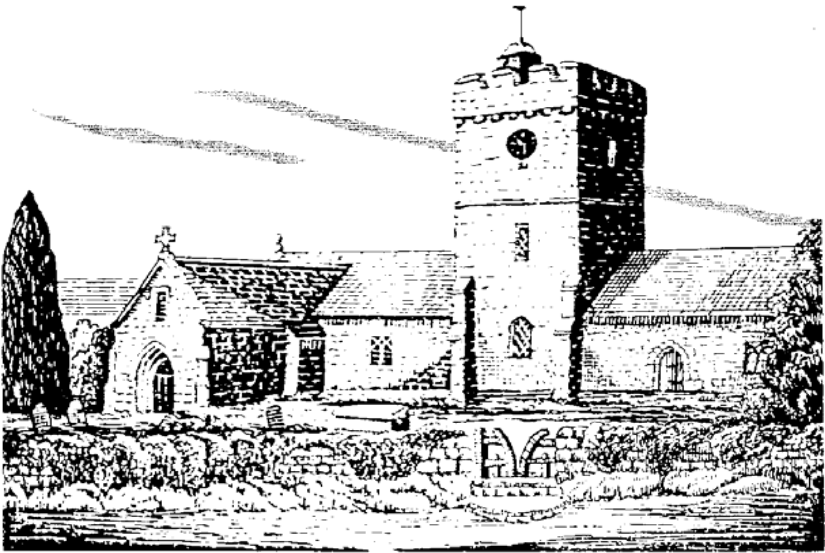


**THE CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS A BECKET
SHIRENEWTON**



**Parishes of Shirenewton and Newchurch
Magazine**

READERS AND SIDES- PERSONS ROTA FOR JANUARY

DATE	SERVICE	READER	SIDES-PERSON
2nd March	4th Sunday of Lent	Mothering Sunday	The Children
9th March	5th Sunday of Lent 9.45 am.	Mike Peirce John Nicholas	Mike Peirce Claire Lewis
16th March	Palm Sunday .9.45 am.	Bob Grattan Ruth Savagar	Bob Grattan Bernice Bowen
23rd March	Easter Sunday 9.45 am.	Sally Saysell John Nicholas	Allan Saysell John Nicholas
30th March	2nd Sunday of Easter	Group Service — Caerwent 9.45 am.	

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

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

NAMES TO NOTE

COMMUNITY COUNCIL	John 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 & MYNYDD BACH -	Beverley Moore	641532
Earlswood	Jayne Kirby	641217

send notes, discs or emails for the April magazine to Bob O'Keefe at:
15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, (641686) or email to bobandwenche@aol.com by
Saturday 22nd March for inclusion in the April magazine.

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

3rd March	Community Council Meeting—7.30 Recreation Hall
6th March	Whist Drive—7.30 Recreation Hall
7th March	Women's World Day of Prayer—Shirenewton Church –2.00
8th March	Concert for Passion Week—St. Mary's Church Chepstow (See advert)
8th March	History Societies Conference Usk Memorial Hall—2.00
10th March	History Society Resource Session Recreation Hall—from 2.00
12th March	M.U. Meeting recommence
16th March	Palm Sunday services—St Peter's Newchurch & Shirenewton
23rd March	Easter Sunday
25th March	History Society Meeting—The Huntsman 7.30
3rd April	Whist Drive—7.30 Recreation Hall
10th –12th April	"SORTED" Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall
17th April	Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall AGM—7.30

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Dear Friends

Those who attended the Ash Wednesday service received the sign of the cross made with the ashes from last year's burnt Palm crosses and in so doing began their Lenten journey towards Easter. Lent is only five weeks and as I write we are in the second week. To help us reflect on where we are in our Christian journey some of us are studying The Lord's Prayer at our weekly Bible study of the this year's York course which I wrote about last month and excellent it is proving to be. It is not too late if you wish to join us at Mrs Spence's home. Throughout Lent those attending services will be given a leaflet each Sunday entitled, "Keeping Lent" which provides a short homily and Bible readings for each day of the week. The material is written by Mrs Jane Williams. I do hope those of you who have received the first two leaflets are finding them helpful on your Lenten journey. If these also prove helpful to your study of your Bible and you would like to continue with them after Lent I will provide them for every Sunday. Please let me or the Churchwardens know your views.

I am sure that everyone who attended the concert given by the Caldicot Male Voice Choir at Caerwent enjoyed a thoroughly good evening and we are very grateful to the choir for giving the proceeds of the evening towards the refurbishment of the organ. Barclays Bank generously matched the amount raised and we are also very grateful to the Bank for their continuing support. Some of you know that the organ was given in memory of those from Caerwent who fell in the First World War and after eighty years of service the instrument is in need of a complete overhaul and this will cost £30,000 which we will have to raise. Donations, large or small will be gratefully received. Further events are being planned so watch for announcements and support this worthy cause.

