

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



**Parishes of Shirenewton and Newchurch  
Magazine**

**READERS AND SIDES- PERSONS ROTA FOR JUNE**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>READER</b>	<b>SIDES-PERSON</b>
1st June	2nd Sunday after Trinity 9.45 a.m.	Mike Pierce Andrew Baker	Mike Pierce Allan Saysell
8th June	3rd Sunday after Trinity 9.45 a.m.	Winnie Jones Ernie Jones	Winnie Jones Ernie Jones
15th June	4th Sunday after Trinity 9.45 a.m.	Sally Saysell Bob Grattan	Bob Grattan Bernice Bowen
22nd June	5th Sunday after Trinity 9.45 a.m.	Margaret Lock Diane Marlow	Margaret Lock Diane Marlow
29th June	Group Service—Newchurch at 10.00 a.m.		
6th July	7th Sunday after Trinity 9.45 a.m.	Jean Jones Peter Jones	Jean Jones Peter Jones

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

<b>Priest in Charge.</b>	The Revd Nansi Davies	01633 400519
<b>CHURCH WARDENS:</b>	Sally Saysell	641369
	Andrew Baker	641925
	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

<b>COMMUNITY COUNCIL</b>	<b>John Harvey (Chairman)</b>	<b>641279</b>
<b>Clerk to Community</b>	<b>Council Carole Jones</b>	<b>641791</b>
<b>WI:</b>	<b>Jenny Bonner</b>	<b>641929</b>
<b>SCOUTS:</b>	<b>Dave Richardson</b>	<b>620356</b>
<b>GUIDES:</b>	<b>Helen Cann</b>	<b>650835</b>
<b>BROWNIES:</b>	<b>Jackie Broughton</b>	<b>641797</b>
<b>BEAVERS:</b>	<b>Becky Lewis</b>	<b>650304</b>
<b>POLICE CONTACT:</b>	<b>P.C. Mike Cowburn</b>	<b>01633 838111</b>
<b>REC. BOOKING SECRETARY:</b>	<b>Beryl Saysell</b>	<b>641637</b>
<b>TRADCRAFT:</b>	<b>Marion McAdam</b>	<b>641316</b>
<b>NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATORS</b>		
<b>S'NEWTON &amp; MYNYDD BACH -</b>	<b>Beverley Moore</b>	<b>641532</b>
<b>Earlswood</b>	<b>Sue Leat</b>	<b>641207</b>

Please send your notes, discs or emails for inclusion in the July magazine to Bob O'Keefe at: 15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, (641686) or email to bobandwenche@aol.com by Friday 20th June. Please note there is no magazine in August therefore any items required for August need to be include in the July issue.

#### **SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

2nd June	Community Coucil Meeting—7.30 Recreation Hall
5th June	Whist Drive—7.30 Recreation Hall
6th June	Friends of the Church event Cae Pw Cella
7th June	Play—"Keep Moving" Itton Hall (see advert)
14th June	The Church Fete—Recreation Field from 2.00 p.m. Grand Parade from the TA at 1.45
19/20/21st June	Kids Ad Lib production at Earlswood & Newchurch Memorial Hall
21st June	St David's Hospice Heights Challenge.
21st June	Coffee Morning in aid of Earlswood Church (see note)
28th June	Shirenewton Primary School—"Summer Fayre.
27-29th June	Gaerllwyd Festival see page 20
4th July	The Martin Singers—Methodist Church—Chepstow.
12th July	Chepstow Choral Society Concert—St Mary's Chepstow

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Dear Friends,

I am sure like me you have found the reports and images from China and Burma horrendous, heart-breaking and unimaginable. Apart from being as generous as we can through gifts of money through Christian Aid or through other charities concerned with the relief work, we must pray for all these people whose lives have been devastated. Thousands have lost their families, homes and everything they owned in these natural disasters which have been on an enormous scale. Such happenings push aside other disasters which have until now captured the headlines but which are caused by warring tribes and the lust for power; the list seems endless. Sometimes I feel so powerless and to make a difference seems impossible but Christians know that in the midst of all the suffering God is to be found along side his people. So we can help with sharing the comparative wealth we enjoy and with our prayers.

Many events are taking place in June and July in all our parishes and notices are found both in this magazine and on church notice boards so please support these as so much hard work goes into planning and running them and not only do the churches benefit from any funding raised but each event engenders community spirit. One main event is the short-listing and subsequent interviews for our next full-time Priest in Charge; last week there had been nineteen enquiries so the likelihood of selecting someone for the post appears positive. Please add to your prayers that our parish representatives who will be assisting with this work will be guided in their judgements.

We have received a long awaited piece of good news for Newchurch in that a faculty has been granted for the repair of the Tower and so at long last work can begin. Well done to the PCC members for their amazing patience.

As I write I am enjoying some time off but by the time you read this I will be back on duty ready to enjoy the forthcoming summer programmes in each parish.

Peace be with you,

Reverend Nansi Davies.  
Priest in Charge.

## SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

### Dates for the next couple of months

Date	Time		Venue
1st June	9.45	Sunday Club	The Chantry
8th June	9.45	Sunday Club	The Chantry
15th June	9.45	Family Service	The Church
22nd June	9.45	Sunday Club	The Chantry
29th June	Group Service		No Sunday Club
6th July	9.45	Sunday Club	The Chantry
13th July	9.45	Sunday Club	The Chantry
20th July	9.45	Family Service	The Church

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

***Jane Smith-Haddon      641 525  
Glynis MacDonald      641818***

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### SHIRENEWTON CHURCH 200 CLUB

The result of the May draw was:

Ticket No	Winner	Prize
17	Mike Penney	£40
82	Peter Bartlett	£30
144	Cynthia Smith	£20
204	Simon Roland	£10

*a contradiction in terms if ever there was one!). It will be interesting to see how we get on with them. They certainly seem more robust than the ordinary melons. These have been planted in the tunnel, but already some have keeled over. I never understand why they do this? The same is usually true of the cucumbers, but this year I had nine seeds and have ended up with nine good solid plants. I'm not sure if this is down to the variety that I've grown (a new one) or the treatment that I gave them, but at the moment it looks like we will be inundated with cue's to eat! Time to get the recipe book out and see what else we can do with them. Apparently they make good soup but we're not sure about that one!*

*I managed to get the main beds dug in both the large greenhouse and tunnel. The under-gardener thought I was mad (mind you I probably am), as I was digging the tunnel bed during the hot period we had a couple of weeks back. I desperately wanted to get it dug and manured, so that I could get the peppers, aubergines and tomatoes planted up before they got too drawn up in the pots on the greenhouse staging. By 11.00 a.m. I had succeeded in completing this chore, but I had got through three sets of clothes as well! You could say it was rather warm! Still, they are now growing away well. In the large greenhouse we have been picking salad things for a couple of weeks and managed our first crop of French (Kenyan) beans yesterday. From plot to pan in less than five minutes – not many air miles there, and they tasted delicious. This bed will be cleared in about two weeks' time. I intend to put something fast maturing in then, before clearing again and planting second crop potatoes (new spuds for Christmas day) and some carrots (baby carrots for the New Year). But before that I think the buttercups will need a little attention and the fish a supply of oxygen!*

*Happy gardening until next month.*

***Steve Hunt.***

*The flowerbeds may have suffered as a result of time pressures, but I have tended to concentrate on the vegetable areas. All bar one of the raised beds are now cleared, manured where appropriate, and planted up. I have one more to do which is a sea of yellow buttercup, but this is to be planted with swedes and turnips, so there is no desperate rush to get things done here. I like these root crops to be available in late Autumn, not the summer, so you can get away with sowing in June and July. I have planted most of the greens now (sprouts, broccoli etc.) and these have been covered with enviro-mesh to prevent the cabbage white butterflies reaching them. I used blue alkathene water piping to make some hoops, but could have done with the next width of meshing. Unfortunately at three metres wide this was a good deal more expensive and would have meant some was wasted. Instead I have done a 'Heath Robinson' and botched together something that will hopefully work. If not then back to the drawing board for next year! What I may do is similar to the job I've done for the carrot bed. Here I have erected a wooden frame around the outside of the raised bed and cut the enviro-mesh in half, length-wise. This has then been tacked to the frame around the outside, and fixed to the bed edge. Over the top I have spread some bird netting, not necessarily to keep the birds of the bed, but more any one of the three cats! Carrot root fly, which is something I have always been pestered with, supposedly can't fly more than eighteen inches off the ground (can't think what that is in new money!). The netting is about seventeen inches so we'll see if an inch makes any difference! If this proves to work I'll do the same for the other beds next year. At least with the netting over the top, it means it can easily be removed, so that you can get down and personal with the weeding chores! One down side to this is that I expect the undergardener to complain that she can't reach over the sides, so no doubt it will be down to me to undertake the weeding!*

*I'm trying several new crops this year, including celeriac, kohlrabi and water melon. Touch wood, at the moment they are looking well. I have planted some of the water-melon in the large tunnel, and some in the hot bed that I created out of half of the cold frame (now there's*

*Dear Friends,*

*I wish to thank very much all those within these communities who so generously contributed to what should have been Hugh's retirement gift.*

*I know without any doubt that he would have been very touched and not a little overwhelmed by your kindness. I am sure that in a farewell speech he would have made reference to the fact that he did not realise how glad or how quickly you all were to be rid of him!!*

*However, jokes aside, I shall think carefully about a suitable gift when I have re-settled. Through these pages, I shall let you know upon what I have decided.*

*Thank you all once again for your generosity and kindness toward me (and the dog!) these past six months. I consider myself very fortunate to live in such a caring community.*

*With my very best wishes,*

*Gill Trenchard.*

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### **St Peter's Church, Newchurch**

We are delighted to report that at long last we have received a faculty which will enable us to carry out re-pointing of the church tower. This will mean that we will be able to go forward providing there is a congregation to support us.

Your continued support will be greatly appreciated as we intend to arrange more fund raising activities in the near future. Please remember to support us at the church fete. We look forward to welcoming you at the group service on the 29th of June at 10.a.m

## NUTSHELL PCC MINUTES

*It has been suggested that people might be interested in hearing what is discussed at Shirenewton PCC meetings, so here is a very brief summary of what went on at our last meeting:*

### **MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2008**

**The New Incumbent:** The process of finding a new Incumbent is slowly grinding onwards and the situation has since been advertised in "The Church Times" and a lot of interest has been expressed. In the meantime we are very pleased that Canon Andrew and Reverend Catherine Todd have volunteered to lead some of our services.

**The New Church Room:** This is coming on apace, the fitting out of the kitchen and decorating is now in progress and the wood for the floor will be arriving soon. We expect it will be ready for use by September or October this year. We hope that the new room will be widely used by the whole community.

