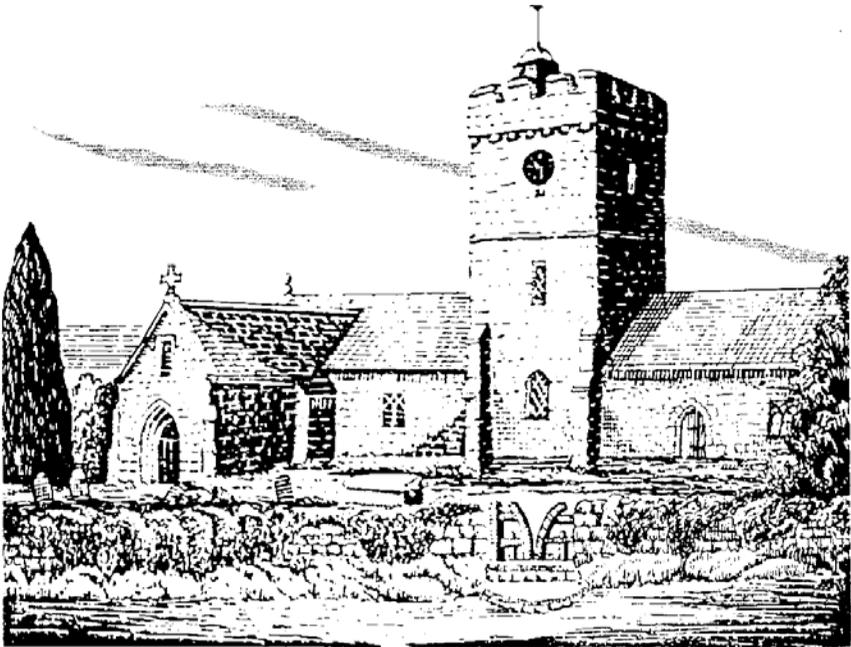


**THE CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS A BECKET
SHIRENEWTON**



Parishes of Shirenewton and Newchurch

Magazine

INCUMBENT:	The Revd Hugh Trenchard	424984
CURATE	The Revd Nansi Davies	01633 400519
CHURCH WARDENS:	Alan Saysell	641369
	Sally Saysell	641369
	Mrs Kath Whittington – Newchurch	641600
	Mrs Susan Lenthall – Newchurch	626389
PCC SECRETARIES:	Andrew Baker - Shirenewton	641925
	David Heritage - Newchurch	641549
PCC TREASURERS:	Kevin Bounds - Shirenewton	641818
	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 Wittington	641600
SUNDAY SCHOOL:	Jane Smith-Haddon	641525
TOWER CAPTAIN:	Mike Penny	650653
MOTHERS UNION:	Auriol Horton	641844
CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER:	John Waters	641449
CHURCH FLOWERS:	Maureen Moody	641524
PARISH MAGAZINE:	Bob O'Keefe	641686
200 Club	Pauline Dutton	641677

NAMES TO NOTE

COMMUNITY COUNCIL	.John Eede (Chairman)	641257
WI:	Sally Saysell	641369
SCOUTS:	Dave Richardson	620356
GUIDES:	Helen Cann	650835
BROWNIES:	Jackie Broughton	641797
CUBS:	Diana Such	650638
BEAVERS:	Gill Norris	622703
POLICE CONTACT:	P.C. Andrew Mason	01633 838111
REC. BOOKING SECRETARY:	Beryl Saysell	641637
TRAIDCRAFT:	Marion McAdam	641316

Please send notes, discs or emails for the July magazine to Bob O'Keefe, 15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, (641686) or email to bobandwenche@aol.com by Tuesday 20th June for inclusion in the July Magazine. Please note; there is no magazine in August.

June 2006

Dear Parishioners,

The Easter season is celebrated by the Church for 50 days from Easter Day until Pentecost more commonly known as Whitsunday which this year falls on June 4th.

Pentecost is a Greek word meaning 'fiftieth day'. It was also the name given to the Jewish festival 'The Feast of Weeks', so called because it fell on the 50th day after Passover. At this feast the first fruits of the corn harvest were presented in the Temple at Jerusalem, and in later times the giving of the Law of Moses was also commemorated by the Jews. Also on this day the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles so the name of Pentecost was applied by the Church to celebrate this tremendous event. Interestingly, in the early Church, the word Pentecost was used for the whole period between Easter and Whitsunday during which time no fasting was allowed and prayer was only made standing! Pentecost ranks after Easter as the second greatest festival of the Church and quite early on became the secondary most important date after Easter for Baptisms. The word 'Whitsunday' is said to derive from the white robes worn by the newly baptised.

