

December / January 2008

Price: 50p

# THE CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS A BECKET SHIRENEWTON



Parishes of Shirenewton and Newchurch  
Magazine

## READERS AND SIDES- PERSONS ROTA FOR JANUARY

DATE	SERVICE	READER	SIDES-PERSON
6TH January	Epiphany 9.45 a.m	Ernie Jones Winnie Jones	Ernie Jones Winnie Jones
13th January	2nd Sunday of Epiphany 9.45 a.m.	Barbara Davies Cynthia Smith	Barbara Davies Cynthia Smith
20th January	3rd Sunday of Epiphany 9.45 a.m.	<b>Family Service</b>	
27th January	4th Sunday of Epiphany 9.45 a.m.	Bob Grattan Auriol Horton	Bob Grattan Auriol Horton
3rd February	Next before Lent 9.45	Peter Jones Jean Jones	Peter Jones Jean Jones

**St Peter's Newchurch first and third Sunday of each month at 2.30 p.m.**

<b>INCUMBENT:</b>	The Revd Hugh Trenchard	424984
<b>CURATE</b>	The Revd Nansi Davies	01633 400519
<b>CHURCH WARDENS:</b>	Sally Saysell	641369
	Andrew Baker	641925
	Mrs Kath Whittington – Newchurch	641600
	Mrs Susan Lenthall – Newchurch	626389
<b>PCC SECRETARIES:</b>	Andrew Baker - Shirenewton	641925
	David Heritage- Newchurch	641549
<b>PCC TREASURERS:</b>	Kevin Bounds - Shirenewton	641818
	Enid Heritage - Newchurch	641549
<b>GIFT AID SECRETARY</b>	Ruth Savagar	641411
<b>CHURCH MAINTENANCE &amp; SAFETY OFFICER</b>	John Nicholas	641368
<b>ORGANISTS:</b>	Karen Millar	650521
	Ruth Savagar	641411
	Kath Whittington	641600
<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL:</b>	Jane Smith-Haddon	641525
<b>TOWER CAPTAIN:</b>	Mike Penny	650653
<b>MOTHERS UNION:</b>	Auriol Horton	641844
<b>CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER:</b>	John Waters	641449
<b>CHURCH FLOWERS:</b>	Maureen Moody	641524
<b>PARISH MAGAZINE:</b>	Bob O'Keefe	641686
<b>200 Club</b>	Pauline Dutton	641677

**NAMES TO NOTE**

COMMUNITY COUNCIL	John Harvey (Chairman)	641279
Clerk to Community Council	Carole Jones	641791
WI:	Jenny Bonner	641929
SCOUTS:	Dave Richardson	620356
GUIDES:	Helen Cann	650835
BROWNIES:	Jackie Broughton	641797
BEAVERS:	Becky Lewis	650304
POLICE CONTACT:	P.C. Andrew Mason	01633 838111
REC. BOOKING SECRETARY:	Beryl Saysell	641637
TRAIDCRAFT:	Marion McAdam	641316
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATOR		
S'NEWTON & M'NYDD BACH - Earlswood	Beverley Moore	641532
	Jayne Kirby	641217

Please send notes, discs or emails for the February magazine to Bob O'Keefe at: 15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, (641686) or email to bobandwenche@aol.com by Monday 21st January for inclusion in the February magazine.

**READERS AND SIDES- PERSONS ROTA FOR DECEMBER 2007**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>READER</b>	<b>SIDES-PERSON</b>
2nd December	Advent Sunday 9.45 a.m.	Bob Grattan Margaret Lock	Bob Grattan Margaret Lock
9th December	2nd Sunday of Advent 9.45 a.m.	Kevin Bounds Alistair Bounds	Kevin Bounds Alistair Bounds
16th December	3rd Sunday of Advent 9.45 a.m.	James Leney Ruth Savagar	Bernice Bowen Clair Lewis
23rd December	<b>No Morning Service - Carols and readings at Caerwent Parish Church 7 p.m.</b>		
24th December	Sunday Club Christmas Eve—Midnight Mass	Nativity Play and Christingle — 4 p.m. Sally Saysell Andrew Baker	Allan Saysell John Nicholas
25th December	Family Service 10.00 a.m.		
30th December	<b>Group Service</b> 9.45		<b>Llanfair Discoed</b>

## SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

December 2007

- 2nd Dec. A Christmas Concert—Shirenewton Church.
- 3rd Dec. Community Council Meeting 7.30 p.m Recreation Hall
- 6th Dec. Whist Drive—7.30 p.m. Recreation Hall
- 5th Dec. Local Neighbourhood Watch Meeting 7.30 p.m.—Huntsman
- 6th Dec. Whist Drive—The Recreation Hall 7.30 p.m.
- 9th Dec. Mini Fayre—Shirenewton Church from 10.45 a.m.
- 9th Dec. Carols around the Christmas Tree 6.30 p.m. Tan House
- 9th Dec. The Clockwork Heart—Earlswood Memorial Hall
- 9th Dec. Christmas Concert St. Mary's Church Chepstow.
- 10th Dec. Torchlight Carol Concert Tintern Abbey (See advert)
- 11th Dec. History Society Meeting at Pen-y Cae Mawr Chapel
- 12th Dec. History Society Resource session 7 p.m. Recreation Hall
- 24th Dec. Nativity Play & Christingle Shirenewton Church 4.00 p.m.
- 28th Dec. Dawn Solstice Walk to the Stones on Grey Hill.
- 31st Dec. A village New Years Eve Party at The Huntsman
- 3rd Jan. Whist Drive—7.30 p.m. Recreation Hall
- 24/25/26th Jan Panto –Beauty and the Beast –Earlswood Hall.
- 7th Feb. Whist Drive—7.30 Recreation Hall

## ***Chepstow Physiotherapy Clinic*** *Specialist in Musculoskeletal & Sports injuries*

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Dear Friends,

In last months letter I told that our Vicar, Hugh Trenchard, was retiring on ill health grounds, sadly I must tell you that before actually retiring, Hugh died on the 16<sup>th</sup> November. This was a great shock to us all and we hold his wife Gill and mother Eunice in our prayers. It was our hope that in retirement that Hugh would be able to begin to recover his health to the extent that he and Gill would be able to enjoy some years together. By the time you read this Hugh's funeral will have taken place and we will have said our farewells and have the opportunity to thank God for Hugh's ministry amongst us.

