

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

**CHURCH FETE is on 13TH JUNE FROM 2 p.m.  
At the Recreation Field**



Cover picture by Sula Maclean age 9  
Year 5 - Shirenewton School

**Parishes of Shirenewton and Newchurch  
Magazine**

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

<b>DATE</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>READER</b>	<b>SIDES-PERSON</b>
June 7th	Trinity Sunday 9.30 a.m.	Jean Jones Peter Jones	Peter Jones Jean Jones
June 14th	<b>Group Service at Llanfair Discoed -Confirmation Service with the Bishop 10.00 a.m.</b>		
June 21st	2nd Sunday After Trinity 9.30 a.m.	Bob Grattan Mike Pierce	Bob Grattan Mike Pierce
June 28th	3rd Sunday After Trinity 9.30 a.m.	Winnie Jones Ernie Jones	Winnie Jones Ernie Jones
July 5th	4th Sunday after Trinity 9.30 a.m.	Margaret Lock Lisa Morter	Margaret Lock Lisa Morter

**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>Church Hall Bookings</b>	John Nicholas	641368
<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>	John Eede (Chairman)	
<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 - Earlswood</b>	Beverley Moore	641532
	Sue Leat	641207

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

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

27th May	Local Neighbourhood Watch - 7.30 The Huntsman Hotel.
1st June	Community Council Meeting - 7.00 The Recreation Hall.
4th June	Whist Drive - The Recreation Hall - 7.30 p.m.
6th June	Joint Police Community Council Meeting- The Rec.Hall. 10.00
6th June	Shirenewton School PTA Summer Fayre.
9th June	Fete Meeting - 8.00 - The New Church Room
13th June	Church Fete - The Recreation Field.
18/19/20 June	Kids Ad Lib production Earlswood & Newchurch West Hall See page 12.
25th June	Community Club Lunch - The Tredegar Arms from 12.00
30th June	Local History Society visit to Tredegar House Tour starts
2nd July	Whist Drive The recreation Hall from 7.30 p.m.
10th July	School Annual Hog Roast - Join family, friends and staff. At 7.00 p.m. earlier if you wish to visit the gardens.
25th July	St Peter's Summer Fayre - Newchurch 12.00 - 4.00 p.m.
27th June	Choral Society - Handel - St Mary's Chepstow (See local press for details.)

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Dear Friends,

In May, we launched a new website for the Parish Group at <http://www.caerwent-parishes.org/>. The goal is to complement the existing individual parish websites with information that's necessary to deliver at the wider Group level: a live-updating Group diary, for example; information on weddings, baptisms, and funerals; and a Group news feed. I encourage you to look and see what's going on around the patch. But, also, please note that the local sites remain very much active – those who tend them work hard to give you more detailed information on *your* parish Church specifically – and I am hugely grateful for all that they do. For these see <http://www.caerwent-parishchurch.com> <http://www.shirenewtonchurch.com/> and <http://www.llanfair-church.org.uk/>.

I have also begun a bold(ish) new experiment with the *Twitter* social networking site: you can now get a live-updated feed about parish happenings and the vicar's activities by signing on to Twitter (<http://twitter.com>) and following me @CPGfatherwill. Twitter's stock-in-trade is the 'tweet' – a short, one-sentence message to the web that answers the question: 'What are you doing?' This is a hugely popular medium at the moment, it encourages interactive exchange between priest and people in an entirely new way, and may even give you a new view on life in a dog collar! I welcome you all to give it a go, hear me tweet, tweet back if you like, and see if it works.

Now, to weightier matters: the Gurkhas' now-victorious campaign to secure immigration rights that befit their honourable service to us. I originally wrote this article in support of their cause before the welcome announcement on 21<sup>st</sup> May that the Gurkha Justice Campaign had finally achieved their goal. Nonetheless, an important general point still applies. I have long believed that Church and pulpit should never become a base tool for party politics. However, this is emphatically not to say that Christian faith should have no political opinions; quite the opposite: the Church is called to work in Christ towards building God's Kingdom, and this call should inevitably lead to a thirst for justice and mercy, delivered to real people in the real world. (Witness, for example, Archbishop Tutu's role in the fight against Apartheid.) In this sense, we do have the obligation to speak out when we see injustice. As an immigrant myself – now a British citizen – I am very aware that the realities of the immigration



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system are quite far-flung from what's generally reported as 'truth' in the press, and I don't propose in these few lines to enter the wider immigration debate. (I could write volumes.) However, as I look at my British passport, hard-earned over eleven years, I cannot but think of this particular group. Heavily courted by our government for their loyalty, prowess, and discipline, the Ghurkhas have put their lives and limbs at risk – and lost comrades in battle – so that I could have the privilege of earning that passport. It seems to me only just that they, too, should have the opportunity to earn what most people in Britain got by the sheer good luck of being born on the right patch of land. I should probably point out, should anyone find this contentious, that I write now *not* on behalf of the congregations I lead, but only for myself as person and priest. All the same, from my reading of Scripture's clear perspective on the hospitality that we should offer at the national level, I cannot but conclude that, when Jesus tells us that 'what you have done to the least of these, you have done to me', this is the sort of thing he means. It is a credit to Joanna Lumley and the *Gurkha Justice Campaign* at <http://www.gurkhajustice.org.uk/> that they have fought and won – and a surprising and unexpected credit to the British press that they have embraced the cause. There is much the Church can learn from this.