So our Easter celebrations continue but what are Christians really celebrating in this modern era? Some readers may be confused about this particularly following the enormous publicity of Dan Brown's book *The Da Vinci Code*. The critics have rubbished the film, TV programmes have journeyed through buildings, local legends and myths and have come up with the fact that this book is an imaginative story based on the one hand the writings of the Gnostics and on the other hand myths that have grown up on fanciful nonsense. Indeed Dan Brown has indicated as much when he explained that the book is a story.

Many sects of Gnosticism emerged in the 1st and 2nd C's AD and basically they believed that Jesus Christ was divine and therefore could not have had a human body. Thus, the Death and Resurrection of Jesus could not have happened.

Dr Tom Wright, Bishop of Durham, whose recent Lent Course, Christian Faith, which some of followed earlier this year in our Bible Study group, has joined the critics of *The Da Vinci Code* and has described readers who are fascinated by it as, "ineffective navel-gazers stuck with a fantasy view of the real world. The book is symptom of a basic fault line in society between neo-gnosticism and the challenge of Jesus." He also writes in his latest book about, "Dan Brown and his muddled characters."

To decide for yourself whether the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ happened as described in the Gospels of the New Testament of the Bible, neo-gnosticism come to the play "***The Vigil – A Pentecostal Play***" being performed in Caerwent Church on Whitsunday , June 4th at 6 p.m. You will be able to make up your own mind about the truth as the witnesses and characters involved in the Passion of Jesus Christ are subjected to cross-examination. You may even be faced with the question about your belief in the existence of angels then and now! Come and join us – admittance is FREE.

With every good wish,
Nansi Davies.

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH 200 CLUB

The winners of the May Draw were:-

054	Mildred Grattan	£40
048	James Bounds	£30
226	John Eede	£20
175	Mrs. S John	£10

SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

DATE	TIME	VENUE
4th June	9.45	Sunday Club - The Chantry
11th June	9.45	Sunday Club - The Chantry
18th June	9.45	Family Service - The Church
25th June	9.45	Sunday Club - The Chantry
2nd July	9.45	Sunday Club - The Chantry
9th July	9.45	Sunday Club - The Chantry
16th July	9.45	Family Service - The Church

*New term will start Sunday 10th September
Shirenewton Sunday Club welcomes
all children from 3 years.*

Do come and join us.

Jane Smith-Haddon 641 525

Glynis MacDonald 641 818

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Regrettably, following the resignation of Mr. Peter Jones from the Community Council we do not have a report from the Council's May meeting and AGM.

Although the minutes of the Council meetings are published on the Church Website, these are only posted following their approval at the subsequent meeting. Therefore the minutes of the May meeting will not be available until after the June meeting, meaning that they will not appear in a magazine until the July edition of the magazine.

Sadly members of the Council are for some reason of their own, of the opinion that the report that appears in the Magazine should be compiled by an independent person and not a member of the Council. The notes supplied by Mr. Peter Jones represented the salient features from the meeting prior to the approval of the minutes. These notes we have been receiving were greatly valued by the members of the Community, being in a form that was easy to read and current without reference to the internet or the few notice boards around the villages served.

Community Council meetings are held on the first Monday of each month from 7.30 at the Recreation Hall. We would welcome a volunteer to attend to take these notes for the Magazine. The alternative will be to select the salient points from the minutes of the meetings following their approval, the negative side to this being that they will always be some two months out of date by the time they appear in the magazine.

We recognise that our Community Councillors carry out an important role as the community voice to local government and all serve on a voluntary basis, however it is very disappointing that they should feel unable to communicate the general points of their meetings back to the community. they serve other than through the website which is not available to many members of the community.

FROM THE REGISTERS.

A funeral service was held for Mrs. Jean Vera Boast on Wednesday 3rd May.
Born 1919 died 2006

A service of Baptism was held on Sunday 30th April for Beatrice Lillian Presland.

A THANK YOU

The family of Mrs. Boast wish to thank the Reverend Hugh Trenchard, and all those that attended her funeral, sent letters and cards that were a great comfort at this sad time.

The Parochial Church Council also give their thanks for the generous collection at the funeral that amounted to £257.05

GAERLLWYD WOMEN'S MEETINGS: – AT GAERLLWYD BAPTIST CHAPEL

At 2.30 p.m. on the 7th June our speaker will be Mrs. Marion Davies.
At 2.30 on the 21st June we will hold our regular meeting.