I first met Hugh while he was in transition from the Rectorial Benefice Cyncoed and his move to the Board of Mission where he served as the Social responsibility Officer (SRO) co-ordinating the Church in Wales Province for this activity. He came into my office at the Welsh Office seeking European grants for the church; I remember saying that I could spare him 15 minutes, but we parted 2 hours later after deep theological discussion and lots of cups of tea. I subsequently attended some of his meetings with Diocesan SRO officers and later joined the Board of Mission Council. During his ministry in the Caerwent Benefice we have been in close contact and I have had the benefit of his wide knowledge of church history and the breadth and depth of his reading . His pastoral ministry with the sick and bereaved is widely acknowledged especially by those that receive it. We will miss him for many reasons.

The four Parochial Church Councils will now play their part in seeking a new minister for our Benefice, and this work starts at the beginning of December and we pray that God will guide us all as we draw up a "Parish profile" describing our vision for the future of our parishes. During the interregnum we must work together supporting each other so that God's work may continue during this time. Our Group service is on the 30<sup>th</sup> December at St. Mary's Llanfair Discoed at 9.45 a.m. and the Penhow group of parishes have accepted an invitation to join us.

Advent Sunday is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December and it's during the season of Advent that we reflect on our Christian lives and prepare to once again celebrate the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest of all God's gifts to us. Yes there will be other preparations in progress for Christingles and Nativity plays as well as hunting for Christmas gifts, but these will be meaningless at heart of what we do is to the glory of God.

There are many services in December to which we can look forward to, and I hope as many of you as possible will come along and join the celebrations.

I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Nansi Davies, Curate.

### From the Registers

28th October 2007 a service of Holy Matrimony was held for Joanna Fraser Mumby and Adam Charles John French.

9th November a service of thanksgiving and celebration for the life of Doris Isobel Cleaves. Born 19th August 1919 died 28th October 2007.

### Shirenewton Church 200 Club

The result of the November draw was:

Ticket No	Winner	Prize
109	Holly Martin	£40
124	James Baker	£30
120	Gordon Hughes	£20
6	John Bowen	£10

Omitted from last months Draw result details £10 was won by ticket;

No. 171 held by Richie Tout.

Apologies from the editor for this omission.

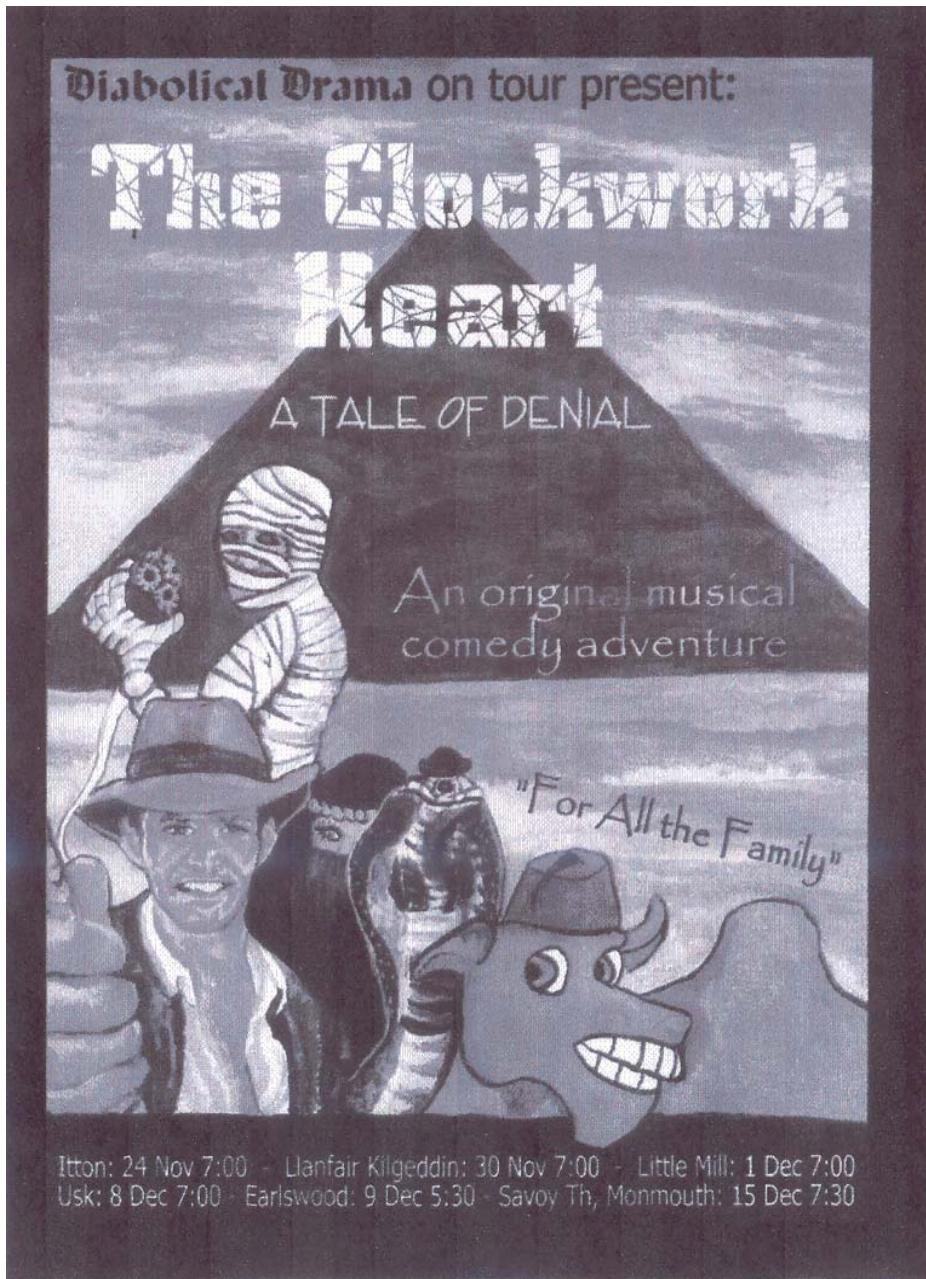
## The Clockwork Heart 23rd Nov—15th Dec 2007

Come to Cairo for a family-friendly evening out at the Golden Eyelash pub. Meet its strange but fascinating clientele: archaeologist adventurers deranged toys, secret societies, belly dancers and astronaut funeral directors? Want to know who Hatshepal is, what is the evil politician up to and how the actions of a toy make will affect mankind's destiny? And what really makes Pharaohs and mummies tick? "The Clockwork Heart—A Tale of Denial" follows the adventures of Brett Avalaunch and his cohort . They seek fame and fortune by excavating ancient Egyptian relics However they dig up much more than they bargained for - and fall under the scrutiny of the Secret Order of the Golden Eyelash.  
Written and Directed by Sam Densham  
Music by Richard Kubiak