Every blessing, Fr. Will

**THE WINNERS OF THE MAY 200 CLUB DRAW WERE:**

Ticket No	Winner	Prize
143	Molly Dutton	£40
135	Sybil Cullimore	£30
35	Kath Whittington	£20
17	Mike Penny	£10

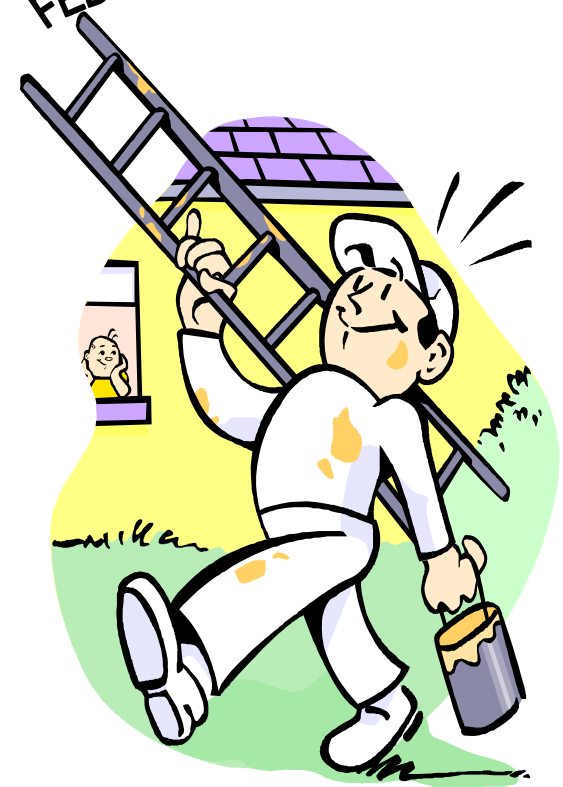
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 1/2 page—£25 for 12 months—10 issues

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**SHIRENEWTON**

**CHURCH FETE**

**2.00 PM SATURDAY**

**13<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

**AT THE**

**RECREATION FIELD**

(Parade leaves Tan House Car Park at  
1.45pm)

**POST FETE SUMMER BUFFET**  
**8.00PM THE TREDEGAR ARMS**  
**TICKETS £10 EACH**  
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## SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

Date	Time	Venue
7th June	9.30	The Church Room
14th June	9.30	The Church Room
21st June	9.30	The Church Room
28th June	9.30	The Church Room
5th July	9.30	The Church Room
12th July	9.30	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***

### WHIST DRIVES

35 players once more attended on a mild evening on the 7<sup>th</sup> May. Some promotional Poker Cards that had been donated to us proved a bit too slippery for our players so will be replaced!! The next Drives will be on the 4<sup>th</sup> June and the 2<sup>nd</sup> July respectively being the first Thursdays of the month, at The Recreation Hall at 7.30 p.m. New players are welcomed.

Auriol Horton, 01291 641844.

### EDITORS NOTE

Regrettably, Caroline Davies as decided it's time to hang up her pinny on our 'Cookery Corner'. Caroline has produced this piece for some ten years so I guess she's qualified to say that she's more than done her bit. So many thanks Caroline for all your culinary creations. Many of which formed a part of the "Village Cookbook" a couple of years ago.

Thanks again Caroline.

*is just as well, as I hate undertaking this task, even though it makes a huge difference, literally to the size and quality of fruit being picked.*

*We are already picking peas, courgettes and onions, as well as salad crops in the tunnel. This is just as well as I have moved the tomatoes, peppers, aubergines and melons into the tunnel to get acclimatised, ready for replacing these first crops. The onions have proved a great success. These were planted as sets in the autumn, and are now being picked at least a month, if not six weeks, before those outside. I have had a problem with some young plants this year though. They are looking decidedly sick, some turning yellow, or burning around the edges. I thought viruses were to blame, but now I'm not so sure. I'm actually wondering if there isn't an issue with the compost, as I have planted a few tomatoes into the tunnel already, and these are showing signs of recovery. Still better get on. The 5.30 alarm has just gone off and the under-gardener will need that hot steaming cuppa to wake her up. Oh yes, the day starts early here! Happy gardening until next month. Steve Hunt.*

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*he salad crops, which as they mature fast, lend themselves to successional sowing and protection under cloches. There is a lot of interest in salad leaves these days as opposed to large lettuces. The individual colours, textures and tastes of these leaves to me are one of lives little treasures. Sown in the raised beds, directly into the ground and then protected, you will be picking the first leaves within a few weeks. You can cheat a little by doing what I do and sow around ten seeds to a small cell, and bring these on in the greenhouse first. These "plugs" are then planted out when growth is around 7-8 centimetres tall. The benefit of growing this way, as with other salad crops, is that don't even have a greenhouse, you can raise them up on the kitchen windowsill, and this gets them past the really vulnerable stage, when one slug in the garden could clear the lot in one night. Beetroot, spring onions and radishes can all be grown in the same way. By sowing a small batch every two weeks, you can secure fresh produce throughout the summer.*

