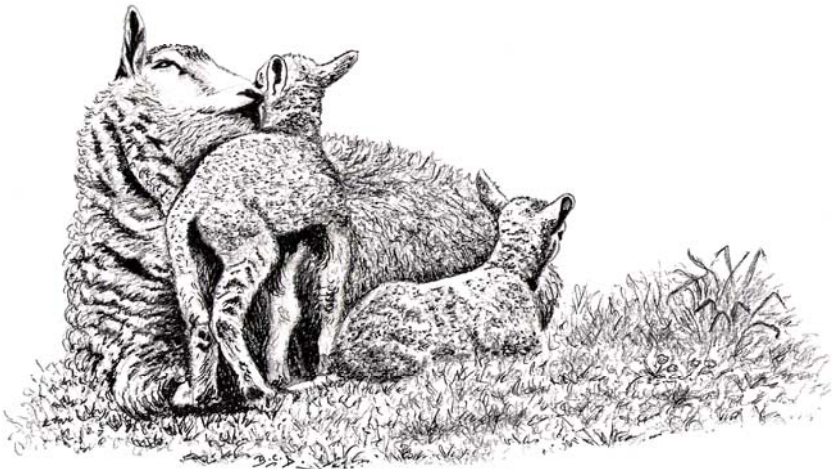


Shirenewton

Parish Magazine

March 2014



Sketch by Barbara Davies

Price: 50p

CHURCH MATTERS

We continue to miss the Reverend Nansi Davies, and wish her all the best for her continued recovery. We are very grateful to Julian and all the other clergy that have stepped in to take services whilst she recuperates from her stroke. It



is wonderful how the clergy have all rallied round and made sure that we have our regular 10 a.m. service every Sunday at St Thomas à Becket Church in Shirenewton. We carry on praying for Nansi and hope that she will be better soon, and for Sybil.

Our major recent fundraising event was the Six Nations Kick Off evening on Friday 31st January. It was very well attended - the church room was full to overflowing - and followed the traditional format of a bar, a ploughman's supper, an interesting talk, and the competition to predict the outcome of the Six Nations Championship. A bottle of champagne was presented to churchwarden Andrew Baker who won the competition last year and there were plenty of volunteers to help him drink it. The talk was by the Chief Executive of Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby who transfixed us all with a very good description of the sport, the athletes, the specialist wheelchairs required and some of the competitions they had taken part in. There were film clips of matches, training and interviews with the players, which were very moving, but underscored the dedication and commitment required such a physical sport at international level. There were plenty of questions and lots of interest in the sport, and all in all it was a very enjoyable evening - and it raised several hundred pounds for GB wheelchair rugby.

Elsewhere in the diocese, Canon John Heales retired as the rector of Penhow, including the parishes of St Brides, Llanvaches and Llandevaud at the end of January. His farewell lunch at the Foresters Oaks was well attended by all the parishes - so much so that it overflowed out of the dining room into the bar! Bishop Dominic amongst others spoke after the meal and wished John well for his retirement. The Penhow group will now become part of the enlarged Caerwent group.

Best wishes Bill

Bill Clark

WJH CLARK, Beaulieu House, Shirenewton, Monmouthshire NP16 6RG

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH 200 CLUB

During February and March we will be collecting subscriptions for the 200 Club for the year April 2014. The prizes for this year will be:- 1st £40, 2nd £20, 3rd £20, and 4th £10 with extra prizes at Christmas. Half the money collected is distributed as prize money.

The draws take place on the **third** Sunday of the month. Nine of the draws pay out prizes of £40, £30, £20 and £10. At Christmas there is a **bumper** draw with prizes of **£100**, £50, and two prizes at £25.

It would be much appreciated and a great help with the collection process if you could give your subscriptions to your normal collector as you see them over the next couple of months, otherwise someone will call on you before the end of March. If you are paying by Direct Debit we would like to thank you for making the collection so much easier as this saves a great deal of running around for those collecting, if you are not already using a direct debit and would be willing to do so, a form was enclosed in last months magazine or one can be obtained from Bob O'Keefe.

Please return completed forms to Bob O'Keefe, at, 15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, NP16 6UA.

I would like to thank our collectors for all the hours they spend collecting subscriptions, and thank you all as always for your generous support.