Soon carpentry work will begin in St. Mary's Llanfair to build the much needed cupboards at the rear of the church. The result will mean a much tidier place with added space to accommodate the chairs; we can buy more of these comfortable seats if anyone would like to buy them perhaps in memory of a loved one, a special anniversary or for some special event in their lives. Contact the Churchwardens or any member of the PCC.

The work on the church extension at Shirenewton has been progressing at a tremendous pace and I am sure all those who have been involved in any way are excited at the prospect of completion. I know some hard work has been involved and even when the building comes into use fund raising will still be needed so your continued support for forthcoming events will be valued.

We are still awaiting the resolution of the Faculty for the repair of the tower at Newchurch. I know members of the PCC are very frustrated at all the hurdles and delays that they have had to face but I hope we are nearly at the end and that we can soon satisfy the DAC and the Diocesan Chancellor that the proposed work and methods are acceptable.

During this month there have been a number of our members ill at home or in hospital and I ask you to pray that God's healing grace will comfort them.

Finally, the Parish profile has been completed and by the time you read this letter it will have been forwarded to the Diocese. It will be used in the process of advertising for our new stipendiary parish priest. It is a very professional piece of work that is bound to attract interest. I am very grateful to our Group production team who have worked together in providing the facts and figures and photographs, and have met their self imposed deadlines! We continue to pray that God will guide his chosen priest to us.

Remain steadfast to whatever you resolved to do this Lent and the Lord will indeed bless you.

May peace be with you.

Nansi Davies,
Priest in Charge.

autumn planted onions and garlic were doing. The onions were fine and apart from the odd one missing, look as though they will give a good crop. The garlic were different with no green sprouts showing at all. I wondered whether this was because they might be planted too deep. I usually dig a hole some ten centimetres deep and then plant the bulb in the bottom. I read an article about the same time that suggested that garlic should be planted just under the surface. I hadn't had problems in previous years, but just to be on the safe side I broke open some of last years' crop and planted them in individual pots in the greenhouse. These have really developed into strong plants and are now ready for planting. On passing the raised bed this week I noticed that nearly every garlic bulb had now sprouted through the soil, so I now have two crops and don't know what to do! I might plant some in the tunnel for some extra early cloves and may also experiment with some around the main carrots when these are sown. The smell of the garlic is meant to mask that of the carrot and so helps prevent attacks by carrot root fly – might be worth a try.

The under-gardener has been busy in the fruit cage this week and has managed to prune all the old raspberry canes out. She refused to tackle the loganberries and blackberries – something to do with prickles! Another job for me to do this weekend!

Happy gardening until next month.
Steve Hunt.

SLOGANS SEEN IN CHURCHES

**Carpenter from Nazareth
seeks joiners**

**Seven Prayer-less days
Make one spiritually
week**

Come in for a faith

plants out probably two weeks sooner, so should be picking by end of April. To fill the gap before this I will be sowing a couple of mixtures that will go straight into the bed. These cut and grow again crops are a fantastically easy way to grow salad leaves in the shortest of times and because they continue growing you can secure a supply for two or three weeks from each sowing. I will also be sowing the different tomato varieties that we have as well as peppers. I should also be sowing the cucumbers and melons, but these are very sensitive to changes in temperature and as I try not to generally heat the greenhouse (apart from the ambient heat escaping from the hot bench), I will leave these for another couple of weeks. Too many times I've dived in early, only to see the plants fall over, one by one with stem rot. The seed is too expensive to waste it!

Other sowing will include the first of the dwarf beans. These will be planted direct into 7 centimetre pots, two at a time. Once big enough, they also will be planted in the tunnel. Like the melons these are also very susceptible to a cold night, but I will have some horticultural fleece standing by to cover them with, so they should be fine. I will also be digging out the lengths of guttering from under the bench. These will be filled with compost and planted up with peas. I don't bother with "normal" peas as these are tasty enough, and cheap enough to purchase courtesy of Captain Birdseye. I'll be sowing mangetout and sugar snap peas. The guttering is cut the right length to fit across the width of the raised vegetable beds. When big enough, planting out is so easy. Just scrape a hollow in the soil with a garden rake, and then slide the compost, plants and all, out of the guttering and into the hollow, water in well and away they go! Some varieties are short enough that they don't need staking, but I always err on the safe side and put some cut hazel twigs down either side of the row to be sure.

