

## THE CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS A BECKET SHIRENEWTON



### Parishes of Shirenewton and Newchurch Magazine

#### READERS AND SIDES- PERSONS ROTA FOR FEBRUARY

DATE	SERVICE	READER	SIDES-PERSON
FEB 1ST	Epiphany 4 9.30 a.m.	Bob Grattan Mike Pierce	Bob Grattan Mike Pierce
Feb 8th	3rd Sunday before Lent 9.30 a.m.	Barbara Davies Auriol Horton	Barbara Davies Auriol Horton
Feb 15th	2nd Sunday before Lent 9.30 a.m.	Peter Jones Jean Jones	Jean Jones Peter Jones
Feb 22nd	Sunday before Lent 9.30 a.m.	Margaret Lock Kevin Bounds	Margaret Lock Kevin Bounds
Feb 25th	Ash Wednesday	Venue to be confirmed	
March 1st	1st Sunday of Lent 9.30 a.m.	Winnie Jones Ernie Jones	Winnie Jones Ernie Jones

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

<b>PRIEST IN CHARGE.</b>	Revd. Dr. William Ingle– Gillis	424984
<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>	ROBIN MITCHELL	
<b>Clerk to Community Council</b>	Carole Jones	641791
<b>WI:</b>	Jenny Bonner	641929
<b>SCOUTS:</b>	Dave Richardson	620356
<b>GUIDES:</b>	Helen Cann	650835
<b>BROWNIES:</b>	Jackie Broughton	641797
<b>Cub Scouts</b>	Geoff Marlow	641407
<b>BEAVERS:</b>	Becky Lewis	650304
<b>POLICE CONTACT:</b>	P.C. Mike Cowburn	01633 838111
<b>REC. BOOKING SECRETARY:</b>	Beryl Saysell	641637
<b>TRAIDCRAFT:</b>	Marion McAdam	641316
<b>Local History Society</b>	Shirley Bonsey	641362

#### NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CONTACTS

<b>COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICER</b>	<b>MICHAEL COWBURN</b>	01633 642068
	<b>E MAIL:</b> michael.cowburn@gwent.pnn.police.uk	
<b>S'NEWTON &amp; MYNYDD BACH -</b>	Beverley Moore	641532

Please send your notes, discs or emails for inclusion in the February magazine to Bob O'Keefe at: 15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, (641686) or email to bobandwenche@aol.com by Friday 23rd January.

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

2nd Feb	Community Council Meeting - the Recreation Hall 7.30
5th Feb.	Whist Drive—the Recreation Hall—7.30 p.m.
6th Feb.	6 Nations Rugby Evening—the Church Room 7.30
6th Feb.	Shirenewton School PTA- Fish & Chips—Family Quiz night
9th Feb.	History Society—Resource session the Recreation Hall 2.00
24th Feb.	Local History Society—Speaker—George Peterkin 7.30 The Huntsman Hotel
28th Feb	Ceilidh—Earlwood Hall—7.00 p.m.
5th Mar.	Whist Drive—the Recreation Hall—7.30 p.m
27th Mar.	Shirenewton School PTA- Race night with curry.
29th Mat.	Chepstow Choral Society—St Mary's Church Chepstow

### **Come to a Ceilidh!**

**On: Sat 28<sup>th</sup> February**

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Dear Friends,

Taking note of how quickly we have raced through January – wasn't it Christmas just yesterday? – I am reminded that the words we use to celebrate the Christian feast of Candlemas on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February – the Song of Simeon, the Nunc Dimittis – contain some of my very favourite turns of phrases in the English language, either in scripture, or prayer book, or indeed in any writing, religious or otherwise:

Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,  
according to thy word.

For these eyes of mine have seen thy salvation,  
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people,  
a light to enlighten the Gentiles,  
and the glory of thy people, Israel.

It is the child Christ, of course – the light of the world – whose praises Simeon sings in the Temple as he holds him in his arms.

There is also, as many of you will know, another holiday of sorts that falls on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February: the American tradition of 'Groundhog Day'. Now, a groundhog is a bit like an overgrown, burrowing squirrel and – so tradition has it – if the animal emerges from his hole to find a cloudy Candlemas and thus fails to see his shadow, then winter will soon end. However, if he emerges to a clear day, he will see his shadow, become frightened of it, and run back in the burrow to hide. This means, for reasons that I've never quite understood, that there will be six more weeks of winter.

The most famous such American groundhog is Punxsutawney Phil, who takes his name from the little town in Pennsylvania in which his annual Groundhog Festival is held. The little beast's complete, official title is 'Punxsutawney Phil, the Seer of Seers, Sage of Sages, Prognosticator of Prognosticators, and Weather Prophet Extraordinary'. Each year several thousands of people gather at his home in Gobbler's Knob – guided by his disciples, the Inner Circle of the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club – to witness his amazing feats of prediction. I've never been there myself; but it's all a great deal of fun, so I'm assured – not least by the well-loved movie starring Bill Murray and Andie McDowell that was set during the Punxsutawney Groundhog Festival.



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And yet, by the Church's own celebrations, we proclaim that amongst us has come the greatest prophet of all: Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God the Father. The candles we light on Candlemas serve each year to remind us that, by his light, we come to know God's own heart. Whereas the groundhog and his followers look to the shadow – the product of light – in the hope of foreseeing the season to come, those of us who gather in Church look to the *source* of eternal light, and thus see the promise of God himself: that when Christ came amongst us, he brought light to all the nations – to each of us specifically, just as he did to old Simeon, and yet also to the human race as a people, to both the Gentiles and to Israel herself. This light truly is light perpetual, light that reveals to us our future calling into God's own eternal Kingdom – light that proclaims the dignity and honour that God has bestowed on the human race by his great, indeed passionate, love for us.