Tickets:- Adults £6.00 Children £5.00  
Itton Hall—Sat. 24th Nov. 7.00—on the door  
Llanvair Kilgeddin Village Hall—Fri. 30th Nov. 7.00 - Jean 01873 840218  
Little Mill Village Hall—Sat. 1st Dec. 7.00—Pat 01495 785113  
Usk Memorial Hall—Sat 8th Dec. 7.00—Sue 01291 673049  
Earlswood & Newchurch Memorial Hall—  
Sun 9th Dec. 5.30 Penny 01633 450617  
Savoy Theatre, Monmouth - Sat. 15th Dec. 7.30—Vic 01600 750488

**Now in our third year, Diabolical Drama are a local amateur community theatre group. We are open to everyone in the community and would welcome support from individuals and companies alike who may share our goal of bringing a sense of fun and inclusion into our otherwise frantic lifestyles !**

Contact details and information about our past shows, on our web-site: [www.diabolicaldrama](http://www.diabolicaldrama)



## Hugh Trenchard

It was with deep sadness and shock that the PCC and Parishioners of Shirenewton learned of the untimely death of their much loved Rector Hugh Trenchard. Our condolences go out to his wife during this very difficult time.

Hugh will always be remembered by us as a Joyous Christian who extolled us from the pulpit to be full of praise and to enjoy the true Christmas message. A fervent Welshman, knowledgeable rugby supporter and raconteur who made all feel comfortable in his presence. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the new Church extension and it is deeply regretted that he he will not be present to see it being used for the benefit of the Church in the Community.

Hugh spent eleven years serving the parish during a time of challenge for the Church. One of his great strengths was the way he conducted funerals, weddings and that is how he will be most fondly remembered.



## Carol Singing around the Village Christmas Tree

Come and join us as we sing carols around the tree in the Tredegar Arms car park - on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December at 6.30. p.m.

## SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

Dates for the next couple of months

Date	Time	Venue
2nd December	9.45	Sunday Club The Chantry
9th December	9.45	Sunday Club & Advent Mini Fayre
16th December	9.45	Sunday Club The Chantry
23rd December	9.45	Nativity Dress Rehearsal—Church
24th December	9.45	Nativity and Christingle—Church
6th January		Sunday Club re-starts— at The Chantry
	9.45	Bring along one of your favourite Christmas presents as long as it is not too large or alive.
13th January	9.45	Sunday club The Chantry
20th January	9.45	Family Service The Church
27th January	9.45	Sunday Club The Chantry

*Shirenewton Sunday Club welcomes all children from 3 years. Do come and join us.*

*Jane Smith-Haddon 641 525*

*Glynis MacDonald 641818*

### The Christingle Service and Nativity Play

Shirenewton Church

Christmas Eve - 4.00

Sunday Club, Bell Ringers and Friends present:

#### 'Flock to Bethlehem'

This service which includes candles and carols, shepherds and sheep, retells in our 'semi-traditional' way the story of the birth of Jesus.

Everyone welcome.

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yesterday and they are looking fine, shows how tough they can be. Hopefully I will also get these planted this weekend, but if I do, they will be protected from the worst of the winter weather by a couple of cloches, just as an insurance policy. I will put some more seeds in pots over the coming weeks.

This should help ensure that some survive and that we extend the cropping period over a longer time. I'm also going to try some early peas. As before these will be sown in peat in a length of gutter in the greenhouse, but will be planted in the tunnel for a bit of extra protection. Hopefully this will provide us with a first picking of peas in early May.

One job I really need to concentrate on over the coming weeks is hedge cutting. We don't have many evergreen hedges at Barn Farm, so cold frosty weather isn't normally a problem. We have some nice beech and mixed hedges that need attention, but these can be cut at any time now and in any weather. The little box hedge around the formal part of the garden will need to be cut when there is no threat of frost though. If not, the cut edges soon turn brown and then you run the risk of getting die-back, which spoils the effect. One other job I really must get round to as well is sorting out the fruit cage, removing all this years fruiting canes, especially from the raspberries. Maybe a job to be left for after the Christmas pudding!

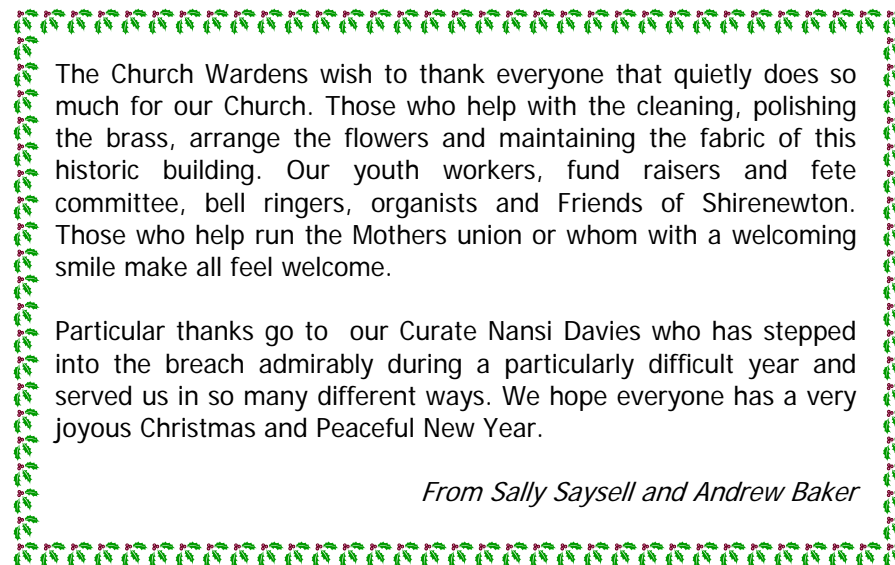
Here's wishing you all a happy and successful Christmas and New Year. Happy gardening until next year.

Steve Hunt.

## Wanted – Cleaner for Earlswood Memorial Hall

2 – 3 hours a fortnight.  
Term time only.

Contact:-  
Glynis MacDonald on 641 818 for more details



The Church Wardens wish to thank everyone that quietly does so much for our Church. Those who help with the cleaning, polishing the brass, arrange the flowers and maintaining the fabric of this historic building. Our youth workers, fund raisers and fete committee, bell ringers, organists and Friends of Shirenewton. Those who help run the Mothers union or whom with a welcoming smile make all feel welcome.

Particular thanks go to our Curate Nansi Davies who has stepped into the breach admirably during a particularly difficult year and served us in so many different ways. We hope everyone has a very joyous Christmas and Peaceful New Year.