I purchased the seed potatoes some weeks ago and these have been sitting in wooden trays on the windowsill of the conservatory. These have started to shoot out well in the recent sunny weather. I only ever buy first and second earlies along with some salad potatoes, again because main crop are relatively cheap to buy and take up valuable space that is best covered with crops that are more expensive to buy. I'm aiming to plant a couple of rows of each into the tunnel bed in order to secure some really early potatoes and this will also be done this weekend.

Some weeks ago I walked around the vegetable area to see how the

Shirenewton Church 200 Club

The result of the February draw was:

Ticket No	Winner	Prize
133	Sally Price	£40
5	Joanna Bounds	£20
63	David Prosser	£20
74	Annie Woodward	£10

Correction: Incorrect prize monies were quoted in the last magazine, for December & January, they should have read as follows:

190	Pat White	£100
79	Barry Priest	£50
81	Betty Bryant	£25
234	David Morgan	£25

The winners did receive the correct prize.

Shirenewton Church 200 Club

During February and March we will be collecting subscriptions for the 200 Club for the year 2008/2009. As usual our collectors will be Barbara Davies (641553), Pauline Dutton (641677), John Nicholas (641368) and Peter Jones (641627). New members are always welcome; please contact one of us if you would like to join. Subscriptions are £10 per number, and the prizes each month are first - £40, second - £30, third - £20, and fourth - £10, with double the prize money in December. There is no draw in January or August. Thanks go to our collectors for their hours spent gathering in the subscriptions, to Auriol for keeping the accounts correct and banking the money, and to you all for your generous support which helps to sustain our village church.

Pauline Dutton

SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

Dates for the next couple of months

Date	Time	Venue
2nd March	9.45	Mothering Sunday The Church
9th March	9.45	Sunday Club The Chantry
16th March	9.45	Palm Sunday The Church
23rd March	9.45	Easter Sunday The Church

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

Jane Smith-Haddon 641 525

Glynis MacDonald 641818

ST PETER'S CHURCH, NEWCHURCH

PALM Sunday Service:- Please note the service on Sunday 16th March is at 3.00p.m. not 2.30.p.m.

Vestry Meeting The annual vestry meeting will take place on Sunday 6th April after the usual 2.30.p.m. service. It is very important that all who are interested in the survival of St Peter's Church should attend this vestry meeting.

Gardening Corner

I'm always glad to see the end of February as I always think the worst of the weather is behind us and we can look forward to the days lengthening and the temperatures rising. This year, for some reason, the days seem to be getting longer far quicker than I can remember – but then again this could just be down to my memory getting worse! I had intended to get seed sowing for this season underway by now but work has as usual got in the way! I did manage to put some broad beans in pots the other week and these are now growing on well. I would have put them outside to harden off, but it has been so cold of late that they have acclimatised in the greenhouse as there is no heating on. I also managed to put the sweet pea seed into pots. Fortunately the mice have left them alone as well, so these also are growing away well. I'll leave these to grow about 10 centimetres tall before pinching the tops out. This will make them shoot out from the base, resulting in much more growth and ultimately flowers. I've used 12 centimetre pots and planted three seeds in each. Ultimately I'll just plant one pot at the base of each support that should result in a handsome display. I like to make a wigwam using stout hazel or ash poles. They look very rustic and just seem to suit the part better than bamboo or the modern day equivalent of steel. The broad beans that I planted in November are looking well. One or two have rotted off in each row, but there are still plenty to produce some lovely early picking of beans.

This weekend I will be turning on the hot bench in the small greenhouse and seed sowing will begin in earnest. For those of you who don't have such luxuries you can achieve just as good results on the kitchen window shelf, but it would be wise to leave sowing for a few more weeks yet otherwise the kitchen could be another "Day of the Triffids", with plants taking over. If you have a small greenhouse or frame into which you can transfer the young plants once on growing, then you might get away with sowing seeds at the beginning of March.

First to go in will be the early salad crops or those varieties that need a long growing season. I usually put several varieties of lettuce seed into one tray, very small quantities of each, and then prick out half a dozen or so into individual pots, for planting out in a few weeks time. This will then be repeated at two or three week intervals to ensure a continuous supply right through to the autumn. This year I have the benefit of extra,

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ANDREW W GRIFFITH AMIH BSYA (IRID)

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
meeting 4th February 2008.

There was a big turnout from the public with nine people attending the meeting in addition to the council members.