Shirenewton Church 200 Club Winners Results of 200 Club draw today (16th Feb) were:

Rosie Gannon £40
Wendy Ward £30
Margaret Lock £20
Martin Doble £10

Parish Magazine

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

Alternatively, please send direct to Bob O'Keefe, at 15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, NP16 6UA, including your name, address and the name of the person that normally delivers your magazine.

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

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

I start with exciting news. I've had a request! Woooo hoooooo – it means I don't have to wrack my brain to think of something to write!

Following my 'frightening' entry last month on the encryption malware, I've been asked to talk/write about Recovery Disks and Mirror images. So here goes with part 1.

Recovery Disks: In the old days when you got a new PC you'd get a few shiny floppy disks/CDs/DVDs/whatever which allowed you to restore the operating system in the event of a major issue. Then, as hard disks got bigger and manufacturers were looking for cost savings in the highly competitive low margin PC business, manufacturers worked out they could put all that information on the PC's hard disk. So, now you get the PC with the hard disk holding a 'recovery partition'.

As Wikipedia eloquently puts it: it is a 'backup of the original factory condition or a favored condition of a computer as configured by an original equipment manufacturer or an end-user. OEM supplied recovery media is commonly shipped with most computers to allow the user to reformat the hard drive and reinstall the operating system and pre-loaded software as it was when it was shipped.'

What this means is that, using the recovery partition, you can restore the computer to its original state when you opened the packaging. I talk about whether this is desirable below. Now, if your hard disk fails, it isn't much help having this stuff on the failed hard disk. Ergo most manufacturers provide some tools to create a recovery DVD or other media from the recovery partition – there is no standard and it is manufacturer specific. The idea being that if the hard disk fails you can restore the PC from this media – which, of course, you have kept safely somewhere. Note: you can use any media for this. DVD/USB stick/etc. The advantage of DVD is you are less likely to overwrite it.

Most techies treat the recovery partition as a waste of disk space and it's gone sooner than you can say re-format. This is mainly because, so long as you have the Windows key (which is normally on a sticker on the PC or in the documentation), you can simply download and re-install Windows. But what if you have a recovery disk and you don't have a recovery partition? No worries a good start is a 'system repair disk' which you can create following the simple instructions on the Microsoft support website. Simply google 'Create a system repair disc for nnnn' where nnnn is your operating system.

Now would you ever want to 'reinstall the operating system and pre-loaded software as it was when it was shipped'? Only in desperation and if you had a proper back-up because you'd lose all your applications, data and everything. In other words, it's a valid strategy only in the event of a hard disk failure. Then you'd restore the operating system from the recovery disks and your applications and data from back-up – unless you had a disk/system mirror which we will talk about next month in part 2.

So, what options are there other than mirrors?

Assuming you haven't had a complete hard disk failure, the main use is in the event of a major virus infestation which messes up your system. Then the first thing is to do a system restore. This rolls the PC back to a known 'good' configuration without affecting your data. In fact I had to avail myself of this facility last month not, I assure you because I had a nasty infection, but because after a Windows update my 2nd monitor stopped working. The Windows update had messed up the graphics driver. So I rolled back. Re-installed the updates and it all worked perfectly – don't ask me I just don't know why.

So make sure you have system restore enabled. Take a look here for information: <http://www.wikihow.com/Do-a-System-Restore> or just google it. This will mean your PC creates system restore points at regular intervals. This is good as you can roll back. Of course this doesn't help you deal with the a malware infestation which encrypts your data (as discussed last month) but it does help in a majority of cases.

Finally, this all refers to Windows PCs. I know nothing about Macs but understand that 'Macs are not as prone to malware - most Mac infections occur as a result of user behavior (downloading Warez or counterfeit software, for example). Whereas a Windows system is easily susceptible to a so-called drive-by silent infection that happens through no fault of the user, a Mac infection usually requires some deliberate (and thus avoidable) action.' (from about.com).

Remember I recommend disabling Flash and java in your default browser.

Disk mirroring next month – I can hardly wait ;-))

Safe browsing.

David Cornwell

Webmaster – Shirenewton Church

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Extracts from minutes of the February meeting

Planning applications

No planning applications had been received this month.

County Councillor G Down informed the Council that he had attended the Public Inquiry regarding Shirenewton Village Shop and the Inspector's Report should be published soon. As should the Monmouthshire LDP Inspector's Report.