*We are fortunate and have been sowing for many weeks. Now the weather is warming up, there is plenty of time to get to work outside and the coming two weeks or so should see most of the years produce on its way. If you have no means of raising or protecting plants under cover, now is the time to get to work.*

*We planted our runner beans and climbing French beans outside by their sticks two weeks ago. There have been a couple of cold nights where we have had to cover them with fleece to protect them, but this is a small task given how early you can be picking your own beans. I hadn't catered for a couple of days bright sunshine however, and some of the fresh tender leaves now resemble parched paper as they got burnt in the sun. Most are showing signs of recovery, but a few are looking decidedly sick. I can't raise any more for a couple of weeks so instead I pushed a few extra seeds into the ground at the base of each stick, and hope that these will grow to replace any of the first wave that die off. Inside the tunnel most things are looking well. The two peach trees have a number of small fruits that are rapidly expanding in size, and to help in this process, I have been removing a number of surplus branches. This will help the trees put more effort into filling out the fruit and allow for ripening later on when we get to that stage. The two apricot trees were smothered in flowers earlier on, so much so that I gave up trying to pollinate the flowers with a soft brush. Instead I left the tunnel door open in the hope that a few bumblebees would find their way in. This they did and the proof of the pudding is in the fact that both trees are covered with small apricots. I should be thinning the fruits out, as there are far too many. But I see that mother nature is doing this for me, which*

## **A MUSICAL EVENING AT ST THOMAS A BECKET CHURCH**

On Friday may 1st, those fortunate to attend enjoyed a delightful evening on music by musicians from The Haberdashers Monmouth Schools under the direction of Mr. David Lawson.

The orchestra who last visited Shirenewton five years ago played a mixed programme including popular works by Vivaldi, Holst and Bizet. The solo violinist was Collette Hazen who lived in Shirenewton until very recently. Collette's playing was superb for one so young and received a rapturous ovation from the appreciative audience.

An unusual surprise was the appearance on Helen Grundy with her Alp-Horn. This instrument measured twelve feet in length. It was the first time an Alp-Horn had been played in the Chepstow area.

After the concert the audience were treated to superb refreshment courtesy of the ladies committee in the New church Room. Our thanks to them.

Andrew Baker summed up the evening by reminding us in his vote of thanks that we in Shirenewton are privileged to live in such a beautiful part of the country and being able to enjoy wonderful music on a regular basis by top quality young artists is an added bonus.

Long may it continue  
John Nicholas.

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## **VELINDRE COFFEE MORNING**

A very big thank you to all who helped make the morning such a success. Including those who donated so generously, the many helpers on the day and everyone who turned up, in spite of the weather, and helped raise a fantastic £750. Thank you also to the Church for kindly lending their equipment and the winning team in the Saturday night quiz in the Tan House who magnanimously handed over their hard won prize money of £27 to the cause.

Lyn McFarlane

## SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL – 11 MAY 2009

**Police Report** – several thefts in the area – lock up carefully.

- 9.4.09 Suspicious phone call received at Shirenewton asking for financial details.
- 10.4.09 Barn broken into near Shirenewton. Chainsaws and hedge trimmer stolen.
- 10.4.09 Neighbour dispute regarding barking dog at Shirenewton
- 12.4.09 Report of off road motorcycles at Wentwood
- 17.4.09 Theft of lawnmower, heavy duty hammer, electric drill and jigsaw from insecure garage in Shirenewton
- 24.4.09 Off road motorcycles in Wentwood
- 25.9.09 Missing child from Shirenewton – located
- 29.4.09 Burglary in Shirenewton while occupants away. Door forced, TV and gold rings stolen
- 4.5.09 Attempted break in at Shirenewton. Did not gain entry – chain on door
- 8.5.09 Two suspicious males in their 20's looking for scrap metal in Earlswood. Also showing interest in horses

There will be a joint police/community council surgery on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June at the Recreation Hall

### **Planning:**

Three planning applications were received on the morning of the Council meeting, but could not be considered in time.

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

A report was received on damage to one of the slides in the playground. CCTV tapes will be checked to identify the culprit. John Saysell has kindly repaired the damage without charge.

Cllr Moore reported that the first Luncheon Club had been very well attended and that everyone had seemed to enjoy it.