Police report

PC Cowburn was unable to attend but he sent a comprehensive report ahead of the meeting the highlights of which were:-

Several problems reported with the functioning of the temporary traffic lights on the Usk Road (*Traffic lights will remain for some time as repairs required to the bank and barrier are substantial*)

06/01/08 – Sheep in road near Shirenewton

10/01/08 - Report of interference with gate & padlock

17/01/08 – Tree down on the Usk Road

18/01/08 & 27/01/08 Suspicious vehicles reported in Earlswood

29/01/08 – Suspicious vehicle in Mynyddbach early in the morning

30/01/08 - Vehicle hit a gate/pillar on a private drive (*not sure where!*).

PC Cowburn also reported that during the course of 2007 there were 15 burglaries in the Shirenewton area, of which six were domestic dwellings and nine were burglaries from sheds, garages & commercial premises.

Planning

Ashlea, Wayloed Lane, Mynyddbach.

Remodelling & extension to provide additional living accommodation.

Approval recommended.

1 Rose Cottage, Usk Road, Shirenewton.

Proposed enlargement of double storey side extension & annexe.

Approval recommended

Two planning appeals, both of which SCC's view remains as their response to the original applications

Seaview Nursery, Earlswood. Barn conversion - recommend approval

Ardog, Shirenewton. New entrance and driveway – recommend refusal

Items of local concern

Donations and grants to local bodies. Several members of the public put their view that being asked to apply each year for small sums of money was an increase in bureaucracy quite out of proportion to the sums involved. Members of the council were keen to point out that the perceived increase in bureaucracy was not intended, and there was no intention to stop funding to local organisations. This will be reviewed outside of the meeting by a sub-set of the council. Councillor Down mentioned the Welsh Church Fund which is also available to give grants to local organisations and may be of interest to the various treasurers of local organisations.

Future of the Open Space at Mynyddbach was to be discussed by Monmouthshire CC later that week. Councillor Down was asked to put forward SCC's view that the land be offered on a long lease to the community council who would in turn ask Shirenewton Fields Association to manage the land in conjunction with the 'green wedge'. This would include retaining part of the area as a playing field.

Update on the options for the shop, councillors have not been able to meet up with the current owners to discuss their intentions.

Allotments – no news, but possibility it could be resolved in conjunction with the long term solution for the Open Space.

Best Kept Village – first meeting of sub-committee 10/03/08

Damaged bus shelter in Mynyddbach, some disagreement over the ownership of the bus stop but agreed that it needs to be repaired ASAP, then a claim can be made against the insurance of the motorist involved.

CEDS Grant for play equipment at the rec. SCC will apply for grant to replace the horse, some matting & a picnic table.

Horse Signs on Gaerllwyd to Shirenewton Road. MCC have said it's not their policy to provide horse signs is a rural area as motorists should expect to encounter horses. However it's a fast road frequently used by heavy vehicles and non-local traffic hence SCC will continue to pursue this.

(Full minutes will be available from the Church website shortly after the next meeting). Next meeting is on Monday 3rd March at 7.10 pm.

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GAERLLWYD COMMUNITY WEEKEND

28TH/29TH/30TH JUNE 2008

Gaerllwyd Baptist Church is the venue for a completely new experience this summer.

We are putting on a display showing how many creative people we have living in this area.

We are hoping to have a huge response from all of you that live within a 5 mile radius of Gaerllwyd Crossroads.

The event will take place over the weekend of 28th-30th June 2008.

Friday evening will be set aside for setting up displays and entertainment by the musical group(s) and choral singers – choice of music will be made by the musicians and singers themselves.

Saturday will be open from 10am. – 6pm. (including refreshments) for all who visit. Sunday will be open from 2pm. Culminating in an evening service, hopefully including some of the singers and musicians, followed by refreshments and the exhibits can then be removed at 9pm..

Exhibits will include photography, flower arranging, cookery, sewing, painting, children's items, computer generated presentations and many more.

We need **YOU** to come and make this event a success. If you have a musical instrument in the cupboard get it now. If you can only play with one finger or one note we can incorporate you into a group. Come and join in and **HAVE FUN.**

Come and find out more over a cup of tea and refreshments.

Next meeting:

Sunday 13th April at 7.30pm.

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**WOMEN'S WORLD
DAY OF PRAYER**



Friday 7th March 2008

**God's Wisdom Provides
New Understanding**

A Service Prepared by Christian Women of Guyana

**At St Thomas A Becket
Church
Shirenewton
From
2.30 p.m.**

ALL WELCOME – MEN WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

SHIRENEWTON WHIST DRIVES

We were pleased to welcome two new players to our Drive on the 7th February so we once more had 37 players present. Our next Drive will be on the 6th March followed by the 3rd April, both being the first Thursday of the month. The Drives commence at 7.30 p.m. promptly. The Whist Drives raised £450 for the Hall Funds during the 2007/8 accounting period. A few more players and we might reach £500 next year!