From Sally Saysell and Andrew Baker

## A MESSAGE OF THANKS

The family of the late Mrs Lillian Remnant would like to thank all family and friends for the cards and letters sent following her bereavement, and thanks also to all that attended the funeral at Gaerllwyd Baptist Chapel.

## EARLSWOOD VALLEY METHODIST CHAPEL

Will give you a very warm welcome at their

**CAROL SERVICE**

on

**SUNDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2007**

at

**3pm**

Come and join us for this festive service  
Followed by a cup of tea and mince pies



## The Christmas Mini Fair at Shirenewton Church

On Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> December

Every year the Sunday Club supports the **Tigers Club** in Uganda and we hold a Christmas Mini fair in the church. After the church service, we will be selling our recycled Christmas cards and tags, pots of spring bulbs, mini Christmas cakes, Christmas Yule baskets and much, much more. The members of Sunday Club work hard to make the crafts and to run the Mini Fair themselves - so do support them by coming along on the 9<sup>th</sup> at around 10.45.

The umbrella organisation for The Tigers is Retrack and I have just read the Annual Review and it makes for challenging reading. One 12 year old, abused by his step father walked 85 km to Kampala and, in return for shelter, was required to scavenge for scrap metal. But he was accused of stealing, severely beaten and three of his fingers cut off. Luckily he was found by, and is being cared for the Tigers.

The review admits the work is not easy - many of the boys have suffered rejection, abuse and violence whilst living rough on the streets and it takes a lot of hard work, perseverance and patience to regain the trust of these boys. But it pays off - by the end of 2006, 573 homeless children had been offered a permanent alternative to life on the streets.

So please support Sunday Club's Mini Fair. All the money will go to the fantastic work that is being carried out by the Retrack's Tigers Club in Uganda.

*I've been busy cementing an edge in alongside our drive. I think I mentioned that the strip to the fence was then going to be filled with soil, planted up with spring bulbs and sown with grass. I have completed just over half now and although I say so myself it is beginning to look quite tidy. Being mean, I didn't want to have to buy several tonnes of topsoil to fill this area in - more importantly this isn't very environmentally sound. Instead I am digging the paths up in between the raised beds in the vegetable patch, using this in the base, as it's a bit varied in nature. Next to go in is the bonfire, well sort of anyway! There is about ten years worth of bonfire to remove. This comprises of a mixture of ash, peat and soil. The first is self explanatory, the peat has come from years of pots and planters that were dumped for disposal, but never burnt and the soil has come from the numerous plants and weeds that we have also disposed of. Some of which has burnt, but most of which has rotted down into what is a quite nice loamy mixture. I am having to remove the odd coat hanger and door hinge, not to mention some plastic pots that have got mixed in as well, but at least we are re-cycling what we can. I am also pinching a couple of barrow loads of fine soil from the raised beds, but the reasoning behind this is to allow me the room to administer several barrow loads of manure instead. Each bed will shortly be rough dug and covered with manure so that it has the winter to gradually work in.*

*The onions I planted in early October are now through and look well. I haven't noticed any garlic yet, so I hope my experiment of saving some cloves from last seasons' crop works out. If not the household will be garlic free next year - good news for vampires! I need to get on and clean off one of the raised beds this weekend if the weather is kind. We had a collection of asparagus crowns delivered this week, and I need to get these into the ground as soon as possible. They look well at the moment but if the weather proves unkind I will have to earth them in somewhere sheltered to keep them going until I can prepare the bed. The autumn broad beans that I planted in pots were moved out of the greenhouse the other day. Mice had succeeded in eating four of them, which is amazing really because the two black and white cats we have usually sleep in the same greenhouse. The bean plants were starting to get drawn up in the warmth. Unfortunately I chose to put them out just before the cold night but I looked at them*



## Gardening Corner

*Funny to think that it is now almost the end of November as I write this page, the last in 2007. Looking outside into the garden I can see clematis, roses, penstemons and even the odd iris still flowering away, not to mention the more traditional autumn type flowers. Even the bees from our hives are flying strongly. This can be good as well as bad news, depending on whether they are finding much food. I was watching some entering one hive the other day but they were carrying little pollen. If they remain active the likelihood is that they will burn more food flying around than they are actually bringing into the hive. I did check the status of the hives several weeks ago and they had a good supply of honey that should see them through a normal winter. I was hoping to extract some honey this year but for the amount that I would have bottled I decided it was best to leave with the bees!*

*The under-gardener has been busy cutting away those flowers that have finished for the year. This is a lot earlier than usual as we wouldn't bother normally until late spring. However we decided that as we might get a really wet winter again (at least more a risk of this than extremely cold!), it would be better to remove the rotting foliage, as it sheltered huge numbers of slugs and snails last year. The frogs and hedgehogs snaffled many of them, but they struggled! Talking of hedgehogs, we will leave all the tall grasses to gradually fall down. These provide the perfect home for an active hedgehog, during the winter, as they can get right in underneath the grass that acts like a thatched roof. Reminds me of the nest we found several seasons ago when the little animal had found a carrier bag and pushed that just under the grass layer, to help keep his leaf bed nice and dry!*

*The better weather has meant that the greenhouse had an extended season as well. We have just picked the last tomatoes and cucumber, fortunately just before the cold frosty night of last week. Unfortunately that night finished the dwarf beans off that we had in the tunnel. I was away in Cambridge and forgot to give the underling instructions on covering them up with fleece. Never mind, the carrots are still going, and we have plenty of leeks, Brussels and parsnips to keep us going well beyond Christmas. The greenhouse has been cleared of all the old plant material and this has been put on the bonfire. Most of the stems and leaves had traces of tomato blight, so I didn't want to have this introduced to the compost heap.*



A Christmas Concert in Shirenewton Church

Get Christmas off to a great start with a seasonal feast of song and music.

Featuring  
Phillip Schartz on trumpet  
The Netherwent Choir  
And refreshments.

Sunday 2nd December 5.00—6.30

Tickets £8.00 or £7.00 for  
"Friends of the Church"  
Concessions £5.00.

Tickets available from the church  
wardens.

Sally Saysell and Andrew Baker  
Or ring Glynis on 641818

## **REPORT ON SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> November 2007**

### ***Police Report:***

A trailer was stolen from a yard near Dyers House during the night of 24/10/07.

There was a burglary at a house in Shirenewton during the afternoon of 10/11/07, no-one was home at the time. PC Mason did not think this one was related to other recent break-ins and attempted burglaries in the area.

There was a road accident on the Crick Road involving just one vehicle when the driver lost control and hit a tree 09/11/07.

On 03/11/07, property stolen in a recent burglary was found in bushes near the church, items were returned to owner after forensic examination.

