

# Shirenewton & Newchurch Parish Magazine November 2010



*Sketch by Barbara Davies*

Price: 50p

Dear Friends,

On a recent trip back to the States, I had the pleasure of attending the local Anglican Church—Trinity in Statesboro, Georgia—and, during coffee hour after the service, joining in on a fantastic conversation about political activism in the broadest sense: not narrow electioneering, but rather how to see the needs of the community and sink our teeth into *doing* social justice, *right on our doorstep*, as a *basic function of the Christian Gospel*. I heard, for example, about Backpack Buddies, a programme operating out of a local Baptist Church in that community which sends home backpacks filled with food for underprivileged children who have food to eat in school, but not enough at the weekend. The programme actually exists across America ... but, far more important to me that day was that it exists *in that community* being done *by Church people for people in that community*.

This was, for me, a thoroughly inspirational conversation: filled with meaning, passion, excitement and hope for better things to come—filled with conviction that Christians can and should be actively making a difference, not *just* on the widest issues of the day (because, indeed, the American Anglicans are very much at the forefront of the fight for greater inclusivity in the Church) but *offering hope on our doorstep*, as well. The most exciting thing is that, there in that Church, they have these discussions every week: after their 8.30 service, they have coffee and discuss a relevant topic.

In Shirenewton, as many of you may know, we have recently paid off a large debt on our Church hall and now finally own it free and clear. For that I am grateful to a wonderfully supportive village who have given of their time and efforts; for those who have performed amazing feats (such as climbing Mount Kilimanjaro on our behalf); as well as for a fundraising committee who started off with a patch of ground and a vision of welcome for all, and have poured themselves, heart and soul, into making it happen for the last five years. "Well done, thou good and faithful servants."

But ... now that we have the building ... and now that we're freed from the burden of debt, the question I want to ask of us (and, frankly, of our money and effort) is this: *what does social justice mean in Shirenewton?* Welcome is a good start—in fact, in God, it is the *core* start—but God exists to go far beyond anything that simple. Indeed, his burning, passionate love demands that we take a further step and actually *enfranchise* those whom we have welcomed—that we give a voice to the voiceless; that, having made the welcome, we now take time to be silent and hear *their* needs.

And, y'all: I've been kicking around this earth long enough to know that there is no such thing as an idyllic, village utopia—not here, nor anywhere. For all the blessings we have in Shirenewton—and they are astoundingly many—there is darkness and worry hidden, as well. Some of it I have seen; other bits I have only had hints and guesses of. But what that means for the church is that there is much blessing that we should still be about the business of doing.

And so, as we come to the conclusion of one chapter and the beginning of another, what I want us to be asking in this Church are the self-same questions that I saw my brothers and sisters in Georgia so inspired to sink their teeth into—eyes on fire—with such animation, soul, and heart—such an infectious passion. What I want us to be asking is this: where are the voiceless, not just those abroad or down in Newport, but *in our own community*? Where are those who have not been heard, not even by me or the Church? Where are those that may even have been silenced? And how can we be a blessing to them? I'm not simply asking what social justice means *for* Shirenewton—as if it were simply a task to be done or a cheque to be written. I'm asking what social justice needs to mean *in* Shirenewton?

My email address is [w.c.ingle-gillis@cantab.net](mailto:w.c.ingle-gillis@cantab.net) . You don't have to be in the Church to let me know where *you* think we should begin to answer that question.

Blessings,  
Fr. Will

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

Remembrance Service Sunday 14th November at 10:30 am

## **200 CLUB FOR OCTOBER**

No.13	Angie Powell
No.98	Donna Denyer
No.215	Claire Oldfield
No.174	Wenca O'Keefe

## **SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY LUNCHEON CLUB**

Please book early to secure your place for lunch on Wednesday  
November 24th

Tredegar Arms, Shirenewton Telephone 641274

# SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2010

From Your Own Correspondent – For the full report go to the minutes on the new notice boards or find the draft minutes on the church web site. I only comment on the bits I can remember. And if anyone else would like to be the Community Council Meetings Hack, **please, please, please** let me know. Glynis 641 818 or [glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com](mailto:glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com)

## Police report

12th to 30th September

- Thurs 16<sup>th</sup> 'Charity Collectors' were asking for bank account details in the Earlswood area
- Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Loud party in the early hours of the morning at Shirenewton (!)
- Sun 19<sup>th</sup> A suspicious Irish male called at a house in Earlswood.
- Mon 20<sup>th</sup> A fallen tree was reported on the B4235 near Shirenewton.
- Mon 20<sup>th</sup> Two hay racks stolen from a field at Mynyddbach. One was recovered on the road. (*I'm such a town bumpkin I thought that a hay rack was the same as a haystack.*)
- Fri 24<sup>th</sup> Damage to a garden wall by a car reversing at Mynyddbach.
- Sun 26<sup>th</sup> Dog lost at Cadira Beeches. Beagle bitch lemon and white in colour.
- Tues 28<sup>th</sup> A balding male taking photos of a house at Earlswood. Suspicious circumstances.

And !!! PC Cowburn also advised us that he had received a report from a resident that the black panther had been seen again in Wentwood!

## The Fortnightly Rubbish Collections

The MCC came along to give a presentation about the up and coming fortnightly rubbish collections. This is likely to start in January and its part of the drive to increase the amount of waste that we recycle in Monmouthshire.