So let us rejoice in that which is revealed this year (and every year) on 'Groundhog Day'. Though we may well have six more weeks of winter coming in the short term, the eternal promise – which we proclaim to all around – is a home for ever in the warmth and comfort of God's love as his own beloved children.

What a vision to proclaim!

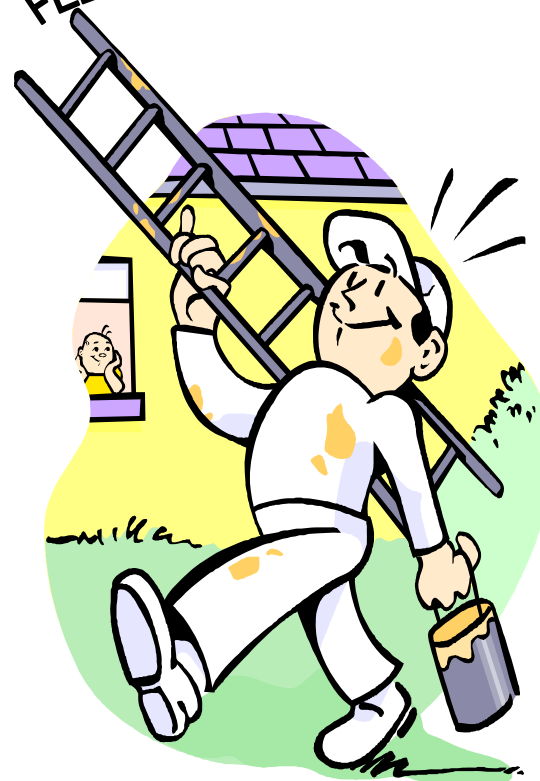
Blessings,  
Fr. Will

**FROM THE REGISTERS**

A Funeral Service was held on Tuesday 16th December 2008 for Nancy Wentworth Strachan followed by cremation at The Gwent Crematorium. Born 1917 died 2008

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ANDREW W GRIFFITH AMIH BSYA (IRID)

**Parish Magazine**

Annual subscriptions of £5.00 for the 10 copies for the next twelve months become due in February. Would you kindly arrange to pay your regular "News boy / girl" during this period.

Additional copies of the magazine are usually available at the rear of the Church

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**SHIRENEWTON CHURCH 200 CLUB**

During February and March we will be collecting subscriptions for the 200 Club for the year April 2007/2008. The prizes for this year will be:- 1st £40, 2nd £20, 3rd £20, and 4th £10 with extra prizes at Christmas. Half the money collected is distributed as prize money. The following will collect the £10 per number subscription;- Barbara Davies, Pauline Dutton, John Nicholas, Peter Jones.

It would be much appreciated and a great help with the collection process if you could give your subscriptions to your normal collector as you see them over the next couple of months, otherwise someone will call on you before the end of March. If you are not a member and would like to join, please call me on 641677 or Barbara on 641553.

I would like to thank our collectors for all their hours spent walking around the village collecting subscriptions and also to Auriol for checking and banking the money. Thank you all as always for your generous support.

Pauline Dutton

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**The winners of the Christmas 200 Club draw were:**

<b>Ticket No</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Prize</b>
171	Richie Tout	£100
130	Ernie Jones	£50
118	Mike Sayce	£25
169	Wendy Baker	£25

Double prizes were awarded in December, there being no draw in January

## SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

Please Note the change of time!

Date	Time	Venue
1st Feb	09.30	Sunday Club—The Church Room
8th Feb		No Sunday Club
15th Feb	09.30	Sunday Club— The Church Room
22nd Feb	09.30	Sunday Club—The Church Room
1st Mar	09.30	Sunday Club—The Church Room

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

*Jane Smith-Haddon      641 525*

*Glynis MacDonald      641818*

### **Tiger's Club - A Wonderful Result !**

Over Christmas, the Sunday Club raised **£635.00 for the Tiger's Club** in Uganda. This is an absolutely fantastic result in these times of financial downturn. Thank you everyone who supported the Advent Fair in the Church Room @ Shirenewton Church where we raised £420.00 The young people of the Sunday Club worked so hard and so enthusiastically – so a big thank you to them.

Then we raised over £100 at the 'Carols around the Christmas Tree' and over £90 from the Wednesday Carol Concert. Then with a couple more generous donations we are able to send this wonderful donation to help the street children in Kampala.

We are going to invite someone from the organisation to come and talk to us about the work of the Tigers (Retrack) in Uganda – and everyone will of course, be most welcome.

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will actually store fairly well. Cox's' always spring to mind, but I understand that there are some good modern varieties now. I'll have to get a fruit tree catalogue or two and while away an odd hour in my leather recliner chair whilst I decide! Preferably with a nice log fire in front of me, and a large glass of rum in my hand. These cold evenings, it is very difficult to drag yourself out to do anything in the garage. Most chores can wait until the days get longer, but I do find it difficult to sit down and do nothing, whereas the under-gardener finds it very difficult this time of year to do anything, other than sit down and do nothing! Most chores are restricted to DIY projects and at the moment I'm building some framed nets to sit over the small ponds and prevent the heron getting at the fish. Whilst measuring up I watched the fated Koi going around in their "ten second circles". Maybe its now time to try and catch them and put them back in the large pond, where they almost met their maker. That would be a nice Christmas present for them, as with their short memories, they would never again see things that they had seen before! Well a month off now! We hope you all have a very good Christmas and I look forward to continuing my ramblings for a further year come 2009.

