Local Enterprise (SMILE)

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Caerwent Group Mothers Union

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Auriol Horton 01291 641844 aur101@btinternet.com

Shirenewton Operatic and Dramatic Society (SODS)

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Shirenewton Tennis Association

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Shirenewton Toddler Group

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Marion McAdam 01291 641316

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SHIRENEWTON PARISH MAGAZINE

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