FROM CAERWENT PARISH CHURCH

Members of the parish are cordially invited to the following events being held at Caerwent Parish Church:

Sunday 4th June – A Play – The Vigil A Pentecostal Play
Fri/Sat/ Sunday 9/10/11th June – A flower Festival
Sunday 11th June 7.00 p.m. Newbridge Celynen Brass Band
Tickets £7.50 (incl. Refreshments)

SHIRENEWTON W.I

Shirenewton W.I. held its' Annual General Meeting this month. The branch Secretary, Margaret Woodliffe, read the Annual Report, detailing the varied programme of the past year. Claire Lewis, as Treasurer, gave the financial report. The President, Sally Saysell, addressed the group, and thanked the committee for their hard work. The committee for the coming year was affirmed, and Sally Saysell was re-elected as President.

Jenny, Winnie and Margaret presented the completed scrapbook for 2004. This scrapbook, like others that have come before it, provides an attractive record for the W.I. The local History Society is presently custodian of a collection of scrapbooks made by Shirenewton W.I... They provide valuable insight into changes taking place in the village. Other scrapbooks, which are fifty plus years old, were previously archived at County Hall.

Winnie gave an account of two resolutions put forward by the Gwent Federation of Women's Institutes for adoption by the National Federation. The resolutions this year concerned the need for new buildings to be built using technology that favours renewable energy; and the need for local authorities and schools to encourage, and facilitate, competitive sports. If accepted by the Gwent groups, these resolutions will be among those voted on at the National A.G.M., to form the basis of the W.I. public affairs campaigning lobby.

Auriol told us about the Gwent Federation Annual Council Meeting, where the guest speaker had given a talk on 'How to Paint a Picture while your Buns are in the Oven'.

Auriol explained the changes taking place with the revamped W.I. magazine. The new magazine will be delivered each month to all members.

The committee provided refreshments for members (including a very chocolaty chocolate cake, brought by Jenny to celebrate her birthday).

SHIRENEWTON WHIST DRIVES

31 players attended the May Drive - we will certainly need the increase in elbow room to be provided by the extended hall!!! The next drive is on the 1st June and in July on the 6th. We start at 7.30 p.m. promptly.

For £2.00 you can enjoy two hours of whist plus refreshments and raffle in pleasant surroundings with agreeable company - why not come and join us.

Enquiries to 01291 641844.

SHIRENEWTON MOTHER UNION

Seven members attended the Deanery Festival Service at St. Mary's Chepstow on the 9th May - our banner was carried by Sally Saysell. The Service was very well attended and we all enjoyed the usual excellent tea in the Cavill Hall afterwards.

On June 3rd the Diocese will be holding an Overseas Awareness Day at Cwmbran Town Centre with coffee being served in the Congress Centre from 10.30 a.m. Netherwent Deanery will be helping to serve coffee and hand out leaflets between 2 and 4 p.m. Members are asked to support this event.

At the end of June five members will be off to Dublin for the Provincial AGM. It will be a flying visit in more than one sense.

Our **next meeting** will be on **Wednesday, 14th June at 2.30 p.m.** in **Church at Shirenewton**. Mrs. Ann Mills will speak to us about Poetry in Worship. Visitors are always welcome.

Enquiries to Auriol Horton (Branch Leader) – 01291 641844

FAIRTRADE NEWS

Here are some facts about farm subsidies and what effect dumping produce surplus to our requirements has on poorer countries. (Apologies to anyone who read the Independent on Tuesday - the Red one, edited by Bono to help launch the Red initiative to raise money for AIDS victims in Africa -you'll find much of the following familiar)

SUGAR

EU farmers are guaranteed a price for sugar (from beet) 3 times higher than the world average. Consider the effect on sugar producing countries in the developing world.

WHEAT

Kenya, Nigeria and Senegal have been hit by cheap subsidised imports from Europe.

Thousands of tonnes of surplus powdered milk are dumped in West African

MILK

Thousands of tonnes of surplus powdered milk are dumped in West African countries such as Mali. In India and Jamaica farmers have been driven out of business.

CHICKEN

The grain that feeds our chickens is subsidised. Chicken wings and thighs are not very popular here. They are frozen and exported at rock bottom prices to countries where the local farmers simply cannot compete on price.

Trade rules are mind-boggling in their complexity. But surely it's time the fledging industries of developing countries were given some support rather than being put at such an insuperable disadvantage.

Meanwhile continue to do your bit by buying Fairtrade. It's straightforward and transparent. Catalogues at the local Spar or contact me.

Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316@gmail.com

BROWNIE REPORT

The Brownies have spent the last two meetings finding out about recycling and how their actions and 'pester power' can help to save the environment. At the first meeting Dorothy showed the girls how easy it was to make garden compost. There was not even the slightest wince from the girls as they mixed vegetable peelings, rotten peppers, paper, eggshells and straw. But when it came to the final special ingredient not one of the Brownies volunteered to be the one to provide itinterested? Ask a Brownie! Last week the girls played games to help them learn which waste they can recycle. The Brownies were very well informed – thanks to Dorothy (and their schools). We can all learn a great deal from our young people.

Jackie Broughton (641797)
Guider in Charge
1st Shirenewton Brownies

A REPORT OF THE BEATING OF THE BOUNDS

It is a tradition to beat the parish boundaries on Rogation Sunday, 21st May this year and to that end the History Society organised a Beating of the Bounds. The skies were leaden, the wind buffeted, the rain lashed but were the people of Shirenewton and Mynyddbach put off?

Yes they were. Only 5 intrepid walkers (and a dog who had no choice) braved the elements and eagerly set off, ready to seize some small child, upend it and beat it's head on the ground on the edge of the parish as a way of ensuring the boundaries would not be forgotten. But rather unsportingly, no children turned up to take part in this ancient ceremony. Poor show from the youngsters of the parish. What is the youth of today coming to when they refuse to turn up for the annual head bashing?

However, the sun shines on the righteous. As we set off down towards the Cwm, the rain ceased, the wind dropped and the sun emerged from the rain clouds. As we walked, we brushed against swathes of cow parsley. We smelled the heady perfume from the drifts of bluebells. We stood and watched the turbulence of the surging Castroggi. The blue of the sky, the sun sparkling on the rain drenched green of the leaves. What a beautiful world.

A couple of photos of the Righteous Five and the dog can be found on the Shirenewton Church Web site. Thank you to Bob O'Keefe for leading the walk. You stop-at-homes missed a good walk.

Glynis MacDonald

PYP, - Parish Youth Page

Hiya folks, - what a very wet month!! So much rain and yet over in London there is a hosepipe ban. But have you ever wondered why our months are called months? And where their names have come from? Well I am a wise old dog and so I shall tell you - pin back your ears and pay close attention.

The word 'month' comes from the word 'moon' because months were once measured from full moon to full moon (about 29 days) In Roman times there used to be just ten months in the year - and the first was March.

March	Named after the Roman god of war - Mars
April	From the Latin <i>aperie</i> meaning 'to open'
May	Names after Maia, goddess of spring
June	Names after Juno, queen of the Roman gods

Then the Romans must have run out of ideas.

Quintilis	Latin for 'fifth'
Sextilis	Latin for 'sixth'
September	Latin for 'seventh'
October	Latin for 'eighth'
November	Latin for 'ninth'
December	Latin for 'tenth'

Next month I shall tell you about the two missing months and Julius Ceaser's great idea to get his name on the calendar.

Meanwhile a question for you. When and what was Imbolc, Beltane, Lamass and Samhain?

Woof - woof!

Pyp

THE CHURCH FETE

At the time of going to press our Annual Fete is now only a couple of weeks away.

We have been fortunate in obtaining a couple of generous sponsors again this year to help meet the costs but as always we are dependant on the support of the local community to ensure that the Fete is a success. Success to the Committee means a great social event and not solely a financial success.

The teams of supporters will be out shortly to collect your donations of bric a brac, books, records and videos that you no longer wish to keep, along with donations of wine, pickles, shampoo, etc. for the bottle stall.

Kestrel Gym Club from Chepstow have agreed to provide a demonstration of their skills. The Club sets very high standards of performance and many of it's young members perform at a very high level nationally. Due to the nature of this event and the risks involved this demonstration will be dependant on the weather.

Our intrepid team of cyclists are once again undertaking a serious challenge, effectively following the line of the Offa's Dyke route from Prestatyn to Chepstow some 200 miles with some serious hills. More details further forward in the magazine.

Especially for the "Footie" fanatics, you need not fear missing England's opening game. Just for you we are providing a large screen TV so you can enjoy the game in the company of the other fanatics from the rest of the Village in the comfort of the bar tent enabling you to feel part of the crowd.

All those who have kindly offered to organise and help run stalls are invited to the next Fete meeting on the evening of Tuesday 6th June at 8.000 o/c at The Huntsman Hotel.

Following the Fete, once again there will be a dance and supper at the Huntsman Hotel, see the advertisement for details.