An application had been made by the Community Council for full disclosure of information about the matter of the allotments under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act

The next meeting of the community council would be held on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2009 at 7.00pm

## GARDENING CORNER

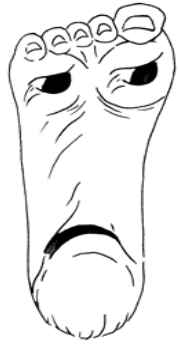
*There is always an air of anticipation in our house as the first shoots of spring begin to break. This is heightened when the expected arrival of the Cuckoo and first Swallow actually happens. Traditionally the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> April respectively, these dates appear, at least in recent years to have gone a little array! The first Cuckoo was in fact heard, here at Barn Farm, on Sunday the 12<sup>th</sup>, thus heralding for me the true arrival of spring. As with every year though, and I never understand why, it was a bit of a stuttering start as he wasn't heard again for another two weeks. When he did come back it was with a vengeance, and many mornings whilst I had my one minute lay in bed before starting the day, I would listen to him adding to the cacophony that is the dawn chorus. I try to count just how many different bird songs can be identified, but I'm not very good at this, so always give up when I get to around five! I say I, as the under-gardener is usually busy powdering her nose, or whatever it is that women seem to spend so much time doing, readying herself for yet another fulfilling day at work! Mind you, at this point you shouldn't feel sorry for her. I can see you have a vision of his nibs lounging in bed, whilst "er in doors" has to get on with life? Not true of course, as by this time the cats have been let in and fed, the fish have received their usual bombardment of floating nuggets, and I have returned to bed with a steaming cuppa. The cuppa is to wake "er in doors" up with in the first place!*

*Now where were we, oh yes birds. The analogy with Swallows is a bit of a waste of time here as we don't attract them – we have no old barns for a start. Next best thing is the House Martin and these started to drift in towards the end of April. I had been reading an article that suggested numbers are getting less because global warming is making them fly a lot further, as temperatures rise, and food moves further north. There certainly don't seem to be so many this year, as yet. We have eight artificial nests and I'm sure these aren't all taken yet. Most years we end up with a fight for occupancy, but not this. We have had up to fifteen nests on the house, but this now seems a distant memory.*

*Anyway, less of that, I'm meant to be gardening not rambling on about country ways. Things have reached peak activity now, with seeding and planting having reached a crescendo. I'm determined this year to crack the successional sowing mystery. I usually start off well, but then lose my way as the year goes on. So far so good, and we are already reaping the rewards of sowing crops early. I know most of you won't have room for a polythene tunnel, but on a much smaller scale, cloches will do just as well. It just means you can't drive a tractor into them like you can with out tunnel!*



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### **NOTICE OF VACANCY IN OFFICE OF COUNCILLOR SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL MYNYDDBACH WARD**

Notice is hereby given that; a casual vacancy has arisen in the Office of Councillor for the Community Council.

If a request for an election to fill the said vacancy is made in writing to the Returning Officer at County Hall, Cwmbran, NP44 2XH by TEN electors for the said Community Council Ward, an election will be held to fill the said vacancy; otherwise the vacancy will be filled by co-option.

**IN THE EVENT OF AN ELECTION NOT BEING CALLED FOR BY ELECTORS, THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL WILL CO-OPT A NEW MEMBER.**

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BECOMING A COUNCILLOR FOR THE MYNYDDBACH WARD, PLEASE CONTACT THE CLERK IN THE FIRST INSTANCE ON 01291 641791**

#### **COMMUNITY LUNCHEON CLUB**

Following the success of the first meeting of the Community Luncheon Club, it is now apparent that it is essential to book your place if you wish to take part in this popular social occasion. This month's participants all agreed that the staff at The Tredegar Arms ensured that the food, the ambience and opportunity to chat was very enjoyable.

Future Luncheons will be held on June 24<sup>th</sup>, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, August 26<sup>th</sup>, (and thereafter on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month) please ring The Tredegar Arms to book your place, Tel : **641274**. If you are of pensionable age and live within the Shirenewton Community Council area then you are eligible to attend. Chose two out of three courses for £6 (with the option of purchasing a third course if required) and enjoy the company of your existing friends and hopefully make new acquaintances.

Further information can be obtained from  
Cllr Beverley Moore 641532  
Mrs Carole Jones 641791

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# **Midsummer Fayre**

**Saturday 25th July 12- 4.p.m.**

## **FUND RAISING LINE DANCE EVENING**

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**India Project Fund**

Will be held at

**Usk Memorial Hall**

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**With Esme Matthews**

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## **FAIRTRADE NEWS**

My latest circular from Traidcraft has an article with the rather astonishing title: LAUNCH OF THE WORLD'S FIRST FAIRTRADE BARBECUE COAL! I am forever extolling the environmental credentials of Fairtrade - so how could be producing charcoal be perceived as environmentally sound? Well, apparently 'The charcoal comes from Namibia and is produced from bushes and trees 'invader' species like acacia which are in effect a weed which grows over farmland. So by removing these trees land is returned to productive agricultural use.... The charcoal products are all FSC marked (Forest Stewardship Council) The charcoal will benefit about 1000 producers.'

This product will be available at selected Co-operative stores. If you are reading this article post Fete I hope you visited 'my 'stall - if this key local event is yet to take place I look forward to seeing you there! (No charcoal but lots of other fairly traded goods!)

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

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## SHIRENEWTON SCHOOL

### PTA Dates for your Diaries

**Summer Fayre** - Saturday 6th June 2009

The theme this year is Medieval Mayhem.