**Christian Aid Week:** A lunch in aid of Christian Aid was planned. *(This has now taken place and was greatly enjoyed by all who attended – a big thank you goes to Kevin and Glynis who hosted the event).* Glynis and Jane outlined plans to lead an Assembly at Shirenewton School and a Family Service in church, with a Christian Aid theme.

**Church Maintenance:** There is some concern over a few wobbly gravestones and the west wall of the church is still damp and needs re-pointing.

**The Church Organ's Birthday Party:** Karen Millar is organising a concert featuring many of our talented youngsters to celebrate the 100th birthday of the church organ, this will be held on Sunday 6 July.

*Well that's about it in a nutshell – so how come I didn't get home till the back of eleven?? Something to do with the meeting being held in the comfortable surrounds of The Chantry and Kevin's wine cellar being open....!*

*Jane Smith-Haddon*

*One of the PCC Secretaries*

## **GARDENING CORNER**

*Back in September last year we took the decision not to open the garden for charity during 2008. We had agreed that for the undergardener's 'special' birthday and our thirtieth wedding anniversary we would treat ourselves to a holiday of a lifetime. Unfortunately events took over and we had to shelve the holiday, hopefully for just a year. What this did mean was that it was too late to change our mind on the garden opening, so we have a year off, for good behaviour. We will miss meeting people when we have the garden open, but we have both agreed how much simpler life is without the challenges of opening two or three days for the National Garden Scheme. We had worked out that we had in fact opened our gate for eight years and had given nearly eight thousand pounds to the NGS. A feat to be proud of! We both work, and have to do all the work ourselves. With me being away one or two nights a week, its amazing just how quick you can get behind with things. As a result all our hedges remain stubbornly uncut from last year, but the flower garden is a sea of purple and yellow. Purple from things such as honesty and self-sown aquilegia and yellow from dandelions and buttercup. Just for once though it doesn't really matter! One bonus is that the bees love the flowers and I'm kind of hoping that the herbaceous perennials that cover most of the beds will eventually cover and suffocate the weeds! I will shortly start to work through the beds but they will have to take second place to the more important things in life, such as days away or fishing!*

*I do have one very important job that must be done before we get too much hot summers' weather (yes I know, very wishful thinking) and that is sorting out our ponds. You may remember that these had to be 'altered' when we did some building work. As a result we lost the stream, which was the link between to two ponds and as such have no means of circulating and oxygenating the water (other than the pond weed of course). There are too many fish in the lower pond and although they are surviving at present in what can only be described as sub-standard water, I have concerns that they will struggle if the temperature should start to climb too high. At the same time I need to remodel the waterfall as this has always leaked. So some major works required.*

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ANDREW W GRIFFITH AMIH BSYA (IRID)

**CHURCH WEBSITE AND SHOPPING PORTAL**

Well I'd let the website maintenance fall a bit behind over the last few months. I a few emails per week noting that a programme or two are being discontinued. So I've spent a while getting the shopping portal back up to date. I'm also working on a new look 'stand alone' shopping portal which should be launched in the new few weeks. I'm in the process of populating it now.

Remember that the Church website has local community news and information, as well as the shopping portal. The local community council minutes are posted on the site monthly and from the community council page you can click through to the community council news and notices page which is now being maintained directly by the community council using blog software. This site also contains the names of your local Community Councillors.

On the shopping front, I've also now updated the 'special offers' section. This contains discount codes which the shops on the website make available from time-to-time. All you need do is check the link to see if there is a discount code available for the shop from which you are purchasing.

As summer holidays approach. Don't forget to book your airport parking through Holiday Extras and your hire car via Holiday autos and take out excess damage insurance (which also covers tyres and glass) from Insurance4carhire. All these shops are available via the 'Travel & Holidays' page on the shopping portal, all save you money, all pay the Church a commission if you shop via the Church website and, remember, it costs you nothing more to shop via the Church website.

Finally, under the 'be a whizz' section, I've posted a link to a simple, legal (I'm assured) way to get free music which you can transfer to your MP3 player, phone or burn to CD.

Happy Browsing

David Cornwell

## Shirenewton Community Council Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> May 2008

We have a new councillor, Liz McCombe, who is representing Newchurch West where she lives. Robin Mitchell now represents Shirenewton replacing Sandra Bushell who stood down at the recent election. Robin is also the new chairman of the Community Council.

### ***Police report:-***

PC Cowburn was unable to attend but sent his report on recent police matters in the area. Highlights were:-

10/04/08 Road accident outside the Huntsman resulting in minor injuries.

19/04/08 Overnight burglary in Shirenewton.

22/04/08 Car accident at the corner near the Prys gau picnic site hitting the building and doing quite a lot of damage – police report only included one accident but there were in fact two recent accidents with cars going off the road near the picnic site.

28/04/08 Two horses loose on the Crick Road.

### ***Planning:-***

Quarry Cottage, Menage & Stable block  
Approval Recommended

Garage at Yew Tree Cottage

No councillor has yet reviewed the plans and visited the site, so it will be reviewed later this month before the planning deadline.

### ***Items of local concern:-***

Councillor Eede has been out and about in the area with the MCC Enforcement Officer, matters raised with him during his visit included:-

Footpath running alongside the Recreation Ground now made into a track with a hard surface and a larger opening onto the road, seems there are various views in the community as to whether this is an improvement to the existing green lane or not.

Boundary moved at New Mill Farm in Earlswood.

Work not to plan at Chapel House in Earlswood bottom.