He further advised that planning application DC/2013/00925, Buckwell Farm, had stalled as a further report on 'glare' had been requested.

Items of local concern

From the monthly police report - both WPC Thorpe and PC A Jones attended. There were several incidents on the report, some being weather related, but only one crime. There had been one call to Brookacre during January regarding an internal issue.

Shirenewton Local History Society - Mrs D Brabon and Dr D Thomas attended to advise the Council that, subject to permission from the Conservation Officer at Mon CC, a blue plaque is to be erected in Shirenewton to commemorate the life of Edward J Lowe.

Taliesen/Yew Tree Bungalow, Earlswood - the Chair gave background information on the discussion at the last meeting and subsequent correspondence received from Mon CC which included a report from Mr I Blomeley on the affected Rights of Way. The Chair assured members of the public that the issues were being actively pursued by Departments of Mon CC and are still ongoing.

Two members of the public expressed concern regarding the discharge of domestic water onto the highway, resulting in thick mud and slurry. They were also concerned over the poor road repairs that have been carried out by Mon CC as the bank is eroding and the field falling into the lane. CC G Down arranged a site meeting with interested parties.

After some discussion, the Chair once again assured those present that this Council will endeavour to pursue issues, but final responsibility lies with the local authority.

Traffic calming update - CC Down explained the background and that SEWTA will fund feasibility and design work. One meeting had been held in September 2013 and two main recommendations made:

20mph speed restriction through Shirenewton and Mynyddbach;

'gateway' features to emphasise village entrances - the need to slow traffic but not obstruct the highway.

South Gloucestershire has some innovative ideas for traffic calming in rural areas but CC Down has had difficulty in getting information from S Glos. Information now received and CC Down to visit villages next week with P Keeble (Mon CC). Following this, engineers will develop drawings/designs to put to the community at a Public Meeting then, once agreed, back to SEWTA to claim funding.

Frustration was expressed by several of those present at the length of time this was taking to progress.

WPC Thorpe advised that the police would appreciate being included in future meetings. She also agreed to greater police visibility in the community and speed monitoring, particularly the school run.

Resignation of Councillor - Council reluctantly accepted the resignation of Cllr Carole Jones and expressed thanks for her unfailing support of this Council over several years.

Road erosion at Weyloed Lane and Spout Hill/ Mynyddbach junction - road repairs have been made. Weyloed Lane is to be patched and surface dressed in the next financial year.

Find more information in the draft copy of the minutes on the Community Council notice boards. Previous minutes of meetings can be found on the Council's page of the church website.

Contact the Clerk to the Community Council -

Mrs Hilary Counsell

Tel: 01291 421307

E-mail: Shirenewton@gmail.com

Chepstow Annual Walking Weekend



Saturday 12th - 14th April 2014

**Want to discover more about where you live
Grab your walking boots for 3 days of walking
action!**

**Guided walks led by experienced walk leaders
varying in length of 3 - 11 miles.**

**A 'one off fee' of £5 (Free for under 16's &
Walk4life) entitles you to as many walks as you
wish to take part in, parking in Chepstow with
transport to start/end points for linear walks.**

Full programme available end of February

**online at www.walksinchestow.co.uk
or Chepstow Tourist Information Centre**

ST PETER'S CHURCH, NEWCHURCH



**A SPRING WALK ON SATURDAY 17TH OF MAY FOLLOWED
BY A CREAM TEA IN THE CHURCH .
A SHORT CIRCULAR WALK TO GAER FAWR.
MEET AT THE CHURCH 1.30.**



CHEPSTOW MALE VOICE CHOIR

Will be giving a concert on behalf of the
Royal National Lifeboat Institution

On

Friday 4th April 2014

At

St. Thomas áBecket Church Shirenewton

7.00 pm for 7.30

All proceeds to the RNLI

Refreshments will be available during the interval

Tickets may be obtained from

Mr. Brian Robinson 01291 641539

Mrs. Sally Saysell

Merricks Pharmacy in Chepstow

Price—£8.00

**St Mary's Church
Llanvair Discoed**

**Flower Festival, Open Gardens
and scarecrows**



**Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th May 2014
10.30am - 5.00pm**

**Entrance to Flower Festival & Open Gardens
£5 per adult (children free)**

**Follow Basil the gardening scarecrow at:
[facebook.com/llanvairpengardens](https://www.facebook.com/llanvairpengardens)
and read his entertaining tweets at:
[@scarecrowBasil](https://twitter.com/scarecrowBasil)**