On 08/11/07 an abandoned vehicle on Crick Road was recovered by the owner (it had just broken down).

### ***Planning***

Tredegar Farm, Newchurch. Conversion of a storage building to children's day nursery plus outdoor play area and parking turning area. Nursery is planned for up to 40 children initially.

Refusal recommended.

Laurel Cottage, Earlswood. Conversion of barn to one bedroom dwelling (re-submission)

Approval recommended.

Chwarae Teg, Batwell nr Usk Road. Renovation & extension to existing dwelling.

Approval recommended.

Planning Appeal on Land opposite Brook Cottage, Earlswood

Refusal recommended.

***TORCHLIGHT CAROL SERVICE***  
***at***  
***TINTERN ABBEY***  
***Monday, December 10th at 7.00pm***  
***(assemble from 6.30pm for torchlight procession)***  
***With***  
***THE MARTIN SINGERS***  
***In aid of Barnardos***

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## Mary Vittle

B.Sc. D.Pod M MchS

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### *Items of Local Concern*

1. Additional Post box – the request was eventually turned down by Post Office as they do not perceive a need. If you notice that your local box is full, make a note of the date and, let your local councillor or the clerk know. Or complain to the Post Office yourself on 08457 740 740 their Customer Services number or submit a complaint via the Royal Mail website [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com).
2. Barrier at Mynyddbach open space – there has been a delay in canvassing residents views, however several residents in attendance at the meeting made their opinions felt quite strongly, and they clearly do not want any barriers or boulders.
3. The shop - investigations of options are still on-going.
4. Gwent Police are looking for contribution to funding further Community Support Officer. The council felt that this was not appropriate use of SCC funds as the Police have their own funding mechanisms and precept raising powers.
5. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan can be viewed/downloaded from the Monmouthshire CC website, there is currently a link from the council's homepage: - [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk).

### *Other items*

There was a lengthy discussion about the way in which the community council allocates its funds to support local activities. I may have nodded off whilst it was going on but I think they eventually decided to leave things as they are for this year and possibly re-consider funding for the next financial year.

The full minutes of the Community Council can be found on the Church website.

Next meeting will be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007 at 7.30 p.m.

Alison Broughton

## THANKS YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

It is now nearly a year since I started serious training for the London Marathon and seven months since having completed it. The blisters have healed, the toe nails re-grown and because of your overwhelming support, I have managed to raise enough money to buy a fabulous hand machine which is already in use in helping to rehabilitate patients both young and old with neurological problems down at Chepstow Hospital. Your generosity has continued and we are now saving up to buy a hoist that will allow patients with more severe disabilities to transfer and help them to participate more effectively in their therapies as well as allowing more efficient use of professional staff.

I wanted to say an enormous thank you from myself and from the people who will benefit by using these machines. I have been touched at the effort people have gone to and also that you have continued to remember us even though some time has passed since all the initial effort. I feel very lucky to live in such a close village community and am proud to tell both patients and hospital staff how we have managed to acquire all this wonderful equipment

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas,

*Clare, the mad runner of Shirenewton!*

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## SHIRENEWTON WHIST DRIVES

Once more we had 37 players at the November Drive (we could have had 39 but we only had 38 seats available so the two latecomers went off to patronise one of the local taverns instead). For the **December Drive** on the 6<sup>th</sup> we will have ample chairs in reserve. There are now 44 players in our Pool and we want to keep them and have room for an occasional new or visiting player .

We will re-start the 2008 Drives on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, followed by February 7<sup>th</sup>. All Drives commence at 7.30 p.m. promptly at The Recreation Hall.

Enquiries to Auriol Horton. 0291 641844.

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Clinical Reflexologist  
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## SAINT PETER'S NEWCHURCH

We would like to remind you of our Annual Carol Service on the 16th of December at 2.30 p.m. when all will be very welcome. Please come and enjoy a mince pie and glass of sherry/cup of tea/coffee afterwards.

Our regular services are held on the first and third Sundays of the month.

There will be no service at St Peter's on Christmas Day.

## **THE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS**

New Year at The Huntsman 2007

Proceedings to commence 7:30 pm

Background music by our local DJ - Peter Burke  
Live entertainment by Zoe Schwartz & Rob Koral  
Buffet from 8:30 pm throughout the evening.

Please contact Phil, at the Huntsman, 01291 641521  
to register for tickets.

Tickets £30.00 per head.

The last two years have been a sell out so get your name on the list.

## Shirenewton W.I.

At our November meeting we decided to make a donation from funds to a WI in Bucharest who wants to enrich the lives of orphans and street children at the Pinocchio centre. Members also contributed generously so we were able to send them £37.

The Welsh Federation of WIs has joined with Amnesty International to act against trafficking of women for sexual exploitation in Wales. This is a growing problem affecting not only cities but also in some rural communities. We were asked to send cards to our AM.

Our speaker was Hugo Nieuwenhuzien who gave an illustrated talk on "Ceramic Restoration". His interest in ceramics began when a student in Amsterdam where Hugo spent his spare time combing wasteland for interesting bottles and china. When he moved to England he took a course on restoration and set up in business. He showed us slides of pieces he had worked on – both before and after his restoration and we were able to see items he was currently restoring. Finally we were able to try our hand at mixing paint to match a colour, we did not find it easy. We were surprised to find that someone with such expertise was living in our village and we did not know.

Our next meeting is our Christmas dinner at the Tredegar Arms 13th December.

Next year our meetings will be held on the second Thursday of the month at 7.15 pm in the Recreation Hall (instead of the third Thursday of the month). – new members are very welcome.

The dates that we will be meeting next year are as follows:

10th January, 14th February, 13th March, 10th April,  
8th May, 12th June, 10th July, 14th August, 11th September,  
9th October, 13th November, 11th December

With the business side of the meeting over our Chairman introduced our speaker Ian McFarlane and as we have come to expect of Ian an excellent informative humorous talk given by him on the subject of Gaerllwyd. We could not get more *local history* than this, the stones have been standing there for over 3,700 years, it must have been a good place to live even then!

The second volume of the Gwent County History (Vol II ), 'The Age of the Marcher Lords 1070 – 1536' is now available through the society at a special price of £45. To order please contact 641376.

At our meeting on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> November the speaker Anne Rainsbury (Curator of Chepstow Museum) gave us an interesting talk on the subject of 'Nathaniel Wells of Piercefield House'. Nathaniel Wells, former black slave went on to become "High Sheriff" of Monmouthshire

Our Society will be hosting the A.G.M. of the Gwent History Council (President: Sir Richard Hanbury Tenison; Chairman Mr Peter Strong) on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> December at Shirenewton Recreational Hall at 2.00 pm. Guest speakers will be: Richard Davies (Abergavenny L.H.S.) with a talk entitled 'Taking a trip up to Abergavenny', and Tony Hopkins (Deputy County Archivist) who's talk is entitled, 'The World we Lost'.