Auriol Horton 01291 641844.



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present

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A new play by Glynis MacDonald



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April

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email: barbaraw@lters.org.uk

Shirenewton W.I.

There was a very good attendance this month. The scrabble evening at Margaret Woodliffe's house was enjoyed by everyone. Sally is still collecting plastic milk bottle tops to help provide a wheelchair for a WI member in Gwent.

The celebration of 56 years of the founding of Shirenewton WI is on Thursday 13 March 7pm at the recreation hall.

Events highlighted at the meeting are a visit to the Eco House & Bristol Docks on Friday 16 May (this is limited to 40 people only). Llangwm & Llansoy WI Playschool for Adults on 18 April at Llangwm Village Hall. Vegan Day on 31 March at Goytre Village Hall, and the Annual Council Meeting 23 April at County Hall. The Wye Valley Group of WIs are holding an evening of entertainment with Folk Dancers on Tuesday 29 April at Tintern Village Hall. The North WI have invited us to their third anniversary celebrations on Tuesday 18 March.

The speaker was Mike Phillips who gave us an insight into his busy life and he is also awaiting a kidney transplant. There are two types of treatment for kidney failure: Haemodialysis and Peritoneal dialysis. Mike uses the peritoneal dialysis as this form of treatment allows him to use it at home, work or on any trips/holidays. This treatment has been in use since the 1980's and allows the patient to lead a very normal life, which our speaker seems to 'pack in' more than most of us do. He does a lot of fundraising; runs a classic car wedding business; takes part in a successful local Christmas festival; besides taking part in many other activities.

The waiting list for a kidney transplant is lengthy due to a shortage of matching donor organs, but apparently in some European countries where there is 'an opt out' clause (that is where everyone is a donor unless otherwise noted) there is no waiting list.

The next meeting is on Thursday 13 March 7pm.

For more information on ACWW visit www.acwww.org.uk

RECYCLING PROJECTS AT SHIRENEWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Yellow Pages

Thank you for collecting the yellow pages for us. Mrs Eickhoff and the children created the Eco Schools logo out of the yellow pages before they were sent off to be recycled - great fun!



An easy way to reduce, re-use and recycle!!

At Shirenewton Primary School we raise money for school by collecting old mobile phones to be refurbished for use in other countries. Please tell your friends and neighbours and drop unwanted phones into the collection box in our entrance hall, rather than in the bin!

Thank you.

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 1090167

We held our annual quiz on Tuesday, 29th January, but I think our members did not want to test their brain power on that evening as we only had a few attending. Jessica once again set the questions, many thanks Jessica and our winners were Shirley Bonsey, Pat Noble and Brian Jones. Congratulations!

We have made slight alterations to our web site, to make it more informative for our members. The main pages are fairly static, but under Notices & News on the menu, you will arrive at a page that asks you to, ***click here***, that will give you the latest information on meetings and other events that we think you will be interested in. We have to thank one of our members who has kindly undertaken the task of improving the site. Many thanks.

Dates for your Diary

Usk Castle Friends

Spring Conference

The theme will be Cistercians in Gwent and their Architecture. Given by David Williams & Madge O'Keefe

Held at Usk Memorial Hall

Saturday, 8th March

10.00 am to 12.30 pm

S.L.H.S. Resource Session

Monday, 10th March

Shirenewton Recreation Hall

From 2.00 pm

Everyone Welcome

S.L.H.S. Meeting

Tuesday, 25th March

'King Arthur' a talk given by Chris Barber at the Huntsman Hotel, Shirenewton at 7.30

Caroline's Cookery Corner.

Well, it seems we have plenty to celebrate on St. David's with the Welsh team doing so well. So a couple of Welsh recipes are called for; the English may also try them!

Tessa used to make these with Ken James when we first arrived here, so long ago that she used to stand on a chair to reach the work surface. She's still making them.

Welsh Cakes:

8 oz self raising flour	3 oz caster sugar
Pinch of salt	1teasp mixed spice
4 oz butter	3oz currants & sultanas mixed
1 beaten egg	1 teasp syrup

Rub the butter into the flour, salt & spice & fruit—Add the sugar &fruit then mix egg and syrup to make a fairly firm dough.

Roll out to approx 1/4" thick (6mm) cut into 2" rounds, Bake on a medium hot griddle until golden on both sides, but a little soft in the middle—dust with caster sugar while still hot.

Thanks to Lewis Thomas I have had a lot of rabbits recently.