The government has imposed targets on every council to encourage recycling. There is already quite a high charge for every tonne of wastage that MCC dumps in landfill, but if this is exceeded then there is a whacking great fine to pay for every tonne over that quota. So, as I began to appreciate, it's in everyone's interest to recycle as much as poss – or it will be our money that goes to pay the fine. Gulp.

Actually MCC (and all of us householders) are doing quite well in terms of recycling. Our target for last year was to recycle 40% of our rubbish and we actually recycled 41.31%.!!! Yipee!! And because we are recycling so much more than we used too, the amount of 'black-bag-land-fill-rubbish' has gone down quite significantly. It is these black bags that will only be collected fortnightly. The recycling red and purple bags and the green waste and the blue food waste will still continue to be collected weekly. And if you need to dispose of nappies, then MCC have a special poo-unit which will collect them, but you would need to register at the One Stop Shop in Chepstow for this service.

But before we sit back and pat ourselves on the shoulder for being so good at recycling, our target for the year 2024/25 will be to recycle 70% of all our waste. Yes, that's **70%**.

If you need more details about what goes where you can contact the One Stop Shop in Chepstow or go to [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk)

### **Planning**

1 .Druids Heath Bungalow, Earlswood

Single storey extension

**Recommend approval**

2. The Old Rectory, Shirenewton

Detached garage

**Recommend approval**

3. Land to the rear of Hill View Cottage, Shirenewton APPEAL

The applicant has appealed and any further representations from this Council must be submitted by 3<sup>rd</sup> November. The clerk will resubmit the original objections.

### **Items of local concern**

A meeting between representatives of SCC and MCC and also Llangwm CC will be arranged to discuss the traffic issues on the B4235.

In response to a planning application at Brookacre, Cllr Down and the Vice-chair of planning will visit one of two homes in either Cheshire or Snowdonia.

Some of the stones in the wall of the Friends Burial Ground, Shirenewton have become loose and require repair. A local resident has offered to pay for the work if carried out by a local stonemason.

Thanks to County Cllr Down who has again provided two bags of daffodils for planting locally. The Clerk will distribute these amongst Cllrs who are prepared to plant them. *(and your erstwhile reporter)*

The 'discussions' regarding the Caution on land at Mynyddbach continues to rumble on but there is nothing to report on. *(This could be because I think I fell asleep at this point)*

There is a Cllr Vacancy on SCC. Apparently, the rules are, that if nobody puts their names forward and an election is not requested by a minimum of 10 electors then SCC will be able to co-opt.

The enforcement officer is looking into the situation at Mynders Barn and also into Yew Tree Cottage

Repairs to or replacement Grit Bins have been requested at Red House Lane and Spout Hill, Mynyddbach. And a Grit Bin has been requested for Old Road, Newchurch.

The Clerk has sent a message to MCC asking that the moss be cleared from: the path from the war memorial to the church, the path from Newton Manor to 'Newton Brae' and from Newton Manor down to the main road.

And Finally... The Poo Patrol

Phase 1 is improving but Phase 2 needs attention. One or two dog owners haven't quite got the full message. Take the poo home. Don't leave it hanging on the trees and bushes. Ugh.

The next meeting is on November 1<sup>st</sup> at Shirenewton Recreation Hall 7.30

And I will try to keep awake next time.

Glynis MacDonald

## **BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2010 JUDGES COMMENTS**

For a large village the overall appearance was excellent. There was no litter anywhere along the roads or public places. The Community Hall, the swings, car park, tennis court, playing field and children's' natural garden play area were exemplary. The Churchyard was good, flowers at the porch, the only thing to spoil it were beer barrels in the dip at the back of the pub car park but in sight of the Churchyard.

The Tredegar Arms was nice but the top end of the car park needed cleaning up. Unfortunately it is a public area.

The Tan House was not very inspiring.

The War Memorial was excellent and the flower box in the 'Keep Left' signs was inspirational.

Newton Manor, Redd Landes excellent .

## **ARE YOU INTERESTED IN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS?**

### **Do you have a few hours to spare each month?**

There is currently a vacancy for a Councillor in the Shirenewton ward of Shirenewton Community Council.

Ideally you will live in the Shirenewton ward but applications for co-option on to the Community Council will be accepted from applicants living in the other three wards.

Please contact the Clerk in the first instance.

Carole Jones 01291 641791

commcouncilclerk@aol.com

## EARLSWOOD & NEWCHURCH WEST MEMORIAL HALL NEWS

Earlswood Hall was busy again this Autumn with the church harvest lunch and the successful Kids Ad Lib production 'Daisy Pulls It Off' in October. There is a Barn Dance at the hall on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November raising money for three local Scouts to attend the Jamboree in Sweden (see advert below) and on-going rehearsals for the SODS panto. The Remembrance Service at the hall will be on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November at 10:30.

If you want to find out more about the facilities at the hall or make a booking for your event please call Glynis MacDonald on 641818.

Simon Stanley  
Chairman  
October 2010

### Barn Dance

Earlswood Hall Saturday 20th November

7:00pm until 11pm,

Tickets £5 adult, £3 child to include a Ploughman's Supper

Licensed bar, mocktails and raffle.

The Barn Dance is being held to raise funds for The World Scout Jamboree in Sweden 2011. Money raised will go towards a pot to help enable 3rd World Scouts to join in the Jamboree. Jonty Cann, Bas Cornwell and Ross Edmunds are amongst the 3 local boys joining this trip.