We will be visiting Pen-y-Cae-Mawr Chapel on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> December, at 7.30 pm (if your not sure of the location please give me a ring on 641376) There will be a talk on the history of the chapel followed by tea and mince pies. We are so lucky to have so many interesting places to visit. This is the Society's 7th Christmas meeting and each year we have visited a different religious build of the Parish

We are holding an **evening** Resource Session on Wednesday, 12th December at 7.00 pm until 9.00 pm, please come along and browse, there might even be mince pies and a cup of tea, all are welcome.

We will be holding our usual **Solstice Walk** up to Grey Hill standing stones on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> December, meeting at the reservoir car park at **7.30 am**, sunrise at 8.10 am, breakfast afterwards at the Woodland Tavern. If you would like to come on this walk please let me know at 01291 641376, again everyone welcome.

Our January Meeting will take place on Tuesday, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008 at 7.30 pm at the Huntsman Hotel, when we will be holding our annual quiz.



# SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 1090167

Our A.G.M. took place to almost a full house, with a talk entitled 'The History and Pre-History of Gaerllwyd' given by Ian McFarlane, this being the attraction, I think, rather than the business of the A.G.M. meeting!

The present officers and committee members were voted back on to the committee with exception of our Treasurer John Clelland who has moved to Cornwall (do you see the lengths you have to go to relinquish this post). We hope John & Elaine all the best in their new home.

Chairman:	Anne Underwood
Secretary:	Shirley Bonsey
Speaker Secretary:	Jessica King
Resource secretary:	Dorothy Brabon

Since this meeting we have *persuaded* a society member to take up the post of Treasurer/Membership and hope to co-opt him on at the next meeting.

Our Chairman, Anne Underwood, stated we had completed a successful year. With interesting talks given by such knowledgeable people with such varied subjects reflecting our local history. Field trips were taken to Dewstow Gardens with supper afterwards at the Golf Club. An intrepid visit to Gilgal Chapel in Wentwood on a perfect Sunday afternoon was well worth a visit. We also took part in the Church Open Day with a flower arrangement depicting our collection of old maps.

We have added to our resources to such an extent this year that we need to find extra storage and hope to have purpose-built cupboard built in the Recreational Hall (funds willing). The society published a second publication this year entitled 'Beating the Bounds of the Parish of Saint Thomas a Becket', our sales have been rather restricted because our main sales outlet 'The Village Shop' as you all know is closed. The both publications can be obtained from The Huntsman Hotel, The Chepstow Museum, The Tourist Office in Chepstow and if you contact this number 01291 641376, perfect for a stocking filler!

## STARGAZING IN DECEMBER

The planet Venus is still shining very brightly to the south in the morning sky.

The crescent moon lies near Venus at early morning on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> December.

The reddish planet Mars can be seen in the evening sky to the south-east, to the right of the bright stars Castor and Pollux in the constellation of Gemini, the Twins. It is getting brighter until it is at its closest to Earth on 17 December, the closest for two years.

The Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year occurs on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

In the evening, to the southeast the constellation Orion is particularly impressive – three bright stars make up his belt; two stars are his shoulders, and two more make his legs. The bright blue-white star in Orion's right leg is Rigel. The bright star at Orion's left shoulder is Betelgeuse (pronounced "beetle-juice"). Betelgeuse means "the armpit of the giant"! 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. Because massive stars burn their fuel at a much faster rate, Betelgeuse has an estimated lifetime of only 5 to 10 million years. This can be compared with our Sun's lifetime of about 10 billion years.

The W-shape of Cassiopeia lies to the northwest, whilst the 7 stars forming the Plough can be seen in the northeast.

Edward Joseph Lowe lived at Shirenewton Hall from 1880 until his death in 1900. His many interests included Astronomy. In the summer of 1860 he joined a group of scientists led by the Astronomer Royal on the HMS Himalaya to carry out scientific observations of the Total Solar Eclipse in the Bilbao region of Northern Spain.

Dave Thomas

## SHIRENEWTON MOTHERS UNION

At our meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 8 members and three guests welcomed Jean Hackett who now represents the Diocese on the Faith and Policy Unit at Mary Sumner House, as our Speaker on The Slave Trade past and present. She gave a well researched and presented graphic display to illustrate her talk. Whilst there is little we can now do to change what happened in the past, Jean urged us to support any efforts by the MU (and other groups) to bring to light cases of domestic and commercial slavery being perpetrated in the South Wales area.

Jean also brought to our attention the fact that recently the United Nations Commission on the Status of women, of which the MU is a member, agreed that the Commission should call on governments and relevant institutions to act for global development, and particularly to: –

1. Recognise the critical role of both formal and non-formal education in the achievement of poverty eradication and other development goals.
2. Increasing girls' ability to attend school and extra-curricular activities by investing in public infrastructure projects and quality public services.
3. Put simply this means that women and girls should have access to schools and other educational projects and that money should be invested in such things as easy access to clean water. At the moment many girls spend hours fetching water and helping in the home while the boys go to school. The MU wants to change this.

Jean told us that the UK Government committed itself to implementing these two agreements in March 2007 but she asks MU members and others who support our aims to write to our MP to ask him to urge the Government to keep its promises and do more to give every girl the opportunity to be educated. For those with internet connections there is now a direct link to the Prime Minister at "10 Downing St. e-petitions" found through the Google search engine.

## *Caroline's Cookery Corner*

*I apologise for giving a recipe that is out of season, it's something that really annoys me, but as there are so many frozen lobsters around now I have been asked by a few people how to prepare and cook them, so I thought I would write it in this month's mag. In case anyone wants it for Christmas.*

*To prepare the lobster is simple. Place underside down and with a sharp knife cut lengthways—you can see a fine line down the back I generally stick the knife through the top of the shell and cut down the tail, then turn it around to finish cutting the head. On the inside just below the eye is a sac, remove that on both halves. Now the lobster is ready for to eat if serving cold.*

*I recently made a risotto with lobsters, a little fiddly but tasty. Remove all the flesh from the lobster—cracking the claws with a nutcracker. When removing the flesh from the shell you will find some feathery bits—throw those away and place the rest in a saucepan with water and a fish stock cube and boil for 20 minutes. Cut the tail into large chunks. Fry chopped onion and celery in oil until soft. Add a good knob of butter and risotto rice and stir until the rice is coated. Add a good splash of wine and reduce, , then add the stock so that it coats the reduce— keep adding more stock until the rice is nearly cooked. Add frozen peas and chopped cherry tomatoes. When the rice is cooked and moist add the lobster to heat it through. Finally stir in chopped parsley and season.*