**Annual Hog Roast** - Friday 10th July 2009

Join family, friends and school staff for the annual hog roast.

**Check out the new Shirenewton Primary School website - its great!**

**Well done Year 2 and Year 4 for leading the Easter Service.**

Thank you to Father Will for joining our Easter celebration. The children did an excellent job of acting out the Easter story.

**Race Night**

Thank you to everyone who made the PTA Race Night at Devauden Hall a great success. Thank you especially to the PTA for all their hard work and organisation. A big thank you to all the parents who bought horses and jockeys prior to the evening, and to the business people who sponsored the races. We raised over £700 for the school.

**Congratulations**

Congratulations to Will Austin Year 6 who becomes the first Shirenewton Pupil to achieve a 100% score in this year's British Land UK Chess Challenge. Congratulations to Grace Evans in year 6 her frog logo has been selected for use by Shirenewton Fields Association.

### School term dates for 09/10

	<u>Term Begins</u>	<u>Half Term begins</u>	<u>Half term ends</u>	<u>Term ends</u>
Autumn	2nd Sept. 2009	26th October 2009	30th October 2009	22nd December 2009
Spring	4th January 2010	15th February 2010	19th February 2010	26th March 2010
Summer	12th April 2010	31st May 2010	4th June 2010	19th July 2010

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1ST SHIRENEWTON CUBS



### *Newsletter (May 09)*

At the start of the month we spent an evening preparing for our camp by practicing how to put up tents and taking them down again. They say patience is a virtue and that evening it really was tested. Poles going in upside down, inner-tent roofs being pegged to the ground and pegs going in at all the wrong angles. However we got there in the end and I am pleased to say that on their second attempt the tent went up very quickly and correctly, so a big well done to all **the cubs**.

**Our camp! Botany Bay, Tintern:** The wind blew and the rain lashed down most of the Saturday morning prior to the Scouts, Cubs and Beavers arriving for our Group Camp. However just as the first of the boys and girls arrived the rain stopped and the sun came out just long enough for us to get the tents up and the kit stored away. Heavy rain hit again for about an hour then the sky cleared, the sun shone and we had a fun packed afternoon with the cubs and beavers exploring the woods around the site and the scouts making their shelters they were to sleep in that night. Di later kept the cubs occupied with a game of rounders followed by Mike, one of the dads, setting up challenges for them to take part in prior to our evening meal.

Sausage beans and mash went down well followed by more exploring in the wood. Matt, assistant leader, kept a close eye on all the children as they enjoyed mud slides and climbing through the woods.

The evening closed with a good old sing song around the camp fire with the camp eventually falling silent around midnight.

Cubs do not believe in late to bed means late to rise, the first of the cubs were up and about around five thirty, full of energy and ready to go.

Unfortunately the weather was not kind to us Sunday morning with heavy rain up until around eleven however the clouds again cleared to give us a final few hours of sunshine prior to our departure.

Regardless of the rain and I believe some parents were putting their children in black bin liners prior to allowing them in their cars when they collected them, everyone had a great time and are looking forward to our next one.

A special thanks to Mike Peckham and Adrian Smith, two parents who volunteered to help us throughout the camp. I understand both are now undergoing counselling and under heavy sedation!!

There are loads of photos of the camp on our web site.

<http://shirenewtonscouts.jimdo.com/>



**1<sup>ST</sup> SHIRENEWTON GUIDES**

Fete day approaches and we are beginning to think about themes / costumes, gathering prizes for the giant card game and digging out the stoves ready to cook the Welsh cakes. The girls really enjoy the fete and the interaction with the community, so please come along and say hello (and spend your money!).

Within the unit we are continuing to learn songs for Water Aid and the Guides now have sponsor forms ready for our public performance. We will be joining the Brownies on the 30<sup>th</sup> June at a camp fire – weather permitting, otherwise in the hall – to sing the songs, toast marshmallows and raise awareness and money for this charity. Any support the village could give would be appreciated as the girls were very moved by the lack of basic facilities that many families have to put up with – particularly lack of toilets. Maybe they won't think camp latrines are so bad after all!

We have been trying to make the most of the outdoor space and decent weather to play sports and we will be practicing erecting the tents, after half term, ready for camp. The last camp saw some very high winds and at least one tent suffered damaged with poles being bent. If there is anyone out there who could straighten light weight tent poles we would love to hear from you.

Yours in guiding

Kestrel      Helen Cann      01291 650835  
Kitten      Amanda Turner      01291 650763  
Koala and Panda



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## SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEB SITE

Did you know that the Church website has more than just Church 'stuff' and the shopping portal. There is a load of general community interest information as well.

The Community Council minutes are published and always make interesting reading. There is also a link to the Community Council Notices page which contains information on the latest initiatives (such as the Community Luncheon club) and the contact details for all Community Councillors. The official village plan document is also published in full. There are also convenient links to Monmouth County Council. So its well worth taking a browse over to [www.shirenewtonchurch.com](http://www.shirenewtonchurch.com) if you are not a regular visitor.