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Work not to plan at Yew Tree Cottage, Mynyddbach.

It was not known if the Enforcement Officer will pursue any of these matters further.

**Llanmelin Hill Fort** – meeting held recently with interested parties from Caerwent and other bodies on site. It was decided a small car park should be to the south of the site, with access through the wood. CADW will continue to maintain the site, cutting the grass etc. Forestry Commission officer is investigating grants available to improve and manage the site. Apparently the site is very impressive and well worth a visit now.

Installation of dog waste bins was discussed at length, it costs £100 - £200 for each bin with additional costs for emptying regularly, there was not a great deal of support for installation of bins in the village. It was eventually agreed to add new dog fouling signs on paths used regularly to walk to and from school and ask the dog warden to pay occasional visits to the area. If this does not improve the situation then the need for dog waste bins will be re-considered.

Initial draft plan for improvements to the play area have been drawn up, work is required to identify amount of grant money available before plans can be developed further.

Best Kept Village is in hand, with MCC to look at their own areas of responsibility, rest of the village to be covered by volunteers co-ordinated by Carole.

Next meeting will be in the Recreation Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 7.30 p.m.

### CHURCH CLEANING

The Church is still in need of a volunteer to clean the Church during the month of July.

Would anyone prepared to offer their assistance in helping to maintain the church in this way please contact Sally Saysell—  
Church Warden on 01291 641369

On Thursday the 1<sup>st</sup> of May Year 3 went on a school trip. First Year 3 got on the bus and went to St Fagans.

We went to the Celtic village and went back 2000 years and met a Celt in his round house. He was fierce! He took us into his chief's house where we saw a real skull. Then we had lunch and played.

Then we went in some old farm houses and gardens and we saw some old beehives that came from Devauden and two robins on a post.

Next we went to the shop and tried to work out how we could spend all our money on gifts and candy!

And then we got back on the bus and got back an hour later after a very fun day!!!

By **Sam, Harvey and Matthew G.**

### Chamber Choir work with year 5

Report by Alex Moore.

On May 7<sup>th</sup> Chepstow Comprehensive School Chamber Choir came to work with us at Shirenewton Primary School. We sang "Be Our Guest." We listened to the Choir sing Aladdin and A Dream Come True. It was great fun.

### Country Dance Club Report

By **Oak and Emily.**

We meet on a Friday at 3.30pm in the hall. Miss Oldfield takes the register and we start our dancing. Miss Oldfield brings the music and gives us our instructions. We have to find partners and work together. We need to listen carefully to the instructions to help us with the dance. We are having lots of fun learning and practicing the dances.



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## SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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April was a very busy month for the society, we started the month with our Resource Session (with new storage!!), a visit to the 'Origins' exhibition at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, our annual Rogation Sunday Walk around the parish bounds and finally our monthly meeting when we had an excellent talk by Roger Morgan entitled 'Roman Medicine'.

All the members who went on our visit to Cardiff agreed it was well worth the trip and highly recommended to anyone who has not yet been.

The elements were very kind to us this year as 16 brave souls met at the church on Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> April, to Beat the Bounds of the parish. All were suitable attired for what ever the weather would throw at us and were pleasantly surprised when the sun shone for most of the walk. Many thanks to Bob O'Keefe for leading the intrepid walkers.

Our speaker for the month was Roger Morgan who spoke on 'Roman Medicine'. He brought along his medical kit that included instruments that would not look too out of place in today's operating theatre only to be told that they were copies of instruments that were designed and used almost 2,000 years ago in Caerleon by the Romans. The talk was interesting and very amusing and we all agreed we were glad we had eaten before coming to the meeting after hearing some of the gory details of some treatments.

Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> May, entitled 'When does Legend become History' given by Daphne Pearson.

## NSPCC

### By Millie and Rebecca year 5

Last Tuesday a lady called Fiona came in to speak about the NSPCC. Firstly she did a play where Bas was mum and Rhiannon was dad. In the play mum and dad didn't listen to the children even though they nearly got killed! Then Fiona told us about a real boy called Daniel. She showed us a photograph of Daniel before the NSPCC helped him and then showed us a picture of Daniel after they had helped him. Fiona told us about the how we could help with a fundraiser it was a really good presentation.

### Promises Auction for Shirenewton Primary School

#### Thank you

A big thank you to Gwilym Richards our auctioneer for the evening.

A massive thank you to all the parents and companies that sent in promises.

A gigantic thank you to the PTA and other helpers who worked so hard to make the evening so successful.

***A huge thank you to all the parents who attended the evening.  
We made an impressive £4000.***

### The Shirenewton Parents Teachers Association have

changed the date of Shirenewton School Fayre this  
year to June 28<sup>th</sup>

**A date for everyone's diary!**

## **Shirenewton W.I.**

May is always the month of our AGM and Resolutions Meeting.

From the new committee, Jenny Bonner has been re-elected as our President with Auriol Horton and Margaret Woodliffe as officers.

The two resolutions that were debated on were 'Ban on Bottom Trawling' which is to urge HM Government to urge the EU to ban bottom trawling in certain special areas to conserve marine life.

The second resolution was the 'Inappropriate imprisonment of the severely mentally ill'. Both resolutions were debated on and voted for. These two resolutions will be presented at the Annual General Meeting of the National Federation of WIs in Liverpool in June where delegates will vote accordingly.

Visitors are welcome to join us at our monthly meetings at Shirenewton Recreation Hall each 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month 7.15pm.

Next month's speaker will be Mr E Jones on 'The Passage of Time'.