Happy gardening until next year. Steve Hunt.

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## Community Council

### Shirenewton Community Council meeting 01/12/08

Very short meeting as the clerk and several councillors were feeling very poorly.

#### Police Report

Dog incident  
Accident at Gaerllwyd  
Tree down  
Suspicious male in Earlswood

Very little crime in the village perhaps because the road was closed but several crimes committed in the adjoining areas e.g. Texaco services – cash point removed with cash, St Arvans several incidents.

#### Planning

- Public footpath Number 175 at Tredegar Farm, Shirenewton, has been diverted.
- Upgrade of Public footpaths (footpaths No 78, 79 & 80) and modification to bridleway No 186 from Cribau Mill to Oxpool, Earlswood.

#### Items of local concern

1. Disposal of land at Mynyddbach – SCC have tried to register an interest in the land, still debateable whether they have a legal right to do so. Notices will be published on sale in Free Press during December; apparently several tenders have already been received. Robin Mitchell has spoken to MCC but they don't see the land sale as anything to do with the request for allotments, MCC are determined to sell it regardless of local opinion. One member of the public present very eloquently expressed her frustrations at the current state of affairs regarding the provision of allotments which has been compounded by the rudeness/incompetence of officers of MCC when she attempted to obtain a tender envelope from them to put in her own bid.
2. The path from Mynyddbach to Tan House Court has at long last been repaired.
3. SCC has received notice that a caravan has been sited and occupied in Earlswood without planning consent.
4. Grants have gone out this month to various local churches/chapels & other local organisations.

5. Next years precept was discussed, it will have to increase as MCC will no longer pay for grass-cutting, SCC has looked at other options but found that MCC will charge less than private contractors.

6. Horse & Rider signs, meeting 15/12/08 with Graham Down, David Davies & Highways Department on site to review the road and possible signage.

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## Shirenewton Community Council - 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009

### Police Report

Several minor calls to the police, but main issues were Car stolen from Shirenewton and found burnt out in Wentwood. A car had gone off road when Chepstow road was closed i.e. driver went past the diversion signs but road not gritted due to closure.

### Planning

Oslo, Mynyddbach - Erection of two pairs of semi-detached dwellings (4 properties in total) – outline planning only. Refusal recommended.

Rose Cottage, Usk Road, Shirenewton - Conversion of barn into dwelling. Approval recommended.

Lower House Cottage, Earlswood - Demolition of old pigsty and erection of orangery. Approval recommended.

Barn by Dyers House, Itton - Conversion into dwelling. Approval recommended

Little Folly, Bluebell Lane, Earlswood - Notification of amendment of plans.

Planning has been approved for widening of gate & driveway in the field adjacent to the Recreation field.

### Items of Local Concern

No new information on the of land in Mynyddbach (the potential allotments)

Village shop. Still for sale with no movement on the price, but perhaps now more negotiable but there is little prospect of the village being able to raise the funds to buy it.

Next meeting Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2009 at 7.30 pm

*it's so wet I doubt we'll be spreading manure for several weeks to come! One advantage of having the tunnel is that you can get on and work, almost regardless of the weather outside! In between bouts of the flu, we have been able to tidy the greenhouse up, getting rid of any remnants of old plants, digging over the soil and removing weeds, and then spreading a good thick layer of manure on the raised beds. Remarkably we were still cutting calabrese up to Christmas and there are still some plants that are sending side shoots out. I'm therefore reluctant to dig these out for the time being, in case we manage to get a couple of more pickings from them. One bed was completely cleared, apart from some spring cabbage plants that were put in during October. These are looking well at present. The rest of the bed was raked over and I planted some onion sets and also sowed some early maturing carrot seed. Hopefully these will mature and be harvested in May or early June, when they will be replaced with the main summer salad crops such as tomatoes and peppers. Hopefully these in turn will be replaced in late summer, early autumn with another over-winter crop of something or other! Just to finish off in the tunnel I moved a load of wood chips to spread on the paths between the raised beds. These provide a nice weed free surface, that is clean to walk on.*

*Talking of salad crops I have now turned on the hot bench in our small greenhouse and have started sowing the first seeds. Tomatoes, aubergines and peppers are actually tropical species and although they grow well in this country, they do need a long growing season. It is essential therefore that seeds are sown as early on in the season as is feasible for you. Any of these can be successfully sown on the kitchen windowsill but they do need warm and light conditions in which to carry on growing. If you don't have these then it would be worth holding off with sowing for probably another month or so. Unfortunately many of you will end up buying actual plants from the garden centre. This is a shame because you will be restricted in your choice and will only be able to buy the more commercially available varieties. Although the end results are still acceptable, I'd urge you to consider growing your own if you can. This allows you to have a look through the numerous seed catalogues that are now available and select older varieties which have superior flavour, compared to many new varieties.*

*Other seed sown so far include salad leaves and broad beans. By the time you read this, sowing will be in full swing, with various varieties of herbs, greens and other crops such as cucumber and melon and courgettes. I'll also be sowing pea seed in lengths of rain guttering, which when germinated, allows you to slide the entire package, straight into a pre-dug groove in the vegetable bed. Not only does this get the crop on growing early, it also means that you can prevent mice from eating the seed, or the*