## SHIRENEWTON WI OCTOBER 2010

Ten members and one guest attended our October meeting. After the conclusion of business we welcomed our speaker, Dr Nick Fennwick, who had travelled from Machynlleth to talk to us about Bovine TB.

Dr Fennwick presented us with a view of the past, present and possible future which has and will concern us all. People get TB and mammals get TB and the types are similar so can be past from one to another.

If symptoms are obvious then the sufferer has had the disease for a long time since it develops slowly.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century more animals were lost due to TB than because of any other disease. Between 1850 and 1950 800,000 people died of TB.

1934 saw the introduction of pasteurising of milk, enhanced meat inspection and cattle testing.

The BCG vaccination was brought in to protect humans, so most adults are immune having received their vaccination at around the age of 11.

However about ten years ago vaccination stopped, so young people aged 20 or under are not immune.

IN the 1930's the incidence of TB in cattle across the country was around 40%, with some areas hot spots and others virtually free. By the 1960's this had fallen to 0.5% due to testing. This continued to fall until the early 1970's.

In the hot spots it was found that there were larger numbers of badgers than in areas with little incidence and some of the badgers had TB. Other animals carry it too especially deer, but to a lesser extent.

In 1986 680 cattle were culled in the UK, around that time badgers became protected, mainly because of badger baiting which was on the increase.

In 2008 without control of badgers in infected areas 40,000 cattle were culled. If a solution is not found the prediction is that by 2014 70,000 cattle a year will be culled.

This is not the only problem, there is a rise in the number of cases of TB in cats and dogs also in humans. Recently there was an outbreak in sheep in Gloucestershire and in pigs. As the number of wild boar in the country rises this is a concern as they are very prone, also camelids are affected and with the numbers of Alpacas and Lamas growing there are already 35 herds on stand still because if incidence of TB reaction when tested.



Culling is expensive and beneficial vaccination of animals providing a significant effect will probably take decades. We also have the problem of conforming to EU legislation.

Dr Nick Fennwick lives on a farm and is very keen on wildlife, he noted that as a lad seeing badgers meant sitting out half the night waiting patiently, now they are much easier to see because they are more numerous. However have you noticed the drop in the numbers of hedgehogs (badgers like hedgehogs)

Winnie Jones thanked Dr Fennwick on our behalf and presented him with a small gift as a sign of appreciation for his talk and efforts to come to us.

We were stimulated to give a little more thought to how everything interacts and how a change in one area may effect many others.

Our November meeting will be on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> 7:15pm at the Rec Hall

## **HARVEST LUNCH**

Once again we managed to fill Earlswood Hall. We hope that the 90 plus people who attended enjoyed the fare and, as ever, the support was tremendous. Our thanks go to all the ladies of the village who made and served the lunch and, in addition, we must acknowledge the generous support of Andy Jones who has taken over from Geoff Roser.

So many people contribute, it is impossible to mention them all but our special thanks go to:

Stu Dutton who, once again, managed to get top price for all the produce and raised £365 for the Severn Area Rescue Association.

Barbara Davies for obtaining such magnificent raffle prizes and raising £190.

Kevin Bounds, who, as always, produced plentiful supplies of both soft and alcoholic drinks.

Jean Jones for producing such attractive flower arrangements for the tables and Peter Jones for organising the production of the tickets.

As always, tickets for next year's event will be available from the box office from mid August so make a note in your diaries!

Margaret and Pauline

## SAMFAL

Here we are at a change of season and a big change in our administration and outlook for the future. Our committee and volunteers have appealed both officially and personally for assistance in our project and seem to have come up trumps in that several people with the required experience and expertise have offered their services in many different aspects of conservation and biodiversity which will be of benefit to our ultimate aim and the dream of our founders. The future; in spite of the darkening days we will soon be encountering, is looking bright.

The Mike Sayce memorial gig held at the Tan House on Friday 15<sup>th</sup>. October was a resounding success and I am told by persons whose word I have learned over time to believe as true; that I had a great time along with everyone else. (I was persuaded by miscreants to sample a quart or two of ale) Many thanks to local band One Sick Lizard; featuring Paul the Shop - Cruise Crooner of this parish - and of course, Steve (Elvis)Lacey for hosting the event and providing slick service and fine beverages. I am told by a reliable source that almost £500.00 was raised. Well done all those who attended and contributed.

I walked the boundaries of the fields the other day and was immediately impressed by the quality of the work done by the team that did the fencing. (I must insert here that I did a brief course at Coleg Gwent Usk on "Countryside Management and Environment Studies") and looking at the straightness and stability of the job immediately grasped exactly what is involved in order to acquire the skills and difficulties needed to achieve a long lasting; aesthetically pleasing; and an environmentally friendly boundary for our fields which will endure for many years to come.

Regarding wildlife it has been for me a strange summer, and I am sure many people will think the same. Rabbits, which seemed plentiful in the summer, have vanished from the fields; I know there was a bout of Myxomatosis in August but they do seem to be rare now but I have no doubt they will recover as they always do. The badgers off Blethyn Close field, however, seem to have moved on or possibly died out, as I have seen no activity recently near the sett.

You may have noticed that you have holes dug up in the lawn over the last few weeks, and I get calls asking me why. Of course I cannot say on the telephone what the cause is, but all I say is that it is nothing supernatural and is probably the result of activity of a Green Woodpecker. "Green Woodpecker" you say? In most cases the answer is "Yes". At this time of year they are looking for protein to get them through the lean months of the Winter and ants, or their eggs is a good source of food for this particular species. (Other garden damage is blamed on squirrels, hedgehogs, or badgers, but badgers would make a real mess of the garden so one would know immediately that this large beast had been present. Hedgehogs are now quite rare; due, I think to changes in farming methods, (i.e. destruction of wildlife friendly habitats) and increasing use of target specific herbicides and insecticides. The Grey Squirrel will bury food in your garden and try to find it later but they do not always remember where it is and dig around until they find something.