For more information on ACWW visit [www.acww.org.uk](http://www.acww.org.uk)

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## **WHIST DRIVES**

32 players enjoyed the May Drive and the Polling Station officers were treated to some refreshments! The refurbished Hall made it possible for the two events to take place simultaneously. The next Drives will be on the 5<sup>th</sup> June and 3<sup>rd</sup> July respectively at The Recreation Hall starting at 7.30 p.m. promptly. New and occasional players will be welcomed. Enquiries to Auriol Horton 01291 641844.

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## **COFFEE MORNING IN AID OF VELINDRE HOSPITAL**

A big thank you to all who helped to make this morning a special event such a success. To date we have made £580 with more donations expected.

Maureen Moody—641524

## **Cookery Corner**

This month the dessert for last month's dinner has arrived. The management apologies for the delay in providing this course. But in the absence of our regular chef, son Max has stepped in to fill the gap.

Dessert – Chocolate orange bread and butter pudding.

This dish can be cooked with bread but is best when done with brioche – ideal for all sweet tooth's.

Serves 6

### Ingredients

Sliced Brioche (from a medium loaf)  
200g Plain Chocolate  
2 Oranges  
50g Butter  
350ml Milk  
350ml Cream  
5 Eggs  
75g Caster Sugar

- Pre-heat the oven to 180oC
- Butter Both sides of the brioche and place a layer of brioche in the bottom of an oven proof dish.
- Chop the chocolate in to small chunks. Grate the oranges, then peel the oranges and chop into small chunks. Sprinkle a layer of chocolate, orange zest and orange chunks on top of the brioche.
- Repeat the brioche, chocolate and orange layer two more times.
- Add the milk, cream, eggs and sugar to a bowl and mix well, then pour the mixture on to pudding and allow to soak into the brioche.
- Place in the oven for 30 – 40 minutes.  
Serve warm with cream.

Our thanks once again to Max, Caroline's son for this one.

## The Bells.....The Bells

Early in May the Shirenewton bell ringers went to Cornwall for their annual "Summer Ringing Tour". There were 10 adults, ten kids and two dogs. On the Saturday we went ringing in and around Plymouth. We crossed the Taymar on the Tor Point ferry which was a bit of fun and had lunch at a pub over looking the estuary. We were extremely lucky with the weather, it was sunny and gently warm. On the Sunday a group put on wet suits, grabbed surf boards and went down to the sea. This was followed by a BBQ on the lawn over looking the beach. We enjoyed ourselves.

The Monmouth branch Striking Competition was held at Nash this year. We entered an adult and a kids band into the Call Changes section and the Method ringing section.

In the Method section the adults did better than the kids but in the Call Changes the kids pipped the adults into second place. Five bands entered this section so congratulations to our kids, especially to Chris Eickhoff who has only been ringing a year and was ringing in his first striking competition and to Maddie Stanley who called the changes

Pip Penny

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## The Good Samaritans

Jesus told a parable about a man from Samaria who helped a man that had been beaten up the way to Jericho, to illustrate how we should behave to one another.

There are Good Samaritans in Shirenewton today.

On Saturday 17th May I was returning home from Chepstow when my car broke down at the junction near to the hospital. Several people drove or walked past, some hooting angrily as I was in their way, others simply ignoring my plight. Along came a couple, from Shirenewton they told me. They kindly pushed my car to a safer place, offered me a lift home, and allowed me to use their mobile phone to call my husband. Luckily he was at home and agreed to come and collect me and the car, so the lift was not required.

I would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to the 'Good Samaritans' who stopped and helped.

You have restored my faith in human nature.

There are good and caring people who live in our community. Keep up the good work.

Once again my sincere thanks

Sandra Williams  
Gaerllwyd Farm



# SHIRENEWTON CHURCH FETE

## 2.00 PM SATURDAY

## 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE

## AT THE

## RECREATION FIELD

(Parade leaves Tan House Car Park at  
1.45pm)

**POST FETE SUMMER BUFFET  
8.00PM THE TREDEGAR ARMS  
TICKETS £10 EACH  
AVAILABLE FROM THE TA**





### 1ST SHIRENEWTON GUIDES

It is that time of year again and we are preparing for the fete, planning camp, involving our new Guides and awaiting information on a County Guide fun day. Busy! We shall be running our stall at the fete so make sure you come along and say hello. We are hoping to be able to offer freshly made welsh cakes for a small (or preferably large) donation. This depends on the number of "staff" we have available on the day. We look forward to seeing you on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Yours in Guiding,

Kestrel                    Helen Cann                    tel. 650835  
Kitten                    Amanda Turner                    tel. 650763  
Bumble, Bee and Koala

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### PAST TIMES WEEKEND

### 1<sup>ST</sup> SHIRENEWTON BROWNIES PACK HOLIDAY

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April – 15 Brownies, 3 Guiders and a posse of parent helpers (thank you very much Karen, Bev and Bev) set out for our pack holiday. We stayed at Miskin Mill Scout Village in a 200 hundred year old mill. This was a change from our usual pack holidays – the venue was further afield, we had the luxury of bunk beds ( don't be lulled into the idea that this meant we all got a good night's sleep – it's part of the fun!), and we even had scouts camping in the adjoining field.

We played 'past times' games, cooked traditional meals, made tissue paper lanterns to light our campfire and visited St Fagans National History Museum where Geraint Thomas gave us a fascinating interactive tour of the working mill at St Fagans. But you just can't beat the old favourites and one of the highlights of the weekend was toasting marshmallows on the campfire (which we had all to ourselves as the scouts had gone to the cinema instead!).