## ***Gardening Corner***

*Start of another New Year. The weather so far this winter is working in the gardeners' favour, if only because it has been cold enough, for long enough, to hopefully be having an affect on the bugs and beasties. The populations of these have built up over a number of years, due to a series of mild winters. It will be interesting to see what, if any, effect this cold weather will have on the garden over the coming year. Most noticeable absentee in the garden over the last few weeks has been slugs and snails, I've found several hiding under pots, that have been quickly despatched, but I have seen none in the garden proper for quite some time.*

*The cold weather has proved ideal in that I have been able to get on and do some tidying in our field where we have our log store and where the fruit trees are planted. I haven't pruned the trees for a couple of years so this is a job that was needed. Most have now been tidied up and a bonfire lit to burn all the diseased branches that were removed. This will help prevent the spread of such diseases as canker. Several trees were removed altogether, two plum trees had been infected with silver leaf disease and were never going to survive any longer, whilst the other had split, and would fall apart before much longer. This tree had a beehive positioned either side of it so the last thing I wanted was for this to fall over, taking a beehive out in the process. I didn't fancy having to go and sort that lot out! I had already ordered replacement trees and these were planted as soon as the weather changed. I had elected to get some more apple trees. The ones we have tend to be early varieties, such as discovery and Worcester. These did keep us in apples until mid October, so I decided that we needed some varieties that ripened later, and that would store into January or February. If you have a little space to spare it is always worth considering having your own fruit trees. The ones we have bought are on a semi dwarfing rootstock, which means that they will grow to around 3 metres tall. We have plenty of room however, so if you are limited for space then buy trees that are on a dwarfing rootstock. Trees will then grow to a maximum of 2 metres tall. If you haven't got this much room don't despair as you can now buy "patio" trees that can be grown in pots. Crops aren't huge, but they will be much appreciated. There is still plenty of time to plant bare rooted trees, which provide much better value for money, over pot grown ones.*

*As the ground was frozen hard for several weeks I couldn't get on in the garden itself and take advantage of the dry weather. I wanted to spread a load of well rotted manure, but there is no point in doing this when the ground is frozen as you just insulate the soil for when the temperatures rise, sealing the frost in the ground. Now of course the weather has turned, but*

## **COMMUNITY LUNCHEON CLUB**

The VILLAGE PLAN, published by the Community Council in 2007, highlighted that a Luncheon Club was on the "wish list" for the next 5 years. This amenity is in it's early planning stage and the views of residents are being sought on the following:-

- \* A Luncheon Club for Older People (Pensionable Age)
- \* Facilitated by the Tredegar Arms (Not for Profit initiative)
- \* A choice of 3 set meals each session
- \* A fixed price
- \* Choose 2 out of 3 courses
- \* Transport available if required
- \* Start date – April 2009
- \* Once a month (to begin with.)

In order for this initiative to be successful, eligible people need to be aware of the proposals, therefore, please discuss the above with family, friends and neighbours. To ensure that the service will appeal to the target group, opinions and suggestions on all aspects of the Luncheon Club would be most welcome.

For further information, to register an interest, or to pass on your suggestions, please contact:-

Carole Jones	641791
Beverley Moore	641532

## **ST PETER'S CHURCH, NEWCHURCH**

It was very encouraging that the Carol Service was very well attended. Many thanks to you all who came to this special service.

### **From The Register**

A funeral service followed by interment in the churchyard was held for Mrs Kathleen Rose Park (1916-2008) on the 9th of December 2008. Mrs Park was a long time PCC member and a previous Churchwarden. She will be greatly missed as she was a great help and inspiration to us all.

## SHIRENEWTON & EARLSWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH.

Although levels of serious crime are relatively low, incidents are occurring. There have been incidents in the locality where there have been walk in burglaries while residents were watching TV. Keep your doors secured even while at home.

Equally seriously, there are national reports of a couple of scams that effect us all.

One is letters are being received stating that the recipient has won a substantial cash prize in a Spanish lottery. To receive the cash they need to forward their bank details to an address within. If you haven't entered a lottery you cannot win—the only result for you will be your bank account will be drained.

A similar scheme is being operated over the telephone. Calls are being received where the caller indicates they are calling on behalf of a credit card company—Barclay Card or Mastercard. They are very convincing, they will quote the card holders name and quote the card number. They will claim to be part of the organisations security department and state that they concerned about transactions made with the card. They will then ask for the security number on the back of the card. Once they have this they can immediately exploit your card.

**DO NOT PROVIDE DETAILS OF ANY OF YOUR BANK ACCOUNTS TO ANYONE CALLING YOU. CALL YOUR CREDIT CARD COMPANY OR BANK AND NOTIFY THE POLICE.**

SHIRENEWTON  
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The School Council are updating the Travel Plan and would like to find out the views and any useful suggestions from the local community regarding our parking difficulties. We hope you are able to help us and we look forward to hearing from you. Please address your letters to 'The School Council' at either:-

shirenewtonreception@yahoo.co.uk or Shirenewton Primary School  
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## 1st annual Six nations kick-off

**Join us for a six nations kick-off on Friday 6th  
February 2009 in the Church Room.**

**Speaker: Brian Price (ex Wales Captain)**

Brian Price gained 32 caps playing for Wales and also played for the British Lions & the Barbarians. He is one of the few players to have played in winning teams against each of the three major touring sides. Brian will share his thoughts on the forthcoming six nations matches and make (dangerous?) predictions.

Surprise additional guest (professional rugby player) also invited! This evening will be a great way to kick off the six nations tournament among village friends and will include a 'rugby slanted' general knowledge quiz and other such 'six nations' centric activities. It is sure to be a fun filled evening.