Now is the time for planting the new hedge and trees and we will report next month on the progress. Any queries please call on 641773 or speak to a member of the committee. Mike Gambold.

# Peace, Privacy, and Stunning Views!

Delightful cosy cabin for two, nestling on a hillside between the Wye and Usk Valleys, 1 mile from picturesque Shirenewton village

- \* **fabulous, uninterrupted views of the countryside**
- \* **newly refurbished, fitted kitchen / luxury shower room**
- \* **private drive, patio and garden area**
- \* **3 night breaks or full weeks available**

**Perfect for a relaxing break or ideal for walkers, bird-watchers, site seeing...or family visiting**

## **Bryn Cosyn**

**Pant-y-Cosyn House, Usk Rd, Shirenewton, Chepstow,  
Monmouthshire, NP16 6RZ      Tel: 01291 641826  
email [lynne@bryncosyn.co.uk](mailto:lynne@bryncosyn.co.uk)    Website [www.bryncosyn.co.uk](http://www.bryncosyn.co.uk)**

## **Spanish Tutor and Translation Services (English, Spanish, Italian & French)**



Are you thinking of taking a few lessons for your holidays? Do you need to improve your skills as a Spanish speaker?

I'm a native-Spanish speaker, with an excellent pronunciation and grammar. If you are interested in learning a new language for business or leisure purposes, just call or drop me an e-mail.

Translation services and rates vary depending on the extension and nature of the text. I guarantee professional reliable service, flexible prices and confidentiality.

I am available in the day time and early evenings during the week. The place will be agreed on together to suit both parties. Please feel free to contact me for further details.

### **Paty Davies**

Tel: 01291 641553

Mobile: 07807103901

email: [lucy\\_24@hotmail.com](mailto:lucy_24@hotmail.com)

## BROWNIES



The Brownies have been busy this month. We've made lamps for our Vision event, and played wide games out on the field to take advantage of the last of the light evenings. We've also been learning Brownie songs. We have had lots of help from parents this month – and it has been much appreciated by Jackie and I it makes our job much easier.

Our biggest event took place on 20 October when we joined with over 400 Brownies, Guides and Rainbows across the District at Tintern Abbey to mark the end of the Centenary Year of the Guide movement. We started the evening with an enrolment – Gwen Blundell got to make her promise in Tintern Abbey and in Welsh! As we were starting the ceremony we were joined by the Divisional Commissioner for Gwent who asked if she could join in. She gave Gwen her special badge as a memento.

Then all the Brownies lit their lanterns and we processed into the Abbey in the dark led by a Chinese Dragon and following a special trail of glow sticks. We sang several songs, and all renewed our Promise at 20.10 on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the October (2010:2010!). All the girls received a party bag of gifts to take home with them. It made quite a late night for some of us but it was all very exciting – especially being out in the dark! Many of the Brownies hadn't been to the Abbey before, so we can feel a trip coming on to revisit it in daylight when we can take a good look at it.

We have spaces for 6 Brownies at present so if you are a girl aged 7- 10 years old and would like to join us, please get in contact. We would still like to find another adult leader prepared to go into uniform so that we can go back to meeting once a week – again if you can help us, please let us know.

Jackie Broughton 641797 and Claire Oldfield 641537

## 1<sup>ST</sup> SHIRENEWTON CUB PACK

*Camping In October!!!* - Nights under the stars...

Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> October saw the second of the introductory overnight camps near Shirenewton for the new cubs; having been postponed from the washout Ryder Cup weekend. The second part of the Training Six undertook a night in tents and for many of the cubs it was their first night in a tent and a first night away from parents. In retrospect I am not sure who was more anxious, the cubs or the parents!

The young cubs arrived very excited and full of expectation; most had clearly paid attention at the pack night when we talked about packing your kit and what to take, with fewer instances of 'my mum didn't pack that for me' than previously.



After unpacking kit into their tents and helping to build the fire we had a few games, including a night trail; then back to the fire for hot chocolate and the opportunity to tell stories.

The unofficial start time of 0630hrs had boys prowling around in the dark, on the pretence of going to the toilet and before long everyone was up with breakfast served at about 7am. The Training Sixers (Rhys and Ashraf) led a great game which appeared to re-enact the Siege of Mafeking between Lord Baden Powell and the Zulus. All too quickly the time flew past until parents started to arrive and the Leaders happily handed over the exhausted cubs, who will have had a lot to talk about.

Friday 22nd October was our last camp for this year and took on the theme of Search and Rescue. Parents started dropping off the cubs at 7:00pm with their first challenge being to find their tents in the dark. During the previous Pack meeting we had concentrated on First Aid so our theme of Search and Rescue was a good way to test their new skills. As the cubs sorted out their tents our two training sixers were dispatched, in different directions, to hide in the forest one having a well-made up head injury and the other a cut on the hand and a badly sprained ankle. Both were also carrying radios and we did promise them that if they were not found by daybreak they could return to base camp!! The cubs had been divided into two teams and briefed on the best methods of searching when we received two calls for help. Each team was dispatched with a first aid kit and one team also had a kit to make a stretcher if needed. Mike followed one team and I the other making certain that our theme did become a *reality*. Thankfully both casualties were eventually found, first aid applied and assisted back to camp, one walking with assistance and the other was stretchered. After a quick debrief and discussion on what they thought they might have done better we sent the teams out again.