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# Songs of Celebration

A variety of works from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries

With the

## Martin Singers



The Methodist Church, Chepstow

**Friday July 4<sup>th</sup>, 7.30 pm**

**Tickets: £6** (on the door or from 01291 627800)

Vocal works by

**John Dowland, John Bennett, Thomas Weelkes,  
Morten Lauridson, Peter Warlock,  
William Lloyd Webber, John Ireland, Orlando Gibbons,  
Gerald Finzi, William Byrd, and more...**

**Instrumental works for recorders & keyboard**

By

**Mozart Scarlatti Colin Hand Brian Bonsor**

It rained on the Sunday but that didn't dampen our spirits – we walked a woodland trail and set about a Dragon's Quest challenge for St George's Day. All the girls earned a Cooks badge over the weekend. Under the capable supervision of Dorothy and Karen they made and cooked bread rolls, cottage pie, fruit salad and Macaroni Cheese. .

Thanks to everyone who helped us on Pack Holiday – and a particular thanks to my assistant Guiders who invested a lot of additional time, as well as their weekend, to make this Pack Holiday a great success. It's so important that we have volunteers who are prepared to give the girls these opportunities.

Jackie Broughton—Guider in Charge

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### SHIRENEWTON MOTHERS' UNION.

Instead of our afternoon meeting in May we sponsored an evening meeting at the Village Hall in Caerwent where John Hall enlightened and entertained an audience of 21 anxious parents and grandparents seeking to be "equipped in the world of drugs".

The annual Deanery Festival saw 120 members and friends gathered at St. Arvans' Church on a beautifully sunny afternoon. All the branches in the Deanery were represented and the new Deanery President was commissioned by the Rural Dean. Several long service certificates were presented by the Diocesan President including one for Mrs. Gladys Lloyd who has been a member of Shirenewton Branch for over 50 years. Unfortunately Mrs. Edith Evans was unable to be present to receive her Certificate that was also for a period in excess of 50 years at Caerwent and Shirenewton. Two members from other branches received Certificates for over 60 years.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> June at 2.30 p.m. at Shirenewton Recreation Hall – visitors are welcome to join us for Talk & Tea at 3.00 p.m.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> June some of us will be traveling to Cardiff for the Provincial Road Show at St. David's Hall – there are still some seats available on the Coach for anyone wanting to do some shopping!

Enquiries to Auriol Horton, 01291 641 844

## COUNTRY LIFE IN OUR COUNTY

*Ernie Jones is well known in our Parish, having lived and farmed all his life in the area. What is not so well known about Ernie is that over his life (covering a good few years) he has written some forty books, covering both his thoughts and life in this lovely area. Ernie has kindly agreed to share with us some of the passages from these books that we shall try to include in the magazine over the next few months.*

This first extract is from; **'The Four Seasons of the Country Side'**

### **Spring:**

Having retired as a working farmer, with time to think of other things, other than the day to day running of a farm, why do people like me write books and such like, it is I suppose a way of putting our thoughts into print. The human brain, that masterpiece of cells, must have a need to be for everlastingly occupied, for even in sleep the brain will dream. So as I a farmer and countryman will endeavour to put my thoughts of the 'Four Seasons' of the year.

Spring as we know it is March, April and May, which is convenient as far as the calendar is concerned, but in fact there isn't a dividing line. When we wake on March 1st it isn't suddenly spring. To the countryman and the gardener it is quite early when shoots of the snowdrops first appear as early as January

### **The dairy farmer in spring.**

Spring is on it's way when we change the clocks to British Summer Time, putting the clocks forward one hour usually on the last Saturday in March. There has been much talk of doing away with the practice and leaving the clocks alone. I have mixed feelings about it. The lighter evenings are something to look forward to, but then we have darker mornings. Dairy cows don't like it, the morning after the clocks are put on one hour it means nothing. Being creatures of habit, and with more intelligence than they are credited with, to arrive as we do in these days to open the parlour door there are those cows that are normally first in, on this morning most are still resting in their sleeping quarters with a look of distain at being awakened an hour early. So to the dairy farmer at least as far as this county is concerned March is just another winter month, with earnest hope that feed, silage mostly, will last out. But towards the end of the month with the warmth of the sun getting stronger, thoughts of spring grass begin to stir the mind. A practice that has crept into farming these of the early nineties [*when this was written*] is the 'T sum. These modern people

## Stargazing in June 2008

The Constellation of the Plough lies high in the evening sky to the northwest. The curve of the handle of the Plough points down to a bright red star called Arcturus.

This is the second brightest star in the northern sky after Sirius. In Greek mythology, Arcturus was created by Zeus to protect the nearby constellations of the Great and Little Bears. In fact its name is derived from the Ancient Greek and means "Bear guard". 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.

Saturn shines brightly above the western horizon in the evening sky. It is just to the left of the bright star Regulus which forms the front paws of Leo. Reddish Mars is close by, lying to the right of Regulus. As the month passes very the bright planet Jupiter is appearing earlier to the southeast. Sights worth looking our for will be when the crescent Moon is close to Saturn on 8<sup>th</sup> June and when the Moon and Jupiter are near each other on 19<sup>th</sup> June.

The Summer Solstice occurs on June 21<sup>st</sup>, when the Sun reaches its northern most extreme giving the longest period of day-time in the year.