On Friday 16th June from 7.30 p.m. there will be a cheese and wine evening at the Church for all Fete stall organisers and helpers. A generous donor has once again offered to fund this thank you.

Church Fete

Post fete Hop

Kids Ad Lib

!!

ST PETER'S CHURCH, NEWCHURCH

A lovely service of thanksgiving led by the Reverend Hugh Trenchard was held on the 15th of May for the life of Jill Horton.

Jill will be sadly missed by all who knew her, as was reflected by the many who attended the service, and we send our sincere condolences to Graham and family.

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 1090167

At our April meeting we were given a very entertaining talk on 'Fairie Lore in 18th century Monmouthshire' by Frank Olding. Frank explained the beliefs of people living in the valleys at that time. Sightings of fairies, apparently, were mainly by men following a visit to the public house!

Dorothy Brabon has been holding Resources Sessions at the Recreation Hall which have been well attended and will continue throughout the year. We have now moved into the extended room in the Recreation Hall and this will become our permanent home for our resource materials.

We have recently launched our web site so you can now find out all about us and view this year's programme by logging on to:-
www.shirenewton-history.co.uk.

Our meetings for the coming months are:

Wednesday 14th June-Resources Session with Dorothy Brabon 2.00 p.m.
Recreation Hall.

Tuesday 27th June- Talk on 'Shirenewton Hall' by Julian Mitchell at
7.30 p.m. at the Huntsman Hotel.

Tuesday 11th July-Resources Session with Dorothy Brabon 7.00 p.m.
Recreation Hall.

The Martin Singers

Their current programme for this year is:-

Friday July 7th: - St. Christopher's Church, Bulwark, Chepstow 7.30 p.m.
Chepstow Festival Concert – Proceeds to purchase new music for the Singers.

Tickets £6 and £5 from Singers Members, Chepstow Bookshop or on the door

Saturday August 26th: - St Tysoi Church, Llansoy 7.30 p.m.

Concert in aid of St Tysoi Church funds.

Tickets £10 to include refreshments – admission by ticket from:-

Mrs. S Vaughan: - Tel. 01291 650227

Friday September 15th: - St. Pierre Church, Chepstow 7.30 p.m.

Concert in aid of Church repair fund – admission by ticket

Tickets £6 to include a glass of wine and refreshments

From: - Mrs J Papps – Tel. 01291 628691

Monday December 11th:- Carols by Candlelight, Tintern Abbey

7.00 p.m. Concert in aid of Barnado's.

Entry by contribution at Beaufort Hotel Tintern assembly point.

Please Sponsor Us!

On Sunday 11th June Kate and Maddie Stanley will be running in aid of Cancer Research UK. They are running in the 'Potters Arf Four Stage Relay Race' around Stoke on Trent. It is 13 miles long and is run in teams of four.

Last summer Kate and Maddie's Granny, Sue Carrott, died from the disease so they are running in her memory with Grandad Steve and Uncle Andy.

If you would like to sponsor Kate and Maddie, please contact them or their parents on 01291 641616

Cycle Page

Cycle Page

Cycle Page

Cycle Page

SHIRENEWTON NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Between 1300 hrs and 1405 hrs on Friday 5th May 2006, the stable block at a property called "Foxes Barn", Itton, was entered by force. Stolen from within was a child's Suzuki Quad bike in yellow, a child's Honda XR50R motorcycle in red, child's white crash helmet and a TV set on stand.

At about 13.30 hours a plain white van, described as small, not Transit size, but had two rear doors, was seen entering the drive of Foxes Barn. There was nothing seen written on the van, and there was no description of occupants.

Overnight Mon 15th to Tues 16th May, three cars were broken into in TINTERN. All three were parked at addresses along the Raglan / Forge Road. Property stolen included Satellite Navigation Systems, cash, a radio controlled car and sunglasses.

On Saturday 13th May, a vehicle stolen from Chepstow the previous day was found totally burnt out along the track to the rear of the Abbey Hotel, in Limekiln Wood, Tintern. This was particularly upsetting for the loser of the vehicle as it contained all her hairdressing equipment and her irreplaceable diary.

Overnight Tuesday 9th to Wednesday 10th May, an attempt was made to break into Ravensnest Fishery building. Damage was caused, but no entry was gained.

On the afternoon of Sunday 7th May, a 1000cc Honda motorcycle was stolen from the Tintern Abbey car park. A white Ford Transit van was seen in the car park just prior to the theft. Registration number of the Transit was similar to VK 53 OEM.

Away from Tintern:-

Overnight Saturday 13th to Sunday 14th May, the Devauden Village Hall was broken into and a fire extinguisher was discharged within.