Later around the campfire with hot cups we had a final chat about the exercise with every one agreeing that it was not only great fun but also a wonderful learning experience putting theory into practice. Both Mike and I were very impressed with at all the cubs' enthusiasm and new found skills.

Soon it was time for bed which was followed by heavy rain but that will be another story!

The one night camps are a great, safe, easy introduction to camping and learning about how to organise and look after yourself outdoors. We are privileged to be able to use the Shirenewton Forest School area as a tremendous resource and hope that our involvement will encourage the cubs to love and respect the environment in the same way that we do. We are also very grateful to the Forestry Commission for allowing us the on-going use of the local forests.

*For any further information please contact Geoff at [geoffmarlow@btinternet.com](mailto:geoffmarlow@btinternet.com) or Tel 01291 641407. Or visit our website on <http://shirenewtonscouts.jimdo.com/>*

## **VOTE FOR SUPER FAST BROADBAND**

BT will 'engage with' any community where at least 75% of home and businesses have voted for super-fast broadband and will explore all possibilities of bringing fibre broadband to the area

Shirenewton and surrounding areas has 499 eligible votes (i.e. those on the Shirenewton telephone exchange). Currently only 47 (=9.42%) of eligible households have voted. We need at least 375 households to vote.

It will cost you nothing other than a mouse click (or two) and 5 minutes of your time.

Simply visit: [www.bt.com/racetoinfinity](http://www.bt.com/racetoinfinity) enter your postcode and other details and register.

**There is no commitment—you are simply voting!**

You can also click through from the church website  
[www.shirenewtonchurch.com](http://www.shirenewtonchurch.com)

Note: this is part of a BT 'race' which guarantees upgrades for the winners. Our area is too small to win but if we can get 75% of households to vote, BT will look at an upgrade.

Super fast broadband would be a tremendous asset to the village and would make it even more desirable. So please

**ACT NOW AND VOTE**

## **STARGAZING IN OCTOBER '10**

The bright planet Jupiter lies to the South in the evening. The Moon can be used as a way of spotting the planets. Jupiter is just below the Moon on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Venus is the bright "morning star", rising earlier as the month progresses. The slightly yellow planet Saturn is just above it. On 3<sup>rd</sup> November, the fine Crescent Moon is just to the right of Saturn.

The Leonid meteor shower is due on the nights of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> November – you may be lucky enough to see meteors, often called shooting stars, in the vicinity of the constellation Leo. Leo rises in the East around midnight. Meteors are caused by tiny grains of dust burning up as they enter Earth's atmosphere. The dust particles result from the break-up of comets, and travel in swarms around the Sun around the same orbit as the original comet.

The seven stars of the Plough lie to the North in the evening. Those of us with particularly good eye-sight can see that Mizar, the star that is the second along the handle of the plough, is in fact a double-star.

The "W" of Cassiopeia lies nearly overhead. In Roman mythology Cassiopeia was queen of the ancient kingdom of Aethiopia. She was chained to her throne as a punishment for being boastful, and placed in the heavens to sometimes hang upside down. The band of stars making up the Milky Way runs through Cassiopeia.

The Milky Way is best seen from the countryside, away from city and even village lights. There have been no really large telescopes of the type used by professional astronomers in the UK for 30 years or more. This is at least partly due to the effects of street lighting. Britain's main optical telescopes are sited on a high mountain away from towns on the island of La Palma in the Canaries.

Dave Thomas

## **WHIST DRIVES**

26 players enjoyed October's drive. The next Drive is on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> November at the Recreation Hall at 7.30 p.m. New players are made welcome, please join us, our Table fee is £1. per person which includes light refreshments. We also have a Raffle which raises funds for the upkeep of the Hall. December the 2nd is our Christmas Drive and in January we shall be playing on the 6<sup>th</sup>, same time, place and conditions.

Auriol Horton. 01291 641844



## Forthcoming Choral & Orchestral music in Chepstow

The two months leading to Christmas always tend to be a build-up of frenzied activity, as we are all assaulted on every side and at every turn with posters and notices inviting us to attend various functions and events. Music often is high on the "attraction" list, with the imminent carol season.

However, there is one particular forthcoming orchestral concert in Chepstow at St Mary's Priory Church, 7.30pm, SATURDAY NOVEMBER 27th when the RHONDDA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (musical director Huw Gareth Williams) present a concert of popular orchestral classics -- Rieni Overture (Wagner), In the Steppes of Central Asia (Borodin), Night on a Bare Mountain (Mussorgsky) and Symphony no 6, "Pathetique" (Tchaikovsky.) Tickets £7/£6, under 18s free, available from Chepstow Bookshop, or on the door.

This orchestra is worthy of support, not only because it comprises many young instrumentalists who are helping to keep music very much alive in towns and areas such as our own, but also because several of the players are also members of the excellent orchestral team which plays for the CCS orchestral concerts, and receives so many plaudits and so much appreciation from Chepstow music lovers.

For further information, please see [www.rhonddasympphonyorchestra.org.uk](http://www.rhonddasympphonyorchestra.org.uk)

For your diary....