*Sorry I have not given any quantities, but I just threw everything in.*

*If you want to serve the lobster hot without going to all the trouble of picking it out; cut in half, remove the sac—(all the rest is delicious).*

*Crack the claws, dot the flesh with 1 oz. butter and place under the grill in a tin for about 8 minutes until heated through—don't overcook or it will be rubbery.*

*Melt 1 oz butter in a small saucepan, add a 1/4 pint double cream & a good dash of Worcestershire sauce and season. When lobster is heated through, pour any juices from the grill papoured over each half.n into the sauce and boil for a minute.*

*Serve the lobster with the sauce .*

*Once again our thanks to Caroline Davies.*

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**NFU Mutual**

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Members are invited to the Deanery Advent Service at Mathern Church at 7.p.m. on the 11<sup>th</sup> December and to a Carol Service held by Llanvaches MU at Llanvaches Church on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> December.

Members are reminded that at our **next Meeting on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> December (2.30 p.m. at the Recreation Hall)** we will be enjoying favourite readings, carols and festive fare with Peggy Greedy as our guest.

If you wish to attend the Diocesan Luncheon at the Parkway Hotel Cwmbran on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February (12 noon for 12.30) please bring £14.00 to the December meeting.

**Our first meeting of 2008 will be on the 9<sup>th</sup> January – please make every effort to attend this meeting.**

**New members will be most welcome.**  
**Auriol Horton, Branch Leader (01291 641 844)**

**ADVERT**

Caerwent Church has only 2 pine pews left for sale. They are about 7 feet long and 33 inches high. Examples of same are to be found in Caerwent church - the pews in front of the pulpit are the same.

Anyone interested can contact Jenny Powell on 01291 421086 or John Waters 641 449.

## **EARLSWOOD AND NEWCHURCH WEST MEMORIAL HALL NEWS**

Hello Readers, welcome to the Hall News.

On 11th November we once again held our annual Remembrance Day Service, at the Hall, along with many other services around the Country.

On behalf of the committee I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended with special thanks to John Waters who conducted the service, with his precise timing to arrive exactly at the eleven o'clock, two minute silence. Also to Mrs. Kath Wittington for playing the organ, and Jeremiah for laying the wreath, Ken Morton for reading the names to be remembered from the plaque, and to all those that attended this service to those that died for us, what is now many years ago.

The service was followed by refreshments. But sadly the numbers attending the service were down by about 60% on previous years, which is a shame that these named were from this small community went to fight for our sakes without thought for themselves never to return. It was in memory of these brave few that the Memorial Hall was built.

The Hall makes an annual contribution to the Royal British Legion, along with the proceeds from the annual collection. With the reduced numbers attending the service, sadly it meant that our donation to the RBL was not as good as it has been in previous years.

The RLB is as important today as ever with our armed services seeing serious action in Iraq and Afghanistan, with many receiving serious injuries, and losing their lives. Our support today is as crucial as ever in supporting this organisation that provides such valuable support for the injured, their families and families of those that have given their lives. (A brief visit to the Star & Garter Home for servicemen will show just many young men are still being seriously injured).

The committee send their best wishes to David Heritage of our committee who has been ill for several weeks, also to Dorothy Cockran who is recovering from a replacement knee operation.

Our sympathies also go to Mrs Remnant, and Mrs Cliff Lewis our thoughts are with them and their families following their recent bereavements.

Sadly we also have to report the passing away of Mrs. Watkin from Lower Earlswood, a lady that has lived in the village for some 60 years.

*John Spary Committee Member*

## **FAIRTRADE NEWS**

Usk has just recently been awarded the status of Fair Trade town! I know that there are many people anxious that Wales should have the accolade of becoming the first Fair Trade country in the UK, but apparently Ireland has also made a great deal of progress towards the award. Criteria for the award are quite challenging and complex, and I know that Fair Trade cities have to resubmit their applications regularly, so there can be no resting on laurels.

There is no doubt that the idea of Fairtrade has spread enormously. Apparently UK Fairtrade purchases benefit 7 million people in the developing world: farmers, workers and their families. All manner of companies and groups as well as individuals have understood that this is a concrete, relatively straightforward step to take to make the world a fairer place.

As always I am concerned that many people's understanding of Fairtrade does not extend much beyond chocolate, tea and coffee, and perhaps more recently bananas. Cotton will, perhaps, be the next big thing. It should of course be organic ( for reasons I have gone into before).

M&S have t shirts. My latest craze is for Pants To Poverty underwear! Have a look at their website.

Do contact me for a Traidcraft catalogue or more info. Marion McAdam  
641 316 [m316@gmail.com](mailto:m316@gmail.com)

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## **A NOTE OF THANKS FROM THE EDITOR**

This being the last magazine of 2007, I would like to thank all our loyal readers, but especial thanks to all our contributors. They can all take a months leave now (until the end of January) before I start chasing them again. But thank you for your contributions they make the magazine.

Also thank you to our advertisers they make a valuable contribution to the funding of the magazine, and hopefully they are achieving results from their contributions.

Have a very peaceful Christmas and a happy New Year.

*Bob O'Keefe*



## MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL

*CHEPSTOW CHORAL SOCIETY* is again delighted to be offering its annual programme of carols, seasonal readings and choral items in anticipation of Christmas. The Society invites all to this occasion, which for many is a welcome respite from the seemingly ceaseless activity prior to Christmas. Come and join with us to enjoy an afternoon of lovely music in a magnificent setting. Tickets (£6/£5 concessions, children free), to include a programme, may be obtained from *Chepstow Bookshop/choir members* and further information may be obtained by telephoning Marjorie Duerden (01291 623310).

### **SUNDAY DECEMBER 9<sup>th</sup> 2007:**

#### ***CHRISTMAS MUSIC and FAMILY CAROLS***

***St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow.***

***3.00pm***

***Musical Director: Graham Bull***

***Organist: Peter Cook***

Chepstow Choral Society is affiliated to the Welsh Amateur Music Federation.



## 1<sup>ST</sup> SHIRENEWTON GUIDES.

The parish magazine may be counting down to Christmas now with the publication of the bumper edition for December and January but, at Guides, we are counting down to winter indoor camp! It would be great to say we were all organised and prepared - but it would be a little fib. However, as they say, it will be alright on the night. We are all looking forward to a great weekend and hope the weather is dry.