**Tickets: £10 per person (£8 for Friends of the Church).**

Your ticket includes a fabulous 'six nations' ploughmans meal. There will be a pay bar with a 'six nations' theme.

**Venue: The Church Room**

**Time: Doors open @ 7:30pm; Food at 8:00pm; Close @ 10:30pm.**

**Tickets: Available for Friends of the Church immediately (and others from Wednesday 21st January) from Kevin Bounds (641818); John Nicholas (641368); & David Cornwell (641715). Strictly limited numbers so book now!**

**Event organised by Shirenewton Church Fund Raising Committee**



## 1<sup>st</sup> Shirenewton Guides

In December the Girlguiding Cymru carol service was held in Llandaff Cathedral and Shirenewton was well represented as our Senior Section girls were asked to carry and escort the Welsh Standard. This was in recognition of the work they had done at an international camp in the summer and completion of their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards – well done Lucy, Alice and Bethany. The service itself made a memorable start to Christmas.

As usual our Christmas party ended up in January due to date clashes with school services. Pyjamas seemed a good idea at the time but it was a freezing cold night and some of us had to go elsewhere after Guides and got some very odd looks!

The new year started with plenty of plans for the coming 18 months. September sees the start of our centenary year with lots of activities planned at local, national and international level. Decisions have to be made on what the girls would like to do (and what the parental pockets will accommodate!) ready to start booking. It all seems so far ahead but experience tells us it will come around very quickly. More immediate plans are being made for unit summer camp and also how the unit is going to meet the latest Girlguiding challenge of “Changing the World” – we don’t do things by halves. Members of Shirenewton Guides have decided they would like to learn more about the work of the Red Cross and also raise some funds for Water Aid to supply stand pipes in Nepal. We will be learning several water related songs and we will be sharing them with you later in the year – for a donation of course.

Yours in Guiding

Kestrel	Helen Cann	01291 650835
Kitten	Amanda Turner	01291 650763
Koala	Karen Ford	
Panda	Bev Thorne	



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Email: [shelly.whittington@shirenewton.org](mailto:shelly.whittington@shirenewton.org)  
Website: [www.pant-y-cosyn.com](http://www.pant-y-cosyn.com)**

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### **ALL CHANGE IN 1ST SHIRENEWTON BROWNIES**

2008 ended traditionally with our themed 'Shiny and Sparkly' Christmas party. The girls chose the theme and games, and as always, it was a fun evening. This year, however, we also felt sad because we had to say "goodbye" to Dorothy Thomas, who has been our Snowy Owl for almost 10 years. We are just wondering how we are going to cope without her and her many skills – from cookery to singing, to say nothing of her great sense of humour and huge general knowledge.

Still, as the saying goes, "Every cloud has a silver lining" and Shirenewton Brownies' silver lining is that we welcome back Lucy Kirkham, who has had a term's break from Brownies. She is returning in January, as assistant leader (aka Snowy Owl ).

The New Year began in style. The 20<sup>th</sup> January 2009 was not only an important day for America and Barack Obama, but also for 10 new girls joining Brownies and making their promise - Maddie, Eleanor Tout, Issy, Lowrie, Anna, Ellie, Christiana, Eve, Tirion, Eleanor Willis. Welcome to GirlGuiding.

2009 will see many celebrations in GirlGuiding UK as we enjoy the start of our 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations. Although the main events will begin in the autumn, Girlguiding has also been set the challenge to help "Change the World" by supporting a variety of international projects. Shirenewton Brownies and Guides have together decided initially to support Water Aid. This project aims to help communities in Nepal to get clean water to their villages. Our challenge is to "Sing for Change" and to raise funds for Water Aid - so watch this space. Safe, clean water was the theme for our enrolment evening. The girls performed a drama for our parent visitors, to help Kirsty and Ellie gain their Hostess Badge at Our Promise Evening.

We are now able to take names on our waiting list from any girls aged 6 and over . Please contact Jackie Broughton (01291 641797) .



## 1<sup>st</sup> Shirenewton Cub Pack

*Newsletter (January 09)*

We ended 2008 with an exciting evening of games and making Christmas Cards for parents and friends with all the cubs signing every card, all thirty six of them.

I am pleased to say all our cubs returned for the new term so it would appear we must be doing something right! During our first two weeks we have been concentrating on the compass and how we can find our way by day or night. We also made a number of compasses using just a pin a magnet and some water to find north.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan we are all off to see our local thespians in Puss In Boots at Eaglewood Village Hall with a number of the older cubs helping with the programs and assisting people to their seats.

Unbeknown to the cast all the cubs have made cat masks which they hope to surprise them with during the interval.

During the next few weeks we will be furthering our skills in map reading and learning how to tie some new knots starting with the clove hitch. Most of our activities will be in preparation for an afternoon hike up Greys Hill and night hike through Chepstow Forest during April plus our first spring camp which will probably be on the 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> May.

For further Cub Pack information, coming events and lots of photos please see The Pack's own web site; <http://shirenewtonscouts.jimdo.com/> or contact Geoff on [geoffmarlow@btinternet.com](mailto:geoffmarlow@btinternet.com)

## CAROLINE'S COOKERY CORNER

There are plenty of pheasants around now, although I prefer pigeon, pheasants are more readily available.

### Pheasants in Red Wine

2 pheasants	1oz butter
2tbsp oil	8oz streaky bacon
4oz mushrooms	1 bottle red wine
Sprig of thyme	2tbsp red currant jelly
12 pickling onions	1 onion
flour	salt, pepper, clove of garlic

Cut the pheasant into portions and quickly fry the pheasant in the oil and butter, remove the pan. Fry the bacon chopped onion and crushed garlic. Add flour to make a roux and add the red wine.