STARGAZING



Much the brightest star in the sky, Sirius can be seen to the South, below and to the left of the constellation Orion. The name "Sirius" is derived from the Greek word meaning scorching. For the ancient Egyptians the appearance of Sirius coincided with the annual flooding of the Nile Valley, vital to growing their crops. This event was of such importance that it marked the beginning of the Egyptian year.

The pair of stars high above Sirius and Orion form part of the constellation Gemini, the Twins, and are called Castor and Pollux. In mythology Castor and Pollux were the twin sons of the Queen of Sparta. Castor was mortal, but Pollux was not – his father was none other than Jupiter, who had paid a clandestine visit to the Queen. When Castor was killed in battle, Pollux pleaded to be allowed to share his immortality with his brother. This was granted, and both boys were placed in the heavens. Gemini is crossed by the Milky Way – the dense belt of stars that make up our own galaxy.

In the evening sky, the bright planet Jupiter is in the south-west, forming a triangle with Castor and Pollux. On the 10th, the Moon is just to the left of Jupiter. The reddish planet Mars rises later in the evening, in the south-east. It lies to the left of the bright star Spica. The Moon is close to Mars on the 18th. The planet Venus is a brilliant Morning Star in the South-East. On the morning of 27th March, the crescent Moon shares the dawn twilight with Venus.

The Vernal Equinox is on 20th March. Day and night are approximately equal everywhere and the Sun rises and sets due east and west. At the equinoxes, the tilt of the Earth relative to the Sun is zero.

WHIST DRIVES



At our meeting on the 6th February we were pleased to welcome two new players making our numbers up to 22 for the evening. – Our next Drive is on the 6th March, the first Thursday of the month. New players are always made welcome, **please join us**; our Table fee is £1.50 per person which includes light refreshments. We also have a Raffle that raises funds for the upkeep of the Recreation Hall, where we play - opening at 7 and starting to play at 7.30 p.m. promptly. We will continue through the year playing on the first Thursday of each month – we would love to see some more new faces. Auriol Horton. 01291 641844

SHIRENEWTON WI DECEMBER FEBRUARY 2014

A brief break in the wild wet weather gave us a benign evening for our February meeting for which we were all very grateful. It was very nice to welcome some new faces joining us for very sociable and relaxed card making. The next day would be Valentines so most members made valentine card.

Looking ahead to other events, birthday cards, Easter cards, new baby, thank you, best wishes and congratulations all appeared. The imagination and artistry displayed in the cards produced through the evening was wonderful. Everyone enjoyed having a go and the time flew by. At the end of the evening a whole forest of very good and personal greetings were displayed.

Some of the cards will have already been given and some will have a few weeks to wait for their event, but everyone will be enjoyed. In this age of electronic communication more real cards than ever are being sent and received.

Our March meeting is our WI's birthday party, fish and chips and entertainment.

March 13th 7:15pm at the Rec Hall.

April 10th we are having a progressive scrabble evening with refreshments.



SHIRENEWTON RECREATION HALL

#



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE RECREATION ASSOCIATION

WILL BE HELD ON THE 31ST OF MARCH AT 7.30PM

AT THE RECREATION HALL

EVERYONE WELCOME

NEW MEMBERS NEEDED

SHIRENEWTON PARISH VISITORS

We have a team of five Parish Visitors who are members of the Church of St Thomas á Becket's congregation. They are trained and supported to offer a

listening ear and time to chat with those in particular need -- the housebound, the sick, the bereaved, or those facing some other kind of crisis. They are also there to welcome new people into the village and help them to integrate into the community more quickly. They are not professional counsellors, carers or social workers, but ordinary people who are willing to be alongside you when you most need it. Their service is free to those of all faiths and none, with no strings attached.



Confidentiality

Our Parish Visitors work within a strict code of confidentiality so that you may be confident that whatever is shared with them goes no further. The one exception to this is that Visitors may share the minimum information necessary to obtain support and advice themselves, if necessary, from our clergy or other appropriate person. This would only happen with the persons consent

How to Find Out More

Contact our coordinator, the Revd Nansi Davies Tel 01633 400519 or Diane Marlow Tel 01291 641407 for an informal chat about your need.