Rabbit Stew

2—3lb rabbit	8 oz streaky bacon diced
1lb swede diced	1lb carrot diced
2 onions sliced	1 leek sliced
2 tablesp. chopped parsley	1oz flour

Put the rabbit in the bottom of large saucepan, cover with the vegetable add thyme and season, cover with cold water, bring to the boil & simmer gently for about 1-1/2 hours until the rabbit is tender. Blend the flour with a little water & stir well into the sauce. Sprinkle with parsley.

Yet more good things to come from Wales!

Our thanks once again to Caroline Davies

Usk Troutwatch project organized by the Environment Agency Wales.

A Report from year 4

Year 4 are taking part in the Usk Troutwatch project organized by the Environment Agency Wales.

We had three visitors to school from the Usk Troutwatch project, Roger, Ian and Steve. They told us all about how poachers and fishing affect the numbers of trout in the environment. So the school have been given a fish tank and over 200 trout eggs for us to look after. Once they have hatched we will take care of them for a short while until we release them into the wild. It will be very exciting. We learnt a lot from their hour and a half visit.



Some Trout Eggs



1ST SHIRENEWTON GUIDES

After a very short half term we are already thinking of Mothering Sunday and providing a treat for all "our" mums. The Guides will be inviting them to join us for a tea party with entertainment and refreshments made by the girls. Then we are back to more traditional activities such as Go for Its. Guides need to complete at least two of these per year to gain their challenge badges; they also need to attend community events and meetings outside our normal meeting place. This sometimes provides us with a challenge as Leaders to provide suitable opportunities that do not clash with school events/exams. Be warned Guides we are looking at another hike/navigation exercise and be warned parents as we will need extra help that night!

On the issue of help, after the summer we will be losing help as our younger leaders/Duke of Edinburgh volunteers will be off to University. This will leave us with only 2 Guiders. What does that mean? Well we can only take a maximum of 24 girls and if either of us is ill we would have to cancel Guides. Parent rotas have had limited success in the past so if anyone out there fancies a challenge we would love to hear from you. Attendance every week is not obligatory! Also if you do have a girl in Brownies please do not assume they will automatically get a place in Guides. We run a waiting list as we take Brownies from Chepstow too as there are only 3 Guide units in the area taking from all the Brownie packs.

Yours in Guiding

Kestrel	Helen Cann	01291 650835
Kitten	Amanda Turner	01291 650763

The Bells.....The Bells

The Monmouth Branch of the Llandaff & Monmouth Diocesan Association of Church Bell ringers held it's annual training day on the 9th of February. This was based in a community hall in Mardy in the suburbs of Abergavenny. Maddie and Christine Stanley and Tom Mitchell attended as pupils, Mike Penney, Charles and Claire Eickhoff, Bob and Jenny Millar plus Kate Stanley went as helpers and Pip Penney went as a tutor. The Shirenewton ringers were one of the best represented towers from the whole branch. It was a lovely sunny day and it was a pleasure to drive between the towers used for training. The views driving between Abergavenny and Blaenavon over the top of the mountains and beside the Blorengge were stunning-clear and far reaching. One small girl not accustom to rural life was so surprised by the sheep walking all over the roads!

We have restarted a second practice to cater for the early learners. This is taking place on a Monday between 5.00 and 6.00. Once a month this practice will be cancelled and instead there will be a practice for the more advanced ringers which will be held on a Wednesday at the normal practice time of 7.30. To run this we are dependent on outside help and we have been lucky to be offered help from ringers from Cardiff, St Woolos Cathedral in Newport and from closer to home in Mathern.

We hope to start to ring some quarter peals on Sunday evenings at 7.00. If you would like us to ring for your special occasion-birthday, anniversary etc. we would be delighted.

Contact Mike or Pip Penney on 650653.

Mary Vittle

B.Sc. D.Pod M MchS

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OAK BARRELS

Oak barrels for sale. I have a quantity of ex-cider/whisky barrels. They are in good water-proof condition with top bung hole - approx. 56gallon capacity. Will make excellent garden water-butts, or could be sawn in half for large flower tubs.

Price £25 delivered (8 mile radius of Shirenewton). Mike Penney

BROWNIE REPORT PENGUINS AND PANCAKES

The Brownie programme this half term has been the usual mixture of making things, learning about our world and community, playing games and of course having lots of fun.

On January 29th, Jenny Bonner (Snowy Owl's mum) came to talk to the girls about her fascinating time living in South Georgia amongst the penguins. She gave us a wonderful slide show and made her talk both funny and interesting. The girls learnt about the wildlife (seals, whales and birds) that Jenny's husband was studying. She also told us how she coped looking after a toddler (Snowy's big brother) in this remote frozen place – for example just how do you push a pram in such deep snow? The Brownies' answers to Jenny's quiz showed just how much they had learnt about the wildlife of South Georgia that evening. It is good for us to realise what interesting lives people in our community lead.