Dave Thomas





## Miracles on the Marsh



There is a strange kind of magic happening here on the marsh at this time of year. I am referring to the miraculous transformations of many of the insects from young to adults – a process known as “Metamorphosis” - and it is amazing to watch.

We've got *complete metamorphosis* as butterflies emerge from their pupae, completely different to their larval caterpillar stage in every way. We also have *incomplete metamorphosis* as demonstrated by the dragonflies and damselflies - their nymphs climb up the reeds, shed their last skin and become beautiful adult flying machines. Grasshoppers and crickets are born as little replicas of their parents but without wings and reproductive organs. They gradually grow and shed their skins four or five times before becoming adults. This is known as *gradual metamorphosis*. These processes are incredible and designed for good reason. It is thought that the dragonflies owe their survival to it. The dinosaurs became extinct but dragonflies could adapt because the adults disperse to other water bodies when they hatch. This gives them a higher chance of survival when one particular area is affected by drought or pollution.

Amazing as the process is, it still seems a shame that the beautiful adult stages of the insects are so short lived (only a few months for some damselflies). The larval stages on the other hand can go through years either underwater (damselflies and dragonflies), underground (crane flies) or as larvae and pupae on leaves and in soil (butterflies, ladybirds and moths).

Many of these changes are dependent on certain climatic and environmental conditions. Grasshopper eggs laid in the soil rely on a low temperature during the winter to be able to hatch the following spring. Dragonflies often emerge in the evenings when the temperature is correct and need a vertical surface to do so. Some insects are even more sophisticated because they can time when all the adults emerge thus improving their chances of meeting a mate.

They may be small but these insects are perfectly formed by this process of metamorphosis – and it's happening in a garden near you!

Kathy Barclay  
Community Education Officer (Magor Marsh)

Stick thermometers in the fields to be grazed, and when the temperature reaches twenty degrees you get the nitrogen fertilizer sown. To me, perhaps because I'm getting old, quite childish I think. If you watch nature, as the grass starts to move and the daffodils are pushing up from their sleep, usually at the end of March early April, you don't need to poke about with thermometers, second nature will tell you when the time is right. One of those quirks of farming that only time and experience can teach. One of the sure signs that spring is not far away is the sight of the first swallow. To see that herald of the spring usually just one gliding through the air is one of great joy to me, and I never fail to marvel that year after year that little bird finds its way back to its home from the African Continent. As long as I can remember they still come back to their old haunts and rebuild their nests with such enthusiasm as they have for years. Ever since the days when we milked the cows by hand the swallows never fail to come, and they seem to like human company.

So April comes and to the great relief of dairy farmers they are able to turn the cows out to grass, at least until that has been the case in the past, (we have not always managed these in the 1990's), usually from late March to early April with cows housed night and day they do get restless. I'm sure they can smell the grass growing, and what a wonderful sight to see a herd of cows out on spring grass. As the month goes on the young stock are turned out, and what a relief after five or six months being housed with the daily grind of bedding down, cleaning out and feeding, and although April can be very unkind weather wise, the sun is getting stronger.

Then we are into May, and one of my early joys was milking by hand on a spring morning and as the milk was milked from the cows the unforgettable smell as it hit the bucket and the lovely white froth which all good hand milkers were keen to get, as the froth stopped the splashing as the bucket filled up, a pleasure that has been lost in these modern times with milking machines. Another aspect of the modern dairy farmer that didn't apply when I was young is the fact that May is when most of the silage is made. These days about the middle of the month, which really speaking is sound sense. The object of silage, at least grass silage is to preserve feed for the dairy stock for use in the winter, and as far as cows are concerned they will produce more and better quality milk if grass is conserved at its most nutritious stage. Although times are changing that might not hold good in ten years time.

So that is spring in the eyes of the dairy farmer.

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

First I would like to say thank you to John Spary who has been a member of the hall committee and reported on the hall news for the parish magazine over many years.

The next major event at the hall is Kids Ad Lib who are preparing for their new production 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> June. I hear the scenery painters are making good use of the new sink recently installed in the basement. Over the past month the hall has also been used as a polling station and for a successful flower arranging class.

Following the many improvements over the last few years the hall is now an ideal location for children's parties, family get-togethers, community functions and drama productions. The hall will accommodate over 200 people for shows and over 100 people for a sit down function or dance. We now have a range of modern tables and chairs and complete kitchen, bar and stage facilities. If you are planning an event and have not visited the hall recently then a member of the committee would be very pleased to show you around.

To book the hall or find out more about the facilities and costs please contact Glynis MacDonald on 641818.

Simon Stanley - Chairman  
May 2008

**Lets take you back to the 1940's - to a village where we  
encounter new beginnings, secrets, deception, sabotage, army drill  
and a few rousing songs as**

**Kids Ad Lib**  
Presents

**CARELESS TALK. .**

**At Earlswood Hall**  
**Thurs. 19<sup>th</sup>, Fri. 20<sup>th</sup> & Sat. 21<sup>st</sup> June**  
**Tickets Adult £5, Concessions £3**  
**Booking Office - 01291 641547**

## **FAIRTRADE NEWS**

I attended an old university friend's 60th birthday party at an Italian restaurant on Sunday. On our UEA (Uni of East Anglia) table were people I had not clapped eyes on for 40 years! The general banter (amongst the men at least) had scarcely changed, most (but not all) hairstyles had changed, largely for the worse, but on consideration, the one that hadn't changed was probably the most embarrassing - although he had not resorted to a pony tail! All bar one needed glasses to peruse the menu (I expect he'd had laser surgery!). After half a glass of wine I was off on one of my many hobbyhorses: how fortunate we all were. Active, looking forward to retirement, with healthy, positive children studying or setting out on a stimulating job. I was the first in my family to go to Uni, my parents never owned, nor indeed expected to own, a house. Our group were all benefactors, to a greater or lesser extent, of the last 20-30 years rise in property prices, where good money was to be made by just sitting quietly in one's house. If I were religious I would say we were blessed; as I'm not I would say we have been exceptionally lucky. All the more reason to try and behave properly to those less fortunate than me!