If you would like to become a member of the Parish Visitors team please contact Nansi or Diane.

FAIRTRADE NEWS



Fairtrade India - the newest addition to the global Fairtrade family - was officially launched in Bangalore in November 2013. The organisation will focus on promoting Indian-produced Fairtrade products directly to the growing Indian market to further benefit Fairtrade farmers and workers.

Fairtrade started working with Indian producers almost 19 years ago and there are now 121,400 workers and farmers working with Fairtrade in India, with 72 Fairtrade certified producer organisations exporting certified products around the world. Homegrown Indian brands now provide Fairtrade rice, tea, coffee, spices and cotton for Indian consumers and businesses.

Although India is a democracy, the deeply entrenched restrictions of the caste system have justified the belief that the lower classes deserve to stay where they are, at the bottom, and their purpose is to serve the upper classes, born above them.

Perhaps Fairtrade in India will go some way to altering this stultifying mindset. I wrote about the ubiquitous use of palm oil in a recent magazine. The industry's roots were in west Africa in the early 1900s, where it was a major source of income for farmers. Demand outstripped supply so huge plantations were developed in the Far East. Huge tracts of forest were destroyed, which had a massive impact on the environment and wildlife. Palm oil is one of the world's most traded commodities. Astonishingly it is in MORE THAN HALF the packaged goods we buy from shops.

Traidcraft is supporting farmers in Ghana to produce fairly traded palm oil and it is doing it in a way that supports smallholder farmers and protects the environment. The new range of cleaning products containing fairly traded palm oil is now available: handwash, washing-up liquid, laundry liquid and multi-surface cleaner. Why not give it a try?

Marion McAdam 641 316, mms316@gmail.com

WW1 COMMEMORATION EVENTS

It is 100 years this year that World War 1 began. To commemorate the lives lost in that terrible war there will be a programme of events in 2014.

29th March

The Brownies will be holding a Mother's day coffee morning which will have a WWI theme

June 14th

The History Society is compiling a book of photographs and information relating to WWI and hopefully this will be on display at the Fete.

31st August

The Women's Institute will be holding a party to celebrate the 100 year history of the WI which of course coincides with the beginning of WWI. It will be an all day event at the Recreation Hall when people will be asked to dress in suitable attire

Friday September 12th and Saturday 13th

We will be holding our version of The Good Ol'Days Variety Show in Earlswood Hall.

Hopefully community singing will be good and people will enter into the spirit by dressing up - even if it's just a hat and shawl for ladies and a waistcoat or similar for men.

Museum and Afternoon Tea (date to be finalised)

From the Welsh Archives we will have a display of pictures and text. We hope to have artefacts provided by local people which can be displayed. Also the book being compiled by the History Society will be on display.

Sunday 9th November Church -Remembrance Service at Shirenewton Church with the emphasis on WW1

If you have knowledge of local people who served or artefacts from WWI , would you please contact

Carole Jones 641791 elorac123@aol.com

Glynis MacDonald 641818 glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com

Further information will be provided nearer the events

Profits will go to Help the Heroes

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Our January meeting had a change of venue, we met at the Recreational Hall in the evening to give not only our members but anyone who is interested in our areas local history to come and check out our village archive, we usually meet here in the afternoon but this meeting was for those who are unable to attend this session. We are adding to our collection every year and our latest addition is a data base (on disc) of everyone who participated in both W.W. I and W.W. II in Monmouthshire, a Roll of Honour of those who died, injured and those who returned in both world wars. Of course we open our archive every month for anyone to visit who are interested in local history.

Dates for your diary:

Monday, 10^h March

Archive Meeting at the recreational Hall,
2.00pm – 5.00pm

Tuesday, 25th March

Meeting at the Huntsman Hotel, at 7.30 with a talk entitled '*Blakeney Hill Stone Mine, a Family Business*' given by David Priddis



JONATHAN CARTER has crazily signed up to run the Newport half Marathon on 2nd March and the 2014 LONDON MARATHON for ECHO, the Charity that supports the Cardiac unit in the Evelina Children's Hospital in London.