Our Young Leaders have been very busy training for their Duke of Edinburgh expedition which they hope to complete this summer. Apparently they all did very well in very low cloud in rugged and unfamiliar terrain - they even brought the County Commissioner back safely. The following weekend they ran an activity at a County Brownie day. This saw them leading disco dance classes for 6 hours. I'm not sure which they found the most tiring. If we had such things as Brownie points you would get them girls!

The Dreamcatcher project was very popular with the girls and all the art work is now completed. All we have to do is sew it all together (I think Kittens mum may help here but she doesn't know it yet). Our next meeting will celebrate St Andrews' Day with caber tossing, indoor tiddly golf and dancing led by a prominent member of the community!

The New Year may well see us carrying on our old tradition of a Christmas party in January and the rest is still to be decided. One thing is for sure, we will be busy as usual.

With very best wishes to you all for a safe, peaceful and happy Christmas.

Kestrel	Helen Cann	01291 650856
Kitten	Amanda Turner	01291 650763
Zebra, Bumble, Bee and Koala		

### The Church Website.

In the run up to Christmas I hope you will be doing your online shopping through the Church website. Remember it costs you nothing and the church gets a commission on your sale. I constantly stress that most of the 'big' high street stores are represented on the site. So, if you are shopping at John Lewis, Tesco's, Argos, etc you can access their websites through the church site and earn the church a small commission for doing so.

Since I started monitoring the site with a 'proper' monitoring system in early June this year, I can report that we have had 395 unique visitors with almost 2,500 page views from 23 countries including Australia, the USA, Canada and, of course, Ireland and the UK. They can't all be interested in the community council minutes - can they?


Now listen very carefully I shall type this only once - reading it MAY SAVE YOU MONEY. Now I have your attention .....

Two recent aspects of my personal computing are worth relating. Both involve renewals. Lets call them the saga of the printer and the saga of the security suite.

The saga of the printer: So our HP DeskJet had run out of ink and needed new printer cartridges. I searched the usual suspects (through the church website of course). They are the Inkclub, Ink Factory, Amazon, etc. I couldn't believe that the B&W cartridge was £22.92 and the colour cartridge was £45.99. Ouch. I search sites not on the church website - no difference! So I purchased the cheaper recycled cartridges at £4.98 & £7.99 respectively. They didn't work. In fact I've never had success with any of the 'plug compatible' or 'recycled' printer cartridges. So what was a man to do? The answer, obviously, was to buy a new printer. I purchased a brand new HP DeskJet colour printer (which, by the way, also acted as a photocopier and scanner) for about £35. New cartridges for this printer were £8 and £9.50 respectively. So, hard to believe but true, a new more functional printer and new cartridges for less than the cost of the cartridges for the old printer. I can only assume it is because the old printer was old and thus the demand for cartridges is not high. Its sad reflection on our throw away society, but I saved about £10 and got a better printer.

Shirenewton Opera & Drama Society  
present

# Beauty and the Beast



Earlswood Memorial Hall

Thur 24th, Fri 25th & Sat 26th January 2008  
at 7.30pm

Tickets available from Monday 17th December  
from  
Barbara Walters Tel No 01291 641338

Price: Adults £6.00 Children £4.00



## SHIRENEWTON , MYNYDD BACH & EARLSWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.

The Gwent Police have advised us that there has been a local spate of crime involving the theft of metals.

There is a large demand for all metals at this time and scrap metal is sold for high prices. Theft is occurring from buildings, particularly copper and lead. But additionally, radiators, piping and other fixing are being stripped out, along the removal of lead from roofs. These activities take time and equipment, especially removing materials from roof tops.

Please report any such suspicious activity to the police.

Local homes have again been burgled through unsecured rear doors. Keep your home secure.

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### Beauty and the Beast

No panto is complete without a few youngsters!! If you are young -(5 -14) and would like a small part in this year's panto 'Beauty and the Beast' please contact Glynis on 641 818. It will mainly be a-singin' and a dancin'.

**Lesson:** check out whether its cheaper to buy new &, if so, purchase it through the church website!

With all the excitement about Identity Theft in the news at the moment, its also worth pointing out that you can subscribe to the CreditExpert Monitoring Service through the Finance & Insurance page in the church website shopping portal. This services, among other things, warns you if any of your credit records are searched. A search, if you are not applying for credit, may indicate that someone is trying to apply for credit in your name.

The saga of the security suite. It had been almost year since I'd purchased the Zone Alarm Security Suite so, naturally, the renewal notices started coming. We as a family run 5 separate PCs and we had a 5-PC licenses. When I looked at the cost of the renewal I was horrified. So a bit of research later I saved around £30 buying purchasing two brand new 3 user licenses of the Kaspersky Internet Security 7 - which comes very highly rated at the moment. As I purchased from Amazon, I won, the church won and Zone Alarm lost. Lesson: don't just renew your existing internet security suite. The different manufacturers are competing with each other the whole time. In fact, they are only as good as their last release. Shop around and be prepared to replace one with another.

Finally, this year to date, the church website has earned about £550 for the church and provided a valuable community service, so a big thank you to those who continue to support us - keeping shopping through the website. Happy Christmas & a prosperous New Year.

David Cornwell  
Webmaster

PS: don't forget the January Sales Bargains through the church website.  
[www.shirenewtonchurch.org](http://www.shirenewtonchurch.org)

## THE JAZZ NIGHT.

All those that attended the evening of jazz with the Robin Reece Jazz Band at Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall on 16th November enjoyed a fun evening of great music and entertainment from this well known band. Further more local charities received donations a result.

Chepstow's community Hospital Rehabilitation Department received £280 from the ticket sales, while any profits from the bar would go to the ongoing maintenance and improvements within the Hall.

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## The Bells.....The Bells

*November 2007*

The sad news of Hugh Trenchard's untimely death reached our Tower Captain late on Saturday night on the 16<sup>th</sup> November. There were more phone calls to be made in the morning. We must get there early to muffle the bells so as ring out over the village in mourning and as a mark of respect. This was duly done. Young Tom Mitchell was aroused from his slumbers by his father and came down to help Mike and Pip put the muffles on.

The first touch to be rung was 120 Grandsire Doubles, and a fine touch it was too. Tom took the treble and afterwards commented on how much he had enjoyed it.

On a lighter note Kate Stanley was awarded her Champion Campanologist - gold badge on the Sherbourne Teaching Aids Award Scheme. This is the last badge in the series and indicates that the ringer is now a competent method ringer. Claire, Jenny and Tom came along to give her a round of applause when the certificate and badge were presented at the Monmouth Branch Practice held at Magor on the 16<sup>th</sup> November by the Master of the Monmouth Branch of the Llandaff and Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell Ringers.

Pip Penny

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