Overnight Saturday 6th to Sunday 7th May, a business sign was taken from outside a property in the Earlswood area.

On Tuesday 16th to Wed 17th May, a vehicle parked in the Tredegar Arms car park, Shirenewton, was broken into and property stolen from within.

A general warning on crime:

It appears that we are having a spate of thefts from unattended motor vehicles, particularly during the night. Please **DO NOT LEAVE** valuables in your cars, or anything else for that matter, visible from the outside, eg. briefcases, bags, cash etc.

Satellite Navigation Systems are being targeted. Be mindful that those that leave a sucker mark on the windscreen are an indication of their presence in the vehicle. So remember to remove that tell tale mark as well.

NB: There are **three basic elements** are required for a crime to be committed:

- 1.** The Criminal
- 2.** The Opportunity
- 3.** The Target

We do not have any control on **1.**, but if we remove **2.** and make **3.** as difficult as possible, then hopefully **1.** will leave empty handed.

If you have any information on sightings of similar vehicles in suspicious circumstances please inform me at the numbers below or to **CRIME-STOPPERS** on 0800 555 111.

PC 363 Andrew J. Mason - Neighbourhood Police Officer, & Wildlife Crime Officer. Tintern, St Arvans, Devauden & Shirenewton)

Chepstow Police Station: -

Tel: 01291 – 623993 - Fax: 01633 – 642381

WITH SCHOOL EXAMS IMMINENT SOME HISTORY ERRORS TO AVOID

The Greeks were a highly sculptured people, and without them we would have no history. The Greeks also had myths. A myth is a female moth.

Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him. Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock. After his death, his career suffer a serious decline.

Queen Elizabeth was the “Virgin Queen” As queen she was a success. When she exposed herself to her troops they all shouted “Hurrah”

STARGAZING IN JUNE 2006

The Constellation of the Plough lies high in the evening sky to the north-west. The curve of the handle of the Plough points down to a bright red star called Arcturus. Above and to the left of Arcturus can be seen a semi-circle of stars making up Corona Borealis, the Northern Crown. The W-shape of Cassiopeia lies in a north-easterly direction. Leo the Lion, shaped rather like a reversed question mark, can be seen in the west. Cygnus the Swan lies in the eastern sky. It is one of the most distinctive constellations, often nicknamed the Northern Cross.

The planet Jupiter shines brilliantly low in the south in June. It lies close to the Moon on 7th and 8th June.

The Morning Star Venus is rising in the east less than 2 hours before the Sun. Saturn is in the north-west in the evening. The fainter Mars is close to Saturn. Both will soon be too close to the Sun to be seen again for a few months. On the evening of 27th June the planets Saturn and Mars are just to the left of the thin crescent Moon.

On the 21st June the Earth's axis is tilted towards the Sun to its greatest extent and the Sun reaches its highest position in the sky at noon. This is the longest day or summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere.

Dave Thomas

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEB PAGE

I've added another feature in the 'Be a whizz' series. This time its about upgrading PCs. Many low spec PCs stint on memory and it can be upgrade cheaply and easily. A memory upgrade is one of the key things you can do to improve the performance of your PC. Its as important as processor speed. The feature has a link to a useful online tool which analyses your PC and can tell you what memory your PC has and whether/how you can upgrade it. Also there is a description on how to clone your laptop or PC disk. This is very useful for upgrading laptops to a new larger disk without having to re-install everything and also as an 'extreme' back-up strategy for critical system. For example, following a spate of hard disks failures in the company, I now keep a clone of my laptop disk locked in my fire safe. I still take very regular data back-ups. Therefore if my hard disk fails it a simple matter of plugging in the

plugging in the cloned disk, restoring the data and away we go - so much simpler than having to re-install everything.

On the shopping front. I'm pleased to say that Screwfix is back on the site and the number of shops continue to grow. You should also check out the 'special Discounts and Shopping news' page. At the time of writing there are discount coupons which will save you money shopping at Jessops, Sleeping Solutions, Currys, The Link, Dixons and HP.

THE BELLS, THE BELLS

Shirenewton held their annual ringing ten towers tour early this summer. Fourteen ringers toured 10 towers in Cornwall on the 6th May. Some of the bell towers were very close to the sea at Tintagel when not ringing you could walk onto the cliff top and look over the blue sea with it's white waves. Beautiful.

We had lunch in Boscastle, in an ancient traditional stone built, white painted slate roofed pub called The Napoleon Inn. The land lord gave us a dining room all to ourselves so we could let our hair down a little.