Wednesday November 24th, Chepstow Leisure Centre (Drama Room), 7.30pm: Chepstow Choral Society Patrons Evening. A programme of light music (including Rodgers and Hammerstein, Andrew Lloyd Webber) and light refreshments – and social chat! –Admission free for Patrons, donations for non-patrons. Contact 01291 424725, 620414 for further details.

Saturday November 27th, St Mary's Church Chepstow 7.30pm. Orchestral Concert by Rhondda Symphony Orchestra (details above)

Saturday December 11th, St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow, 7.30pm: Chepstow Choral Society's annual Festival of Christmas Music & Readings. With Wyedean School Choir.

Monday December 13th, Mathern Church, 7 pm  
Carols by Candlelight with the Martin Singers (tel.627800 for further information).  
Instead of the Tintern Abbey Service for Barnardos this year



On 13 October we met (unusually) in the morning for a cookery demonstration by Patsy Lewis, using her home-grown vegetables. She produced two kinds of tasty soup - the most unusual and delicious was a Thai curried beetroot soup, followed by a chocolate and beetroot (yes!) cake to die for !

While these were cooking we heard about an amazing Christian lady of almost 98 whose funeral was a most inspiring service of thanksgiving for her life and influence on young people and elderly alike.

Finally we enjoyed a shared meal together - yummy. Thank you Patsy !

**Our next MU meeting**

Will be on Wednesday 10 November when the Rev John Hall (who holds the original Ryder Cup) will be telling us about our local street pastors, their training and experiences.

2.30 to 4. 30 p.m. in the Shirenewton Church Room. Interested ? You are most welcome.

Contact Rosemary Carey Branch Leader 01291 425 010

**A Date for your diary**

Thursday 25 November 1.45 to 5 p.m. "Christmas Past and Present" with afternoon tea at The Greenmeadow Golf and Country Club, Cwmbran. Come and join us. Tickets £7 with all profits raised to the MU Home and Abroad.

Let Rosemary know if you can come.

"Focolare" - our Home Group,

Open to all will meet at 3 p.m. on Thursday 18 November (instead of the 4th Thursday)

at 83 Wentwood View, Caldicot. Rosemary Carey 01291 425 010

***Where's the place to be on  
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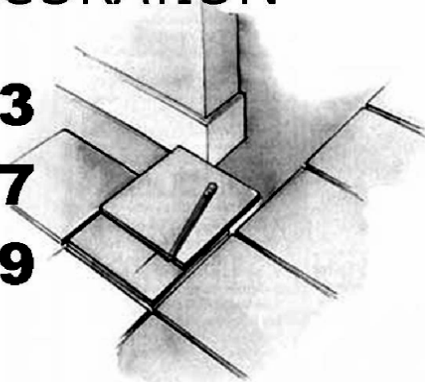


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## POEMS BY MINETTA MORRIS

### THE CHAPEL LIVES

Those beautiful wild hills of Wales,  
If only our eyes can see,  
They're green on green with blue above.  
Its contrasts are supreme.

Our ancestors have seen so well,  
And built a chapel high.  
And visitors we need to tell,  
Find pathways when they try.

Those walls gleam white like beacons for travellers below,  
And older people say that many came here long ago.

We gather now a cheerful throng. to care for it again,  
From dereliction sad to see. all is mended all the same.

The ancestors are buried here who sleep their long gone sleep,  
And visitors, who came there now, just feel its tranquil peace.  
And we will try to take great care  
And hope to play our part,  
And remember those who came before,  
Stay forever in our hearts.

### WHO DARES ALL

I know a merry blue eyed boy,  
It could be said is not all joy,  
But on the whole that wicked smile,  
Can very easily beguile.

What does he think, where does he go,  
For me to see, and him to know,  
When confrontation takes a part,  
He's off again. Oh, what a lark.

When he is sad he's really sad,  
The mood has changed, he's really glad,  
When asked to tidy up, oh no!  
Asks for remuneration, don't you know.

It seems when danger comes, no fear,  
He dares to try and all is clear,  
When friends come round they dash away,  
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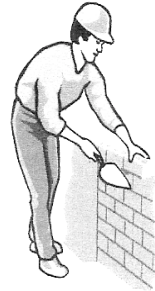
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## ***Nerys's Natty Nosh***

Colcannon ( Irish Cal Ceannann-meaning "white -head cabbage) is a traditional Irish dish. Colcannon is made from mashed potatoes, kale or cabbage, butter, salt and pepper. It can contain other ingredients such as milk, cream, leeks, onions, chives, garlic, boiled ham or Irish bacon. At one time it was a cheap, year round staple food, though it is usually eaten in Autumn/ Winter, when kale comes into season.

An old Irish Halloween tradition was to serve colcannon with prizes of small coins concealed in it, as the English do with Christmas pudding. This is still done today and small amounts of money are placed in the potato.

The song " Colcannon" also called " The Skillet pot" is a traditional Irish song that has been recorded by many an artist.

It begins-

*Did you ever eat Colcannon, made from lovely pickled cream?*

*With the greens and scallions mingled like a picture in a dream*

*Did you ever make a hole on top to hold the melting flake*

*Of the creamy, flavoured butter  
that your mother used to make ?*



### ***Colcannon Mash.* Serves 4**

#### **Ingredients .**

- 1 Kg ( 2lb) peeled, chopped potatoes
- 450g ( 15oz) finely shredded cabbage
- 2 leeks, finely sliced
- 150 ml ( ½ pint) milk
- 100g ( 4 oz) butter
- Salt and pepper

#### ***Method***

- 1 Boil the potatoes until cooked, drain and return to the pan. **Mash.**
- 2 Cook the cabbage for 2-3 minutes in salted boiling water until just cooked, drain.
- 3 Rinse the leeks thoroughly. Put the milk and butter in a pan and bring to a simmer, add the sliced leeks and simmer for 8-10 minutes.
- 4 Combine all the colcannon ingredients and stir on a low heat. Season.