5th February of course was Shrove Tuesday and is now firmly fixed in the Brownie calendar. There was lots of fun and exercise in the traditional pancake race and the evening finished with lots of eating too.

We have welcomed four new girls into Shirenewton Brownies in February. Emma, Issy, Fleur and Nia made their Brownie promise in front of all the Brownies and their parents - a memorable event for every Brownie.

Anyone interested in joining Brownies please contact Dorothy Thomas (641660)

Jackie Broughton- Guider in Charge (641797)

Shirenewton Mothers Union

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 12th March at Shirenewton Recreation Hall commencing at 2.30 p.m. Our Speakers will be Ken and Coralie Payne telling us of the work of the "Mercy Ships". Visitors are welcome to join us at 3 for Talk and Tea. Members please remember your Overseas Boxes and Subscriptions.

Branch Leader: Auriol Horton 641844

CHURCH WEBSITE & SHOPPING PORTAL

As I sat here staring at a blank screen wondering what to say this month (except, of course, shop via the church portal) I received a round robin email purporting to warn me of a new virus attack. I'm sure you recognise this emails genre which includes those asking you to participate in collections, i.e. Little Joe Blogs is dying of [insert disease] and is trying to collect postcards or the aforesaid emails warning about viruses i.e. "Warning there is a new virus circulating.... etc). If the sender had spent two minutes checking out the validity of the email prior to forwarding it to all their friends, they probably would found it was a hoax and saved everyone a lot of time. There are several sites which you can use to check out urban legends and fake emails. www.snopes.com is perhaps the best known, for scams try www.scambusters.org or simply type some of the text (or Urban legends) into Google. Please don't forward these types of email without checking them out first.

Moving onto anti-virus stuff; always remember to keep your anti-virus suite up-to-date. I am keeping the church website 'be a whizz' section on viruses up-to-date. I am currently running Kaspersky Internet security and finding it a lot 'lighter'; i.e. consumes less PC power/memory/etc) than my previous suite, ZoneAlarm. However, whilst these suites are relatively cheap and I recommend them, there are free methods of maintaining effective internet security. This month's PC Pro (cost £3.99) is giving away (on the cover CD) a full copy of Iolo's System Shield - a full internet security suite which has a full year's updates - for free! So for £3.99 you will get a magazine and a full year's protection!

Obviously having an internet suite doesn't protect you against stupidity—so don't click on random links on emails sent from unknown people or which are generic (ie a family member sent you this). There are some very good eBay fakes going around at the moment - I almost fell for one myself the other day as it looked so genuine. However, I never click on the link in the email itself and always log-on directly to the eBay website.

On a slightly different subject, I was asked for advice recently on whether someone should get Vista or XP Professional on a new laptop. Answer: XP Professional. Vista is a real resource hog and you really do need a top spec. machine. Also some of the more common 3rd party software tools used on XP don't yet run on Vista and Microsoft have already released a preliminary list of software which currently runs on Vista which won't run once the Service Pack (SP1) is released - this is due imminently! XP sales were due to be stopped on 30th January but sheer pressure and demand forced Microsoft to extend the deadline until 30th June 2008. So if you are thinking of getting a new machine I'd advise you to get in before June and have it with XP. Please use the church website to order it.



MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL

CHEPSTOW CHORAL SOCIETY is offering its annual presentation of choral music which is appropriate for Lent with a ***Passiontide Concert on SATURDAY MARCH 8th at St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow, 7.30pm.*** The programme will include a tribute to the great British composer Ralph Vaughan Williams, who died 50 years ago this year, as well as a performance of Faure's *Requiem*. Tickets may be obtained from ***Chepstow Bookshop/choir members*** and further information may be obtained by telephoning Marjorie Duerden (01291 623310).

Fair Trade

Fairtrade Fortnight is upon us. Most people now have quite a good idea what fair trade means. 15 years or so when I got involved with promoting fair trade very few people had even heard of it. Now the message seems to have got across, at least in connection with tea, coffee, chocolate and bananas. One of the aims of this year's Fairtrade Fortnight is to promote all the other goods on offer so that producers in the developing world can have a fairer share of the profits their hard work produces.

One excellent recent piece of news is that Tate and Lyle, Britain's second largest sugar company is to convert its entire retail sugar range to Fair-trade. This will benefit 6,000 smallholders in Belize. The sugar it supplies to manufacturers is not included in the Fairtrade arrangements, but nevertheless this is an amazing development.