On the subject of browsers, you may or may not be aware that Microsoft has started to roll out Internet Explorer 8 (IE8). If you have your PC set up for automatic Windows updates the chances are you have it already or will certainly be getting it soon. Why should this matter you ask? Cornwell on his techie ramblings again. BUT STOP! Before you move rapidly on you need to be aware of 'compatibility mode'. So what is this 'compatibility mode' all about?

This all plays into the 'hidden' updates on the church website I mentioned a couple of months back. Sites which work perfectly well in older versions of Internet Explorer (IE7 & IE6 - surely no-one is still on IE5) don't necessarily look (or even work) in other 'standards compliant' browsers such as Firefox, Chrome and Safari. IE8 is now 'standards compliant' which means some websites will look rubbish or simply won't work when using IE8. So Microsoft's answer is 'compatibility mode'. IE8 will theoretically automatically tell Web pages that you're using IE7 if the site won't render properly in IE8. IE8 will also remember the pages on which it needs to use compatibility view. However, nothing is fool proof. So, if you are using IE8 and the web page looks rubbish or doesn't load can switch on compatibility view manually. Simply go to Page and then select 'Compatibility view' to turn the view on/off for that page or 'Compatibility View Settings' for more options.

Remember to do you online shopping through the Church shopping portal. It costs you nothing more than you would have paid and we get a small commission for referring you to the shop. Last year the Church earned ~£950 via these small commissions so they really do add up and they really are 'money for nothing' - so please make sure you click through from the shopping portal and not from an email the retailer has sent you.

Have a good summer & happy compatible browsing.

David Cornwell



## SHIRENEWTON BROWNIE REPORT

The summer months are a busy time for Brownies – competitions, sleepovers, Fire Safety Skills, badges work, and that's only seen May out.

Shirenewton Brownies have had a very successful run in the Guiding Competitions this summer. Six of our girls, Emily James, Ellie Mc Gregor-Taylor, Erin Mc Innes Willard, Eleanor Tout, Eleanor Willis and Maddie Ostler, competed in the County Outdoor Cookery Competition held at Caldicot castle on Saturday on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The girls won second place with their 'Enchanted Forest' Picnic, which included magic toadstools, a baguette snake and a fruity cactus (well it was an enchanted forest!). We also competed in the Brownie Quiz and I am very proud to announce that the Gnomes' Six (Kirsty Lindsay, Ellie Mc Gregor-Taylor Eleanor Willis, Issy Wixcey, Eleanor Willis, and Ellie Barrell) are due to represent Gwent County at the Welsh final of the Brownie Quiz at Broneirion on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June. How exciting is that!

May 22<sup>nd</sup> saw 10 Brownies and 3 Leaders packing up for the Animal Antics Sleepover at Llanishen Village Hall. It was a huge success – the girls were brilliant, the weather was fab, we all managed a decent sleep and to top it all, Dorothy Thomas (our ex Shirenewton Guider who has sadly moved to London) returned to be our Q.M. (chief caterer) and Cookery Badge tester. The girls went on an Animal Hunt, played animal games and made and decorated biscuits. A special 'Well Done' goes to Issy Stephens and Issy Millar who worked particularly hard with Dorothy to cook a full English breakfast for 13 – no mean feat when you are only 10 years old !

Look out for us on our float at the Shirenewton Church Fete!

Jackie Broughton (Guider in Charge- 641797)

We are anticipating having a few places available in Brownies in September, as some of our girls will be moving on to Guides. If your daughter is interested in joining, contact me or come and see us at the Fete (after the Opening Ceremony, please). Brownies is open to all girls aged 7 – 11.

## SHIRENEWTON WI MAY 09

May is a month of changes, spring moves into summer everywhere lush green highlighted with vibrant colour. For our WI, it's a time to review the past year and prepare for the next. Our AGM was well attended with twenty of our twenty five members, a representative from Federation graciously undertook to oversee the proceedings and make sure we conducted the meeting properly. These events can be quite complicated with ordinary business, reports and resolutions all to be contained in the one evening. Our president, Mrs Jenny Bonner, conducted most of the evening, but due to ill health had decided to stand down, with only two of the present committee re-standing the members were canvassed for their willingness to join. We have a committee of six for the coming year and a new president 'Mrs Diana Such' who is already very grateful to her committee for being there. The resolution to go forward to the NFWI AGM this year requires our government to support research into serious problems with the bees, everyone supported it since the loss of our pollinators concerns us all.

AGMs don't have to be all business and ours was enhanced with a truly interesting and enlightening talk by Mrs Winnie Jones on the historic village of Runston, the remains of which can be found to the left of the Crick road just off Runston Lane. After the talk we all enjoyed a delicious selection of savoury and sweet nibbles with our tea. Our multi-tasking treasurer Auriol Horton provided us with an opportunity to view some of the video taken at our Birthday Party by Diana Such. The DVD is being borrowed by members to view at their leisure.

Our speaker for the next meeting on June 11<sup>th</sup> will be Geoff Marlow on Eighteen Years of prison service and the competition for the evening is 'A wooden object'.