**Serve-** on it's own or with grated cheese, as an accompaniment to fish, meat, sausages, bacon or poached eggs. The choice is yours.

**Nutritional value of cabbage.** Cabbage contains high levels of the antioxidants vitamin A, C and E so it helps protect against free-radical damage.

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## GARDENING CORNER

The first frosts of the Autumn have come early this year, and as a result the tender crops in the tunnel and greenhouses have suffered. With a few more nights of worse to come, this will bring to a premature end a number of crops. Tomatoes and peppers in particular had been cropping well, despite a chequered start and the loss of a number of individual plants for various reasons. This year we grew three different varieties of pepper ranging from sweet, for using with salads, through to hot chilli ones. As with peppers, we grew five separate varieties of tomatoes, with some bred for cooking and others for eating like sweets. All in all they did pretty well. One Italian variety which we grew for making sauces was a complete failure. The seed was of dubious quality, with no two plants producing the same sort of fruit. The quality of fruit itself – those that did crop- was also low, so all of these were pulled out and thrown on the bonfire and replaced with a few spare plants that we had left over. With the remaining cooking varieties we have been busy making roast tomato soup, throwing in a few sweet and a couple of hot peppers, plus the odd aubergine for good measure, not to mention a smattering of basil as well. In the end we decided that we had enough to see us through the winter, but still had plenty of tomatoes to pick. We decided to have a go at making passata (think that's how you spell it!) sauce for making our own lasagne and bolognese. This was quite easy as all you needed was a large pan 8lbs of tomatoes, some garlic and two or three lightly fried onions. I have to say that the results have been extremely good, so that is something that we will be repeating next year. The frosts will have brought to an end the picking of any more fruit for the salad box, but the seed catalogues are now all lined up on the side, so will have to browse through them and decide what we are going to do next year.

Talking of the self sufficiency thing, we have tried making some sloe gin this year and also some damson gin. Both are looking good although the damson has taken on a much more pleasing colour. The proof will be in the drinking of course! We'll probably open some up at Christmas to try, but appreciate that this may be a little early to get the best results. I can't wait to strain the damsons off, but not only just to try the tippie! The recipe I have used comes from a cottage gardening / self sufficiency website. This particular recipe really does make the most of the fruit and we can't wait to follow through with the directions! Let me explain. When the gin is ready, you strain it off, bottling it for future consumption. The fruit is then placed in another jar and then covered with medium sherry and left for a further three month period. Apparently this makes a particularly "devilish" drink. Once the three months are up, it's still not finished! Strain the sherry off, bottling the drink for immediate consumption. The fruit however can still be used to either make a very intoxicating summer pudding, or they can be cut in half, stones removed, and then covered in liquid chocolate to make some very interesting alcohol rich sweets. Mmmmm, I just hope that damson gin

hurries up as I can't wait to get started on the rest. Who said this self sufficiency wasn't fun! I was so taken with the whole damson experience that I decided there and then to buy a couple of trees so that we could grow our own in the future. I'm ashamed to say that both the damsons and sloes were harvested one weekend at my parent's house in Hampshire. Most recipes say that you should pick the sloes once they have been frosted, but we didn't read that part until after we had picked the fruit! We had more than enough anyway so we put some in the freezer for future use and the rest we sat down one night and pricked them all by hand with a fork! That's what the recipe said. This was a very sticky affair but have to say that the colour of the resultant juice looks good – although not as good as the damson! All this was a little embarrassing though as I did feel a little self conscious as I stood in the queue in Morrison's with four one litre bottles of gin and a packet of peanuts! You know how you always stand in the queue, looking at what everyone else is buying and making a judgement of how they live their lives?! Well I felt very small that night and couldn't wait to get out of the store. The peanuts were a token gesture as I was adamant that I was going to prove that I didn't live off gin alone! My choice probably made matters worse! We grew a lot of shallots this year but for some reason they were not keeping very well. I decided that the best course of action was to pickle them, so a couple of very tearful nights were spent peeling and then bottling the onions. These are tucked away in a box with the various gins, in the dark under the stairs, and will hopefully be fully pickled for Christmas. Both the gin and onions will have to be inspected and then topped up with the various liquids as necessary. Continuing with the self sufficiency theme, the assistant head gardener has been busy shelling beans. These are Italian barlotti beans which are dried and stored in air tight containers and can be used in stews and casseroles, not to mention the various soups. She has also been busy in the freezing department and we now have two chest freezers bulging at the seams, with different vegetables. One thing with the early cold weather is that the trees will lose their leaves earlier than normal. I've ordered a number of apple and pear trees, some to replace the cherries that just don't have any fruit, and some to prolong the picking and keeping season. This has been a bit of a problem this year as both our discovery apple trees and another early variety, have been absolutely bulging with fruit, to the point that some branches have been breaking under the weight. We hate to see waste but have been unable to keep up with the apples. The butterflies, not to mention the wasps and hornets, have been enjoying the rotten fruit on the ground however, so at least not all went to waste. If we can afford it next year we are thinking of buying a small fruit press so any excess crop can be juiced and drunk as such, or made into cider. Probably next year we will have hardly any crop to enjoy! Still talking of next year it's time to plan what we are going to grow, so time to find where we put the seed catalogues. I'm sure I've seen them propping a broken table leg up somewhere! So happy gardening until next month. Steve Hunt.