Ten non-ringers, and three dogs joined us for the weekend , altogether we had 14 adults and 10 children in the party. The meals had to be taken in two sittings! The Sunday morning dawned fine and twelve people put on wet suits and went for a swim in the sea from the nearby beach. This was followed by a bar-be-que on the terrace. The rain started 2 hours after everyone had set out for home, so very lucky we had been.

Saturday 20th May was the Monmouth Branch Striking Competition. This year it was held in Mathern. Shirenewton entered 3 bands, 2 in the method ringing section and one in the Call Changes section. 3 of the junior members of the band also rang for the KIDS.RING.OUT bands.

The call changes band won their section and now pass on to the Pitman Striking competition which is against the winning band from the Llandaff Branch of the association and will be held on June 24th.

Gwillam & Richards Ad

Yoga Page

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For more information contact

Annabel Hancock MRxS

Clinical Reflexologist

01291 650309

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COFFEE MORNING IN AID OF VELINDRE HOSPITAL

Organised by Mrs. Bernice Bowen raised a total of nearly £900 for the Velindre Hospital.

Mrs. Bowen would like to thank all those who made such generous cash donations, gifts and items for sale. Thanks to all who came along and gave so generously, With special thanks to all the wonderful helpers.

CONGRATULATIONS AGAIN ON THIS WONDERFUL EFFORT.

EARLSWOOD HALL NEWS

Welcome to Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall News.

The March dance went well, with eighty plus tickets being sold. The Monmouth Big Band gave us with a very good evenings entertainment. Thanks to all concerned in organising the event.

The AGM was held on 6th April. Sadly it was not as well attended as we would have liked. A New committee was elected and they are:

Chairman - Simon Stanley; Vice Chairman – Charles Eickhoff; Secretary – Nancy Davies; Treasurer – Christine Stanley; Booking Secretary – Glynis MacDonald; Entertainment Secretary – John Spary; Bar Manager – Bob Millar; Other committee members being: Dorothy Cockran; Debora MacLean; Peter Jones and Ken Morton.

There are some new faces on the Committee this year with Simon Stanley replacing Peter Jones as Chairman, Charles Eickhoff replaces Ken Morton as Vice Chairman, and Bob Millar takes over the management of the bar from Nancy Davies. We were pleased that David and Enid Heritage were co-opted onto the Committee at the previous meeting.

The Treasures account for the year 2005-2006 showed that the finances were in reasonable shape given that there had been maintenance expenses met.

Work on the electrical system has been completed. More switches have been added, the emergency lighting has been updated and the meter board in the switch room has been simplified.

At the previous meeting several items were discussed including the flooding of the cellar area of the Hall. This has been an ongoing problem for a number of years, and at present is not affecting the Hall foundations, but it is a problem that needs to be resolved. The chairman has been investigating the matter and has obtained quotations for installing a drainage system to alleviate the problem.

The next meeting's aims are to arrange functions for the forthcoming autumn and winter months. Under discussion are; Country & Western evening a "Shadows Nigh" with "FBI" a brilliant band from Paignton, more details will follow.

The Kids Ad Lib production will be on in June, and this is normally another first class evening out. KAL have this year produced a movable extension to the stage to increase the performing area. This should be a great asset to the Hall.

Finally thanks to all of those involved with the maintenance and running of the Hall over the last year, many of whom are not committee members.

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Gardening Corner

Despite the cold start to spring the cuckoo still managed to arrive exactly on time, 13th April. It didn't take many days for it to be in full flow with its tell tale call sign. Shame the garden has taken much longer to get into its stride. Its only been the last couple of weeks that the plants have really started to get growing but even now I'm sure that things are at least two, if not three weeks behind normal. Certainly by the time that we are open for the first time over the late May bank holiday, the aquilegias are usually well in flower and the wisteria is all but finished. This year neither is yet to flower and they should be at their best by the time we get to opening day. The recent rain has been welcome to some degree as I was amazed just how dry the ground was getting as I progressed through weeding the main flower-beds. Unfortunately the rain and warmer weather will mean that the slugs will start to get their teeth into the hostas and other vulnerable plants. I don't like to use pellets because of the cats but I will resort to placing some under the plants if damage begins to reach to an unacceptable level!