Diana Such

The most popular method for hauling the hay was a horse and four wheeled hay wagon with three men, they would drive up these rows, one man either side of the wagon loading to the third man would make the load, this job of making the load required a skill acquired with experience. This was a job I performed many times; the load of loose hay would be twelve feet high and had to be taken back to the farmyard, which may be some way across fields, through gateways or up lanes. If the journey was rough we would rope the load, one of the ensuing dangers was a rope snagging on a gatepost, so the waggoner or driver had to know his job. One horse was used to move up the rows to load the hay, but it was sometimes necessary to harness a second trace horse in front of the shaft horse if the journey to the farmyard was difficult.

*Our thanks to Ernie for sharing these notes with us and for Peter Bartlett who carried out the original setting. The whole series of these books (some 8 of them) are available to order from Peter Bartlett or Ernie Jones.*

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### THE MORNING SONG

Who are these people who sleep and sleep? What do they fail to hear?  
The sounds that the early riser knows, Happy bird song echoing here.

Slowly waking from deeper sleep, The gradual light of the dawn.  
The cockerel crowing to his delight, The sun is slowly born.

Up with the lark as the saying goes, Climb up to the hilltop high,  
In the green flat meadows the grasses flow, We see the skylark fly.

As he hovers just above the trees, His wings rotating neatly,  
We pause; the sound is on the breeze, Perpetual motion singing sweetly.

The traveller wanders down the burn,  
Into the valley below.  
So many song birds echoing here.  
Does the early riser really know?

With thanks to Mrs. Minneta Morris  
From her anthology entitled.  
'Country Thoughts'

*If you would like a copy of this  
anthology, contact the editor  
who will pass on your request.*



## COUNTRY LIFE IN OUR COUNTY

This month we look through Ernie's eyes in the days when the horse was an important part of any farmers life.

**THE HORSE IN SUMMER**, this could mean many different things to many people, to many it could mean riding horses and ponies grazing in odd fields on the outskirts of many towns, farms that have been sold off in lots, much of the land built on, split up by roads and through the actions of dogs and vandals too difficult to farm and so they end up as horse paddocks. To some, horses mean show jumping at Agricultural shows and horse events and of course the ever popular horse racing. But here I will write about the farm horse of my youth on the general farm, on these farms the horse did not have a bad life, the summer time was the hardest work with haymaking a very important part of the farming scene, the hay harvest was very important as on most stock farms it was the basic feed for all the livestock during the winter months. In the days of the early 1930's most general mixed farms grew a bit of corn in rotation so that there was usually a young ley containing red clover, this was first to be cut about the first week of June and kept mainly for the horses being a bit coarse and good for cutting into chaff. It was the end of June or July when the meadow hay was cut. My father used a two horse machine to cut a 4' 6" swath that today would be just under 1.5 metres, for the horses two good shires would manage quite well, not very good in the heat of the day, flies tormented the horses a lot, evening time when the sun went down or early morning were the best times to cut the hay.

As a young lad on a summer evening if father went mowing I enjoyed sitting on the mower between fathers legs. Those days were very good for wild life in the country, grass for hay was cut in July, by July all the birds would have finished nesting, young wild animals would be large enough to escape the mower, and wild flowers would have dispersed their seeds ready for next years growth. Farmers used to say the hay needs a bit of seed in it, not that the seed was all that beneficial but because grass had stopped growing in fact it was literally dying, in those days hay was treated very gently, sometimes turned by hand or with a horse drawn swath turner that just turned the swaths, depending on the weather the mown hay was turned each day for three or four days then two swaths were put into one row, then it would be cocked up, women would very often make these small heaps (known as cocks), every two or three yards in rows three yards apart ready for hauling.

## MOTHERS' UNION, SHIRENEWTON

Mothers' Union – "Christian Care for Families."

On 12 May we celebrated the Netherwent Deanery MU Festival with a thanksgiving service at St Mary's Church, Caldicot, attended by 80-90 people. followed by wonderful refreshments in Hall.

The Rector, Lyndon Harrison took his theme from Star Trek "To boldly go where no man has been before" What's the connection with MU ? Men, yes, a few brave souls are members, but it was the founder Mary Sumner, who in 1837 had the vision boldly to empower women in Britain through education and literacy to transform society beginning with their own families. Lyndon urged MU members to be bold, to be passionate, a point not lost on the few brave gentry aforementioned.

And now today we need to continue to live out that vision in our post-Christian, post-everything society. It is happening in this country where MU members are out on the streets at night to offer friendship and practical help to teenagers – the "granny Wagons", and in prison visiting, and in helping with Contact Centres to facilitate the meeting of children with their estranged parents, or in unsung ways in their own communities. MU is a worldwide organisation of 7 ½ million members engaging in their own 78 countries with every possible type of social, health and educational need, and all as a witness to Christ to bring not only life, but life abundantly.

The MU June meeting will be held on Wednesday 10 June at 2.30 p.m. in the Shirenewton Church Room. The Rev Christopher Carey will be the guest speaker: "From the Romans to Rowan, Christianity in Britain."