This is the unit where Harry, his son, had all three of his stages of open heart surgery. He is aiming to raise £2500 for this fantastic unit that treats children with complex heart problems from all over the UK.

To find out more about what he is doing and why, and donate if you wish, then please visit <http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/JonCarter68>

Don't forget to tick the box to reclaim Gift Aid on your donation if you're a UK tax payer. Virgin Money Giving will pass this on in full to charity, making your donation go even further.

Thanks for your support.

Jonathan Carter, Yew Tree House, Kilgwrrwg, NP16 6DA, 01291 650 472



MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL

Saturday April 5th, 7.00pm

G. F. HANDEL'S

Messiah

St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow

with

CCS ORCHESTRA (Leader: Paula Kempton)

Alison Wray (Soprano) Helen Bruce (Alto)

Gareth Treseder (Tenor) Stephen Hamnett (Bass)

Conductor: Graham Bull

Tickets (£10, to include programme) available from Chepstow Bookshop, also choir members (01291 623310, 620414, 650472, 627800) – students, u/18s free

Come & hear this wonderful work performed IN FULL by Chepstow Choral Society, with professional instrumentalists & soloists! Please note that the commencement of the concert will be 7.00pm. Help us to keep 4-part choral music alive in Chepstow & surrounding areas.....

*CCS is affiliated to Ty Cerdd & Making Music,
and is a Registered Charity (no. 112798).*

For further information about singing membership, please contact Marjorie Duerden (tel. 01291 623310). Log on to our website (www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk) for more!



**Poppy Rastall BSc (Hons), MSCh, SRCh, HCPC reg
Podiatrist / Chiropodist**

- General treatment – Nails, corns, callus
- Verruca treatment
- Sports Injury treatment and prevention
- In-growing toenails & toenail removal
- Custom Orthoses
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readers only !**

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Welsh Street, Chepstow, NP16 5LR**



**PAINTING AND DRAWING IN THE
GWENT WILDLIFE TRUST NATURE RESERVES 2014**

with artist **Jenny Joice**

Friday 11th April at Magor Marsh, Newport

Saturday 17th May at Silent Valley, Ebbw Vale

Saturday 14th June at Pentwyn Farm, Monmouth

A three day course which aims to provide an opportunity for inspiration, experience and development of skills in painting '*en plein air*' the lakes and waterways, the trees and plants, the grasses and wild flowers as well as the wealth of insects and butterflies around GWT'S beautiful nature reserves.

Should the weather be poor, arrangements may be made to work indoors from photographs and still-life.

Those with experience --- and none are equally welcome.

Please bring your own equipment and materials - - and packed lunch.

Cost £25 members, £30 non-members per day (20% discount for all 3 days)

Advanced booking essential

Please contact Gwent Wildlife Trust on 01600 740600

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING—NOTES

Monday 3rd February 2014

There were lots of members of the public attending this month's meeting as there were a few contentious issues.

Police Report

Thankfully there was not a lot of crime reported in the area.

10th Jan. Chain saws were heard up in the forest...

12th Jan. Some off-road bikes were reported up at Wentwood ...but by the time the police had got there – the bikers were nowhere to be seen.

18th Jan The traffic lights on the Usk Road were reported as being far too close to the bend. By the time you'd rounded the bend, you were seeing red lights.

20th Jan. At least two cars were caught out by the black ice but luckily there were no injuries

25th Jan. The high winds brought down some trees across the Shirenewton/Itton Road but some strong people moved them.

26th Jan Two suspicious looking characters were caught on CCTV having a wander around a barn. Nothing was taken. Except their pictures.

There were loose cows reported near some road works. Although a cow's gotta do what a cow's gotta do.

30th Jan 4 horses were also definitely 'loose' in Mynnyddbach but as this was Chinese New Year's Day and it was The Year of the Horse, the evidence they left behind them was felt to be auspicious rather than suspicious.

While the police were still at the meeting the cllrs took the opportunity to ask a few questions.' When will The Red Car parked tightly between two trees down in the woods on the way to Chepstow 'be removed' (It has been.) One cllr also asked how it managed to park quite so cleverly. He was told by helicopter.