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*If you know of any changes or omissions please contact the Editor Terry Walters  
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### **Church of St. Thomas à Becket Shirenewton**

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<b>Shirenewton Ward:</b>	Beverley Moore 01291 641532 John Eede 01291 641257 Robin Mitchell 01291 650414 Beverley Leaf 01291 641680 John Harvey 01291 641279
<b>Mynyddbach Ward</b>	Sally Saysell 01291 641369 Suzi Squires 01291 641787
<b>Earlswood Ward</b>	Charles Eickhoff 01291 641716 Ken Morton 01291 650268
<b>Newchurch West</b>	Liz McCombe (CHAIRMAN) 01291 652957
<b>MCC for Shirenewton</b>	Graham Down 01291 621846 <a href="mailto:grahamdown@monmouthshire.gov.uk">grahamdown@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Member of Parliament</b>	David Davies 020 7219 8360 <a href="mailto:daviesd@parliament.uk">daviesd@parliament.uk</a>

### **Police Neighbourhood Watch Contacts**

<b>Comm. Police Officer</b>	Michael Cowburn 01633 642068 <a href="mailto:michael.cowburn@gwent.pnn.police.uk">michael.cowburn@gwent.pnn.police.uk</a>
<b>Shirenewton &amp; Mynyddbach</b>	Beverley Moore 01291 641532
<b>Earlswood</b>	Sue Leat 01291 641207

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<b>Brownies</b>	Jackie Broughton 01291 641797
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<b>Shirenewton Primary School</b>	Jayne Edwards 01291 641774 <a href="mailto:jayneedwards@monmouthshire.gov.uk">jayneedwards@monmouthshire.gov.uk</a>
<b>Shirenewton Tennis Association</b>	P Brabon 01291 641376 <a href="mailto:brabonn1@hotmail.com">brabonn1@hotmail.com</a>
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<b>Traidcraft</b>	Marion McAdam 01291 641316
<b>Whist drive</b>	Auriol Horton 01291 641844 <a href="mailto:auriol@btinternet.com">auriol@btinternet.com</a>
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## DIARY DATES

For further details see inside the magazine.

<b>Nov</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>1</b>	Shirenewton Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
<b>4</b>	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
<b>10</b>	Mothers Union Meeting	Shirenewton Church Room
<b>11</b>	Womens Institute Meeting	Recreation Hall
<b>14</b>	Remembrance Service	Earlswood Hall
<b>18</b>	Focolare Meeting	83 Wentwood View Caldicot
<b>20</b>	Barn Dance	Earlswood Hall
<b>24</b>	Tredeggar Arms Luncheon Club	Tredeggar Arms
<b>24</b>	Chepstow Choral Society Patrons Evening	Chepstow Leisure Centre
<b>25</b>	Mothers Union — Christmas Past and Present	Greenmeadows Golf Club
<b>26</b>	Amazing Christmas Shopping Night	Recreation Hall
<b>27</b>	Rhondda Symphony Orchestra	St Mary's Church Chepstow
<b>30</b>	Shirenewton Local History Soc. Talk	Huntsman Hotel
<b>Dec</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>2</b>	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
<b>11</b>	Chepstow Choral Society	St Mary's Church Chepstow
<b>13</b>	Carols by Cadlelight Martin Singers	Mathern Church
<b>Jan</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>6</b>	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall

## SHIRENEWTON CHURCH - READERS AND SIDES-PERSONS

<b>NOV</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Reader</b>	<b>Sides-Person</b>
<b>7</b>	Third Sunday before Advent Holy Eucharist at 9:30 am	Annabel Hancock Auriol Horton	Annabel Hancock Auriol Horton
<b>14</b>	Second Sunday before Advent REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY Assemble at Cenotaph at 10:45 am followed by Service at 11:00 am	The Children	
<b>21</b>	Sunday before Advent Holy Eucharist at 9:30 am	Diane Marlow Barbara Davies	Diane Marlow Barbara Davies
<b>28</b>	First Sunday of Advent Holy Eucharist at 9:30 am	Bob Grattan Mike Peirce	Bob Grattan Mike Peirce
<b>Dec</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Reader</b>	<b>Sides-Person</b>
<b>5</b>	Second Sunday of Advent Holy Eucharist at 9:30 am	John Nicholas Kevin Bounds	John Nicholas Kevin Bounds
<b>12</b>	Third Sunday of Advent Holy Eucharist at 9:30 am	Jane Fisher Sally Saysell	Jane Fisher Sally Saysell
<b>19</b>	Fourth Sunday of Advent Holy Eucharist at 9.30	Bill Clark Janet Clark	Bill Clark Janet Clark
<b>24</b>	Midnight Mass at 11:30 pm	Sally Saysell Andrew Baker	Sally Saysell Andrew Baker
<b>25</b>	CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE AT 10:00 AM	The Children	
<b>26</b>	GROUP SERVICE AT 10:00 am LLANFAIR DISCOED CHURCH		

Earlswood  
Chepstow



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#### **EDITORIAL INFORMATION**

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- The views expressed are those of the contributor.

**Deadline for contributions to the November issue is the 22nd November**