My daughter has just joined me 'live' on the computer to say that she has tried Fairtrade cola and it was fab! You see there is no end to the products available! Do contact me or the Fairtrade Foundation or Traidcraft website for more info .

Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316@gmail.com



Chepstow Choral Society

Musical Director: Graham Bull

Present

Fauré : Requiem

Dvorak : Te Deum

Vaughan Williams : Benedicite

Ravel : Pavane

on

Saturday March 8th

7.30 p.m.

St Mary's Priory Church Chepstow

with

Soprano : Charlotte Ives, Bass : Neil Bellingham,

Tickets : £ 10/£ 8

Available from The Chepstow Bookshop, or ring 01291 623310

www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk



Chepstow Choral Society is supported by the Welsh Amateur Music Federation

Other than that - please use the shopping portal on the church website for all your shopping needs. There are some interesting stores on the website which you are unlikely to find by simply browsing. And lastly, remember to book your Easter holidays/airport parking/etc through the site.

Happy browsing.

David Cornwell
webmaster

Stargazing in March '08

Apart from the Moon, the brightest object in the evening star is the star Sirius, which can be seen in the south-west. It appears so bright since it is relatively close to our Solar System.

The reddish planet Mars is fairly high in the evening sky to the south-west. Saturn has a yellowish colour, and is situated to the south, just to the left of the bright blue-white star Regulus which is the dot in the backwards-facing question mark of the constellation of Leo the lion. The brightest planet that is visible this month is Jupiter. It can be seen to the South in the morning sky. Although Venus is brighter still it is too close to the Sun to be seen at present.

The Moon can be a useful way of finding the planets. The crescent Moon and Jupiter are close together to the south on the morning of 3rd March. The Moon is close to Mars on 14th March and to Saturn on 19th March.

In March 1781, William Herschel of Bath was observing stars in the constellation Gemini when he discovered a new planet. This was the first new planet to be seen since the beginning of history and resulted in Herschel being knighted and given a royal pension. In gratitude to the king he wanted to call the planet George! However good sense prevailed and it was named after the god Uranus, conforming to the tradition of naming the planets after characters in classical mythology. Incidentally, Herschel's house in Bath is open to the public. The planet Uranus is quite faint but can be seen with the naked eye, under a dark sky, provided you know exactly where to look. The best views of Uranus, to date, were taken by the Voyager 2 spacecraft in 1986. Some of the brilliant images taken can be seen on <http://voyager.jpl.nasa.gov/image/uranus>.

Dave Thomas

SHIRENEWTON , MYNYDD BACH & EARLSWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.

PC Mike Cowburn has taken over from PC Andy Mason as the local Officer for Shirenewton. Additionally , he covers Earlswood, Mathern, Devauden, Itton, Llangwm, Llansoy, St Arvans and Tintern - so he is quite thinly spread!

There was a Partnership and Communities Together PACT Meeting at the Shirenewton Village Hall on 18th February. Three priorities were selected for the area these being:-

1. Speeding on the B4235
2. Motorcycles (a) in Wentwood
(b) Speeding in the lanes.
3. A visible Police presence in the village.

There are two new Community Support officers due to start at Chepstow in the near future. So more patrols will then be organised.

Joint Police and Council surgeries will be held about once every three months. Precise dates will be announced as the dates are fixed.

Messages can be left on an answer phone for Mike Cowburn on 01633-642068 at the Chepstow Neighbourhood Office or michael.cowburn @gwent.pnn.police.uk

EARLSWOOD AND NEWCHURCH WEST MEMORIAL HALL

Hello Readers

Being the end of February as I write this there is not a lot of news from the Hall.

We are still waiting for the outside wall rendering to be completed, and hopefully this will be done within a couple of weeks.

A new key box has been fitted in the Hall so that users will only need two keys, the remaining keys can be housed in a secure box.

Two cleaners have recently been hired to keep the Hall fresh and clean.

A cheque for £250 has recently been received from S.O.D's towards the Hall's funds. Our grateful thanks to all concerned.

It is hoped that the main entrance doors can be replaced or repaired by the end of February.

A date for the AGM has been fixed for Thursday 17th April at 7.30 pm

Finally on behalf of myself, my wife and our family's I would like to say a sincere thanks for all the cards, messages and floral tributes received following our bereavement when Queenie Spary our Mum who passed away recently. She was a regular user of the Hall at many of it's functions, and will be sadly missed by friends and family.

John Spary

Nick Bruce

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EARLSWOOD & NEWCHURCH WEST
MEMORIAL HALL

AGM

THURSDAY 17TH APRIL 2008

AT
7.30 P.M

ALL WELCOME