Anyone interested is very welcome to come.

From Rosemary Carey, Branch Leader

# Shirenewton Primary School

## Summer Fayre



Saturday



6<sup>th</sup> June 2-4pm

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The April meeting was well attended as our speaker for the evening was Tony Hopkins, Deputy County Archivist. The subject of the talk was entitled 'Medieval Gwent' and everyone agreed how well he spoke. He was born and brought up in the county and knows his subject thoroughly. He always brings to life the specific era he is talking about with interesting facts and figures.

Rogation Sunday (17<sup>th</sup> May) Beating the Parish **Bounds**.

The day dawned as is the tradition wet and windy! After every morning shower there was a 'phone call asking. "Is the walk still on". We met at the church, fourteen walking, one carried, two dogs and four stayed behind to prepare the important, welcoming tea at the Church Room on our return.

We experienced spring, summer, winter and autumn on our five mile walk, doing a very good time of just over two hours. We headed down to the Mounton brook, up over the ridge to Howick and through the wood to Middle Lodge, through the tunnel to Mounton and back up the lane to Shirenewton. We all agreed it blew away any cobwebs that were lurking.

We will have a stall at the Church Fete, please look out for us, we will be selling the account of the 'Rogation Sunday Walk 1745' that covers 5 walks around the "Bounds of the Parish and we still have a few copies left of 'Historic Walks around Shirenewton'. That covers 6 walks. The walks vary between 4 and 12 miles. These walks are laminated as individual cards to ensure they convenient are weather proof, and are supplied in durable plastic covers and include sketch maps walk directions, illustrations and some details on the places of interest . Price: £3.50 per set.

Dates for your Diary:

Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> May, Monthly Meeting at the Huntsman Hotel at 7.30

'Solemn Sabbaths and Faraway Sundays'  
a talk given by Peter Strong.

Monday, 18 May 8<sup>th</sup> June, Resource Meeting at the Recreational Hall  
At 2.00 – 5.00

Tuesday, 30<sup>th</sup> June An Evening at Tredegar House. The tour starts at  
7.00pm (earlier if you wish to view the gardens)  
Cost £6.15.

## STARGAZING IN JUNE '09

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

The slightly yellow planet Saturn can be seen to the south-west in the evening sky to the bottom left of the constellation of Leo. Very bright Venus is in the east before dawn, whilst Jupiter is in the south at the same time of day. If you look carefully rather faint Mars can be seen passing close to Venus this month, and is just above Venus in the early morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> June.

The crescent Moon is near Venus and Mars on 19<sup>th</sup> June, and is directly below Saturn on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The Moon lies just to the right of Jupiter on 13<sup>th</sup> June.

The Hubble Space Telescope has been in orbit for 19 years. Recently NASA astronauts have been installing a new camera and replacing a failed computer. Hubble has produced astounding images which can be found at <http://hubblesite.org/>. It is planned to launch a replacement space observatory in 2013. This will be much bigger than Hubble. Whilst the Hubble telescope has a tube that is 2.4m wide, its replacement will be nearly 3 times larger.

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

Dave Thomas

## **SHIRENEWTON & MYNYDDBACH FIELDS ASSOCIATION.**

June, by now the trees should be fully clad in leaves and blossom and most species of indigenous birds and mammals are either expecting or have already produced the next generation. This time of year is widely regarded as a time of bounty, but for some animals thing can be hard; for example, the grey squirrel, introduced from North America in the late 19th and early 20th century finds mid-summer pretty tough due to a shortage of things for them to eat. After the springtime flush of buds and flowers there is not much that is palatable to them until the nuts, acorns and fruit arrive in the autumn, and they often resort to nibbling tree bark which makes them unpopular with foresters and gardeners alike. They have quite a high mortality rate at this time and to compensate for this there is evidence of them breeding twice a year, (aided by a long series of mild winters) as early as February and again in late summer.

There are those of us who would welcome the extinction of these creatures and the re- introduction of our native reds, but I think the grey squirrel has far too strong a foothold in mainland Britain for this dream to come true.

This is the time of year when most birds moult to replace worn and broken feathers and we often find them while out walking and try to identify which species shed them and even identify which part of the body or from the left or right hand side.

While some birds like wildfowl can retreat to a sheltered spot away from predators and complete the moulting process in a couple of weeks (having limited flight capability is no problem as there will be food all around) birds like hawks and falcons can take up to five or six months to completely change their plumage, as they will drop a primary feather in one wing one day and the corresponding one on the other wing the next day and the new one will grow, protected by its adjacent feathers, neither of which will fall out until the other has grown. These birds need quite a full set of feathers to catch their food, although nature is kind in that during summer there are a lot of young, inexperienced prey species around and the weather is a good deal warmer.

It will be noticed that there is a bit of work going on in the fields at present but please do not be alarmed at the sight of any mess as all will be cleared up as time goes by. In order to restore the plot into a site of unimproved grassland and hay meadow quit a bit of slashing and uprooting will have to be done to make things the way we all would like to see. For more information please look at the website.

Thank you, Mike Gambold.

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