Place the pheasant into the casserole and add the rest of the ingredients.

Cook in the oven at a moderate temperature for about 40 minutes.

Serve with **Brussel sprout puree.**

1lb cooked, mashed and seasoned potatoes
2lb sprouts—peeled
4oz butter

Cook the sprouts in the usual way until nearly cooked, drain and cut in half.

Over a low heat melt the butter and fry the sprouts gently until cooked.

Put into a food processor and blitz until pureed, add to the mashed potato.

*Thanks once again to Caroline Davies*





## **Chepstow Folk Dance Club**

**Every WEDNESDAY from  
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7.30– 9.30**

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## **SHIRENEWTON WI JANUARY 2009**

January 8<sup>th</sup> saw our first meeting for 2009. New Year : Time to make plans and renew our ideas. Our speaker was Mr Ian McFarlane, of Shirenewton's local history society, who gave us some inspiration with a look at the diverse and intriguing history of Shirenewton and the surrounding area. We already know about the famous historical sites and events which bring many tourists to this part of the country, but not many people living here are aware of how interwoven this area is with sites both ancient and almost modern. Ian talked to us about a burial site older than Stonehenge, an ancient hill fort and a lost village. All of which are just the sort of things people would visit as places of interest if they found them in a tourist guide. We found his information on Shirenewton Hall and its various incumbents up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century very interesting, some members who have lived in this area for a long time added their own anecdotes, which helped us understand more about the community we are part of. We all enjoyed Ian's talk and I hope to get a chance to visit the Hill Fort this year, it's definitely on my list of places to visit.

Our next meeting is on the 12th February at the Rec. Hall starting at 7:15pm. New members always welcome. Our speaker will be Mr Henry Hodges, talking about Chepstow's "Prisoner in the Tower"

D Such



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## SHIRENEWTON MOTHERS UNION

From Rosemary Carey, our new Branch Leader

We now meet in the beautiful new church room at Shirenewton, a lovely venue. On 14 January we were reminded of the MU Theme for the Year "The Cost of Relationship" thinking of people & places around the world where women - and men - members of MU are engaged in supporting and facilitating healthy family life and relationships in their communities thorough all kinds of hope-generating projects.

Our part, as a dozen or so members (out of 3½ million worldwide) is to engage with what's going on here and abroad through shared information, prayer, giving and action. See the MU Website: - [www.the.mothersunion.org](http://www.the.mothersunion.org) - for more.

**A prayer from and for Zimbabwe** - a country of 'starving millionaires' because money is worthless

Lord, you asked for my hands that you might use them for your purpose.  
I gave them for a moment then withdrew them for the work was hard.

You asked for my mouth to speak out against injustice.  
I gave you a whisper that I might not be accused.

You asked for my eyes to see the pain of poverty.  
I closed them for I did not want to see.

You asked for my life that you might work through me.  
I gave a small part that I might not get too involved.

Lord, forgive my calculated efforts to serve you  
Only when it is convenient for me to do so,  
Only in those places where it is safe to do so,  
And only with those who make it easy to do so.

Father, forgive me, renew me  
Send me out as a usable instrument  
That I might take seriously the meaning of your cross.

## Itton Village Hall

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**Tessa Davies – 01291641331 or 07817411615-**



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We thank Auriol Horton our outgoing Branch Leader of 9 years for her faithful and steady leadership and we are grateful that in spite of numerous other responsibilities she remains very much part of SN-MU. Our next meeting is on March 11 (no February meeting) when Mrs Jean Hackett will tell us about the work that goes into preparing the annual service for the Women's' World Day of Prayer

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## FAIRTRADE NEWS

23rd Feb-7th March is Fairtrade Fortnight and throughout the country supporters will be trying to boost the profile of fairly traded goods. In spite of all our current grave difficulties there is, perhaps, a small hint of optimism in the air - note I did not embellish the notion with the phrase 'green shoots' (but the poor maligned woman who did use the phrase recently was responding to her interviewer's use of it!): the plane landing unscathed on the Hudson river and more importantly, much more importantly, the election in the US of an articulate, intelligent and apparently moral man.

Fairtrade sales are still showing significant growth: many organizations and businesses have made the change to Fairtrade coffee; tea etc and many individuals take for granted that their regular purchases include fairly traded items. I know however that there is one product that as yet no one has bought, because it's only just been launched: rubber gloves! I will be placing an order soon! (£1.10 a pair).

Please contact me for info or a catalogue, or Traidcraft direct.

Marion McAdam 641 316 [msm316@gmail.com](mailto:msm316@gmail.com)

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## WHIST DRIVES

26 players heralded in the New Year with a very pleasant drive on the 1st January.

The next Drives will be on the 5<sup>th</sup> February and 5<sup>th</sup> March commencing at 7.30 p.m. promptly at The Recreation Hall. New players will be welcome. You do not need a partner to make a start!!

Enquiries to Auriol Horton 01291 641844.

## STARGAZING IN FEBRUARY 2009

Orion the Hunter, many people's favourite constellation lies directly to the South. Four bright stars represent his shoulders and legs whilst a further three form his belt.

Sirius, the sky's brightest star lies to the lower left of Orion. Also called the "Dog Star" it appears particularly bright because it happens to lie nearby compared with other stars, at a distance of 9 light years. This can be compared with the bright blue-white star at Orion's right leg called Rigel. This is an extremely powerful star but at great distance, and is at least 60,000 times more luminous than the Sun. Rigel's name comes from the [Arabic](#) for "Foot of the Central One", whilst that of Sirius has [Ancient Greek](#) origins and means "scorcher".