Well what are we up to at present? In the vegetable garden it is all systems go with the raised beds. As usual the first sowings of carrots have almost failed completely. Six carrots per 1.5 metre row can hardly be classed as a success! The ground had set quite hard where these were sown so I quickly hoed the area off and re-sowed more seed. This time I used the seed that we had bought in France last year – the idea being that if they were produced over there, they should be more suited to our present drier, warmer climate. Time will tell! One thing I did note was just how much more seed you got for your money. If they succeed I think that I will buy more packets next time we are “sur-le- continent”. The summer cabbages and cauliflowers have been planted. I've got to put a low wooden frame over these in the next day or so and then spread a crop net over the top that will hopefully keep the cabbage white butterflies off. If I still get problems with caterpillars this will probably be the last year that I try to grow them so we will wait and see. Elsewhere in the vegetable patch I have planted out the first broad beans and mangetout peas the latter now being well up the pea sticks. I also planted a few runner bean and climbing French bean plants that I sowed earlier in the greenhouse. This is early for these as they shouldn't really go in until 1st of June (as plants). I always take a chance knowing that if a cold night is forecast that I will have to get the protective fleece out. There hasn't been a need for this so far, but as with last year the leaves got a good scorching in the first day of sunshine. So much so that the French beans were completely defoliated and killed. The runners survived and are now getting going and have almost recovered from this experience. The next sowing is well up in the greenhouse and these will be planted this week-

this weekend. Hopefully this will give a degree of continuity in production, with early beans being an added bonus. Most of the salad crops have also been planted along with courgettes and the early potatoes and these are now well up. For some reason I never got around to harvesting all the potatoes last year. I was going to dig them up and put them on the bonfire but they all started shooting out again. Instead I decided to loosen the soil and earth them up and see if they actually produce some even earlier potatoes than the freshly planted ones. The more cold susceptible crops such as tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and melons have been re-potted and are still growing well in the greenhouse. These will be planted out right at the end of the month. The cucumbers will be put into the bed in the large greenhouse whilst the others will be planted into the raised beds in the tunnel. For the first time ever I have managed to keep all six cucumber plants growing on. Usually they rot off one by one due mainly to over-watering and extremes between night and day temperatures. I had read somewhere that one of the organic organisations recommended putting the seedlings on top of a mound in the pot and just water at the bottom to help avoid such losses. So it was a case of trying this method and it seems to be a success. Equally though the difference between night and day temperatures hasn't been as pronounced as usual, so who knows! At least it appears to be working at present.

I had hoped to replace the timber frame and then the plastic cover on the tunnel this spring but unfortunately time has not been on my side! Unless we get a big gale the cover should last until the autumn. If not the plants will get a bit cold and not be so productive, so we will have to keep our fingers crossed. Of course I could always order the under-gardener out in the teeth of the gale to hold the cover down if things are looking a bit dodgy, but I have a feeling that I might not be able to persuade her to do this!

In the fruit garden nearly all the work has been completed. I still need to get the wire netting on the fruit cage but hopefully there is still time to get this on before the fruit becomes attractive to the local squirrel population. I have moved some excess strawberry plants into the tunnel for an early crop, but these won't provide any results until next year. Elsewhere the blossom on the fruit trees has been unbelievable this season. With no frosts and reasonable flying weather for bees I think there will be a need to thin some of the fruitlets out as the season progresses. This will probably be left until after the "June drop" when the situation can be re-appraised. If all the fruit that had set were to be left on you would end up with a lot of awfully small produce to pick, not to mention run the risk of a lot of the branches on the trees breaking under the weight of the fruit.

In the flower garden there are quite a lot of gaps appeared where plants have been lost over the winter. The spell of really cold, often wet weather has seen off a lot of the less hardy species with penstemons in particular being badly hit.

That is when having a nursery on tap becomes very handy, as I source ready replacements! The biggest problem is escaping the notice of the under-gardener who counts and protects her charges with vigour! I have developed a habit of walking with hands behind the back to avoid her glances, but she kind of knows what I'm up to! Still, hopefully we will see some of you at one of the garden openings this year.

Happy gardening for now. **Steve Hunt.**

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 1st June Whist Drive Recreation Hall – 7.30**
- 4th June A Play – Caerwent Parish Church**
- 6th June Fete Committee Meeting Huntsman Hotel 8.00 p.m.**
- 10th June Church Fete – The Recreation Field from 2.00 p.m.**
- 7th June Lunchtime Concert – St Mary's Chepstow**
- 16th June Fete Helpers get-together at the Church – 7.30 p.m.**
- 22/23/24 June – Kids Ad Lib Production –Earlswood Hall (see Ad)**
- 6th July Whist Drive Recreation Hall – 7.30**
- 7th July The Martin Singers – St Christopher's – Bulwark 7.30**
- 19th July Chepstow Choral Society – Chepstow Leisure Centre**

Readers & Sides Persons