It is reported that now 70% of the population has heard of Fairtrade! I suppose the next job is to try and persuade a few more of them to buy the stuff!

As ever contact me for a catalogue or more details or contact Traidcraft direct!

Marion MacAdam on 641 316 or [msm316@gmail.com](mailto:msm316@gmail.com)

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## **Hospice Heights Challenge – 21<sup>st</sup> June**

This is an annual event to raise funds for St David's Foundation Hospice Care. This year a local team comprised of Helen Cann, Robert Thomas, John and Tom Brookes will be entering and any sponsorship would be greatly appreciated. If you feel you could support us please contact any team member or see Robert and/or Helen at the fete.

Thank you.  
Helen Cann            01291 650835

*Itton Village Hall presents*

**'KEEP ON MOVING'**

by

**The Fairgame Theatre from Cheltenham.**

*All the fun of the fair! A portrayal of an old fashioned fairground –  
an evening of fun for all the family.*

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June 7.30 pm**

**Tickets at the Door:**

Adults £6.00, Students £4.00,  
Family of 4(Adults + children) £15.00

Refreshments, Raffle, Disabled facilities.

*Grateful thanks to the Arts Council of Wales for their support.  
Please support this community theatre*

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**BEST KEPT VILLAGE**

**2008**

Volunteers met on Tuesday evening and Wednesday afternoon during the last week in May to address any problems in the public areas in Shirenewton Village.

This consisted of such things as strimming back overgrown areas and cleaning of signs.

Judging for the Competition will be sometime in June.

Would you please help by giving some attention, if required, to the area immediately outside your property.

**COFFEE MORNING**

**IN AID OF**

**EARLSWOOD VALLEY CHAPEL**

**FROM 11.00 a.m. TO 1.00 p.m.**

**WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY 21ST JUNE**

**AT**

**OLD HOME - EARLSWOOD**

**NEAR SHIRENEWTON, CHEPSTOW**

**RAFFLE, BRING AND BUY AND OTHER STALLS  
BY KIND PERMISSION OF MRS. MINNETA MORRIS**

For further details contact  
Mrs. M Morris on 01291 641561

**GAERLLWYD FESTIVAL WEEKEND  
FRIDAY TO SUNDAY 27TH TO 29TH JUNE.**

You are invited to participate in this Festival, to discover just how creative you are.

Exhibits will include:-

Embroidery, Dressmaking, Needlework, Crocheting Tatting, etc.

Drawing painting and sketching, etc.

Fruit, Vegetable and Flower displays, including Flower Arranging;

Photography, local photographs, photos of days past, nature – animals, etc.

Cooking—Cakes, scones, Welsh cakes sausage rolls, etc.

Jams and pickles, Wine making.

Computer Graphics—Make poster to advertise the event.

Music, soloists, duets—or groups. Any type—your choice.

Musical items could be presented at 30 minute intervals throughout the weekend (a rota system would apply)

A children's section for all categories.

Set up displays on Friday 27th June from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Open all day Saturday from 10 a.m. with an evening picnic (weather permitting) .

Refreshments available throughout the day—so if you can help with these we would be very grateful.

**This is an ambitious project which relies on you participating.**

If you can help by making posters, delivering leaflets, arranging exhibits, or helping prior to the event, please contact us.

**WE NEED HELPERS TO ORGANISE THIS EVENT as well as exhibitors and participants, and spectators during the weekend.**

**IF YOU CAN HELP PLEASE CALL:-**

Elsie Remnant 641214

Beryl Weavin 650622

Sandra Williams 07970 045380

Or see us at the Chapel on Sunday (service 6.30—7.30 p.m.)

Refreshments available after the service 8th June —please come along to find out more, and offer your support .

**LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH**

According to PC Cowburn, the last month has been relatively quiet regarding police activity. The most significant event was a house burglary that took place in Shirenewton. Intruders entered the house during the night, when the occupants were sleeping, and some items were stolen. Access was gained by forcing the patio doors.

A number of accidents have occurred on the Usk Road, two near the Picnic area (Pandy Mill) and one at the Huntsman crossroads.

At the last Lower Wye Neighbourhood Watch Group Meeting it was stated that funds are diminishing and donations need to be collected again. In Earlswood participating households will be asked to pay their £1, whilst in the Shirenewton and Mynydd Bach area people attending the Fete will be asked to pay their money to the Neighbourhood Watch stand. It is hoped that sufficient funds will be collected to avoid having to collect door to door.

Everyone is invited to drop into the stand at the Fete and meet our Community Police Officer and share your views and opinions on general crime prevention and community safety issues. There will be things of interest to the children (blue lights and sirens sorts of things)

Please continue to be aware of your surroundings and pass on unusual observations or concerns to your local Neighbourhood Watch person or Gwent Police.

Beverley Moore - NHW Coordinator.

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