The planet Venus is the brilliant Evening Star in the West. The Waxing Crescent Moon is just below Venus on the evening of 27th February. The Moon is presenting a widening Crescent during its waxing phase.

Saturn lies to the West at dawn. It is yellowish in colour and lies to the left of the sickle pattern of stars that form the head of the constellation Leo, the Lion. In the early morning of 12<sup>th</sup> February the Waning Gibbous Moon is to the left of Saturn. At this point the phase of the Moon is between Full and Last Quarter (or Half Moon).

Recently the Cassini spacecraft has flown amazingly close to one of Saturn's moons. The moon is called Enceladus, and is particularly interesting because it produces geysers of water. The spacecraft has flown as close as 15 miles above the surface, allowing features as small as 90 feet across to be identified. It's possible that the moon has water below the surface which is warm enough to host living organisms.

Dave Thomas

### **ADVERTISING RATES**

To advertise in the Magazine rates are:

Full page—£50 for the 12 months i.e. 10 issues

1/2 page—£25 for 12 months—10 issues

Local charities for a single event—no charge.

in January, they shear them, all feed is taken to the sheep, in a special house that is designed for lambing, they have students working in shifts to look after the sheep, giving twenty four hour attention at lambing time.

I wonder if the small family flock is going to disappear and be replaced by big flocks and big business; the world is a changing place, is it a question of change or be left behind. Economics of scale is very real, brought about mainly by the increased cost of labour, a shepherd years ago would be paid £1.50 per week for unspecified hours, at that time fat lambs were 75p. to 100p. each, so you would need to sell seventy eight to one hundred and four fat lambs to pay his wages each year. Nowadays a shepherd is paid £200.00 per week and fat lambs are sold on average for £40.00, so you would need to sell two hundred and sixty fat lambs to pay the shepherds wages each year.

I thought myself very fortunate when I ran a dairy herd single-handed and also had a small flock of about sixty ewes, lambing usually about March 20<sup>th</sup>. when the clocks were being put on one hour, in that my wife is a farmers daughter, and her father kept sheep and I had to rely on my wife to keep an eye on the sheep at lambing time, which she was quite capable of doing, when I was busy with the cows, and she used to work very hard with ewes lambing up the field in bad weather, and sometimes having to carry the lambs home to shelter. We had five children and as soon as they were old enough, they also had to help, in reward they each had a ewe of their own and when the lambs of these ewes were sold the children had the money.

That brings to mind another job for not only the sheep farmer but the grassland farmer in general, that job is mole catching and I used to pay our eldest son Geoff when he was a school boy one shilling (five pence nowadays) per dead mole and he was quite good at it. I have always been keen to catch moles as they can be a nuisance and a hidden

*Our thanks to Ernie Jones for sharing with us his feelings for our local countryside through the seasons. Also to Peter Bartlett for providing the copy. These notes are short extracts from one of Ernie's numerous books, copies of the books are available direct from either Ernie or Peter.*

## COUNTRY LIFE IN OUR COUNTY

*Now we have started to enter winter with the unusual, but seasonally cold winter weather we continue with extracts from the notes from Mr Ernest Jones that he has compiled through his long years of farming in this area.*

### Winter and the Sheep Farmer.

This can mean different things to different types of farmer. Winter to sheep farmers on the hills must be quite different to winter for sheep farmers in the lowlands. Not having farmed on the hills I cannot speak from experience but I would think snow is the biggest problem, problem enough anywhere but trying to recover sheep that have been buried in the snow in isolated locations must be very hard.

As I have written earlier we lambed down in March as that meant on a dairy farm ewes had had the run of the farm as the cows were still in their winter housing, the sheep would have cleared up all the old grass ready for the spring growth, they would be moved out of the silage fields and those fields that were planned for early grazing by the dairy herd. The sheep would be provided with hay in racks if the weather was hard, and some ewe nuts, a concentrated feed would be started about six weeks before lambing was due to start. Lambing would take place in a field thought to be most suitable for the sheep, offering some protection from the worst weather. If this field was some way from the farm then this could mean a lot of walking for the shepherd but this did not seem to be a problem when you were young. There is a lot in favour of lambing outside, you do not get the build up of diseases such as watery mouth, which can be a problem when lambing inside. There are though problems when lambing out of doors, if a ewe has difficulty lambing, you might inspect the sheep at say 10.30 pm. and decide to leave things to nature for a while so you walk back to the farm and return to the field an hour later to see what progress has been made, help is required so back to the house to get Winifred to come and help with the lambing and when all is then done it is possibly midnight or later, it is back to the farm for some sleep, but knowing you have to be up to start milking again at 6.00 am. next morning or earlier if you think the sheep should be checked before morning milking is started. We did later change to lambing indoors, there were still problems but they were much easier to manage, and led to a much better way of life. Some of the large flocks are housed with their

## The Bells....The Bells, The Bells, The Bells.

On Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup> of January Shirenewton bell ringers set off for their 2009 Winter Ringing Tour. It was an early start for a Saturday. We were ringing at Much Marcle in Herefordshire at 9.00am. (Oh yes; Shirenewton bell ringers are keen)! The air was clear and cold, the sky bright blue. We were lucky as by the end of the day on the way home the rain started to hammer down. We rang at seven different towers around Hereford, some with big bells, some with small, some of which "went" beautifully and some of which were "rather agricultural" and difficult to ring. There was a long leisurely lunch at the Tarrington Arms, Tarrington a traditional coaching house where the youngsters could play pool or outside in the play area while the adults preferred a pint of real ale in the warm.

After the ringing the contented but rather weary group gathered at The Old School in Earlswood to be wined and dined by the kind hospitality of the Stanley family. A great finish to a lovely day out.

We have rung two quarter peals over the Christmas period. The first on the 14<sup>th</sup> December gave Tom Mitchell his first opportunity to ring "inside" to a well known method by the name of Grandsire Doubles.

Three members of the Stanley family Chris, Simon and Kate rang in the second on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January. It was Chris's first quarter on the treble. Congratulations to them both.

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*SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY*  
*Registered Charity No. 1090167*

Our Christmas meeting took place at Itton Church, a most enjoyable evening. Mr. John Rogers provided us with a history of the Church and it's relationship with the Curre family. This was followed by tea and mince pies.

At our next meeting on 24th February at the Huntsman Hotel, Mr George Peterkin a local author and authority on natural history in Wye Valley he will talk to us about the Wye Valley Meadows and traditional Hay making.

The next resource session will be on 9th February at the Recreation Hall from 2.00 p.m.

# **SODS TRIUMPH FOR THE TENTH YEAR IN SUCCESSION WITH PUSS IN BOOTS**

The lively and snappy performance of the Pantomime "Puss in Boots" by Shirenewton Opera and Drama Society (S.O.D.S.) last week was great fun for all.

A pantomime should be fun for the actors and the audience. It was the obvious enjoyment of the performers at Puss in Boots that made the evening an enjoyable one. There were lots of children in the cast made it a lively performance. This community production was snappy and the music and songs were great. As I observed last year, an amateur dramatic performance can outshine any professional performance on the enjoyment front.

Puss in Boots proved the case again with the three lively performances at the Earlswood Memorial Hall on 22, 23 and 24 January by SOD's. It was their tenth Anniversary Pantomime, and they have learned how to exploit all the tricks that bring humour, fun and audience participation to the occasion. With many family members and friends of the cast in the audience, local jokes won a good laugh. It was great entertainment for sell out audiences that ranged from 3 to 80 years old for all three performances. That left us all warmed by this outstanding performance on a typical wet January evening.

Most of us know the fairy tale story of Puss in Boots which was written in 1697, but in case we do not ... the narrator (Will Smith-Haddon) dressed as a Jester led us through the evening with poetic verses ending with some humorous innuendos. It soon became clear who were the Goodies and the Baddies in this story.

Star of the show is a lively Puss in Boots (the young Philippa Broadribb) who bounces round the stage cat-like at all times; just how old was the cat is uncertain as the fur around the head was grey and her tail brown. But she was certainly the wisest and cleverest of all the characters.

Best supporting actor is Jack (a lady Sarah Price as a pantomime dictates) who has the biggest role and the task of holding the story through to the end when he wins the hand of the beautiful blond Princess Alice (Hannah Dartnell). Jack a steady but not an imposing young man and it is left up to Puss to win the hand of the Princess by gifting her three rabbits (as she simply adores pets).

The rabbits dancing (played by six young children) are the real stars of the show. They keep appearing either as rabbits or dwarves throughout the show with a springy step to some gorgeous music. Perhaps too much time was spent catching them to present to the Princess but all can be forgiven .... COS rabbits love lettuce.

The leading lady, a Goodie - Dame Hettie Quette, aunt of Jack - played by Stu Dutton gave a convincing and amusing performance. She runs a School of Deportment but cannot teach Jack and his fellow villagers much in the way of politeness. But she is a strong character and plays an always enjoyable, key role in winning the Princess for Jack.

Jack and his Puss in Boots want Jack to marry Princess Alice and inherit the huge Royal estate of King Herbert (Gerald Davies) and Queen Mildred (Glynis MacDonald) dressed in a shining white regal robe. They have as attendants the Lord Chancellor (James Leney) and Royal Secretary (Karen Millar). The King and Queen are well acted, convincing us how keen they are to marry off their daughter.

Too keen you might say ... because at first they accept the offer of a Baddie - Lord Rodger ably played by Gareth Adams in a sumptuous silk costume and with a wonderful singing voice. The audience participation was stronger with this Baddie, almost booing him off the stage every time he appeared.

The stage play beautifully crafted and produced by Glynis MacDonald (the Queen) moves at a snappy pace throughout all of Act One. There are lots of good musical numbers, plenty of dancing and not too much dialogue. Then after a mulled wine during the 20-minute interval comes Act 2.

A long scene in the dungeon of the Ogre's castle reveals the Princess imprisoned with Jack's Aunt Dame Hettie Quette. But Jack and Puss in Boots have set out to rescue them and in true pantomime style they succeed.

Then in the final scene, Jack wins the hand in marriage of the beautiful Princess Alice. It is the happy ending we in the audience and Puss in Boots all wanted.

This was a most enjoyable panto, with the some of the obligatory slapstick, and great scenery. It was well crafted and directed by Tony Broadribb (the father of Philippa our Puss In Boots), which this serves to emphasise that this production is a both a family and a community event. The cast start rehearsing in September and bring the panto up to a highly professional standard with many full-length rehearsals in January.

Every one of the 100 local people involved in the production (on stage and back-stage) enjoys themselves and the children have a wonderful opportunity to contribute to a professional entertainment project. You can share their sense of enjoyment and give yourself a good evening out by attending the next S.O.D.S. panto in January 2010.

Well done S.O.D.S for a brilliant evening and keeping the enjoyment and vitality of amateur dramatics alive.

By Richard Line.