The inhabitants of the area were also praised for supporting the TA in its hour of need after a wodge of dosh had been stolen just before Christmas. *One does what one can...*

What was the red tape for – stretched across the entrance to St Pierre Great Wood.? It was assumed that it was put up to stop people from going into the woods because of falling branches although there was no notice to that effect.

Planning Applications. NONE! Early home then!!! Sadly, No.

A Blue Plaque

Dorothy Brabham and David Thomas from the Shirenewton Local History Society announced that we are to have a plaque erected in the village in honour of Edward Joseph Lowe. He was a contemporary of Charles Darwin and was a Victorian Gentleman Scientist and one of the founders of the Meteorological Society. He lived in Shirenewton Hall and died in 1900. The blue plaque will be erected in late spring or early summer. To learn more about this remarkable man, pop along to the History Soc open afternoons up at the Rec. He was one of Shirenewton's finest.

The Neighbourly Dispute brou-ha ha continues. We heard a lot about the problems gushing out. Patience was becoming strained. It was suggested that The Highways Department should be involved. And moving on...

From The Agenda

A Grant for the Telephone Box. Still waiting. Please hold...

WW1 Commemorations

The Brownies will be holding a themed Coffee Morning in March, I think.

The WI are celebrating their 100 years in August.

A travelling History Exhibition has been booked. Details tba

An Old Time Music Hall is being arranged for 12th and 13th September up at Earlswood Hall. It will be a Good Old Days 'café-style entertainment.

Traffic Calming Measures. Well this was a bit like the neighbourly dispute inasmuch as Patience was Strained. But very much more so. Basically, it was felt that the Traffic Calming Measures are needed for the village particularly during the morning rush hour and the school run. Traffic goes through the village too fast and therefore Traffic Calming measures need to be employed. But anger was expressed that it is taking too long to sort out and members of the public and some SCC councillors were deeply unhappy about this and asked Graham Down why it was taking so long. For example why had it taken from Sept to Feb to arrange a visit to South Gloucester to see some good examples of traffic calming measures? It was agreed that the Traffic Calming Measures have to suit all the road users including farm vehicles, lorries, buses, cars, etc and therefore the right measures have to be employed but nevertheless great frustration was expressed over the delays. The heated discussions continued for quite some while. The meeting was told that photos would be taken of the said measures in

Continued on Page 22

Continued from page 21

Gloucester and circulated to members of the Calming Committee. I think the phrase, 'It was a robust and frank exchange of views' covers the mood of the meeting. Finally, at the end of the debate, the police, the members of the public and Cllr Carole Jones left the meeting.

The Chair then announced that Carole Jones had sent in her letter of resignation from the Shirenewton Community Council.

So what with that and the depleted numbers, the meeting carried on in a somewhat muted and sombre manner really.

The Rocking Horse. It needs a new head. Cllr Moles said he'll get one and stick it on.

Grants to local organisations. The question was asked (again) as to whether the way the council dispenses with this £300 pot of money is the sensible way of doing it. This is a perennial question. I'm sure it crops up every year.

As ever, the usual points of view were aired. And, as ever, it was agreed to hold the discussion over.

Pre and Post Meetings. The Chair proposed that he should hold both a pre-meeting and a post-meeting with the Clerk and Graham Down. But the councillors felt that this was not such a good idea as it was important that the council meetings should be seen to be both open and transparent.

Clerk's Report

The Poor Land Field? Still Not Registered. The solicitor to be reminded to Do Something before the end ofthe century.

Web Portal? Nearly ready

Overgrown Hedge? Still overgrown.

Small Grants Applications now in from small claimants for small projects(see above, yawn)

Update of Policies? I want to go home.

Issues pursued by Graham Down

Signs MCC have recognised that people may want to know where Earlswood is and that they will consider the possibility of improved signage.

Bins Breaking News. MCC say they are not going to empty the bin on the Village Green because it's not their bin. Well shock, horror. And also odd... because they have been emptying it for years.

So, after that appalling bit of news I had to go home and recuperate.

Next exciting instalment:- Monday 3rd March, 7.30 at The Rec

ALI BARBER AND THE 14 THIEVES'



It seems a long time ago now – well it was way back in January when the days were long and cold, rainy and windy... (so not like now) ... but nevertheless a big Thank you to everyone who was involved in this year's SODS panto 'Ali Barber and the 14 Thieves.' I looked at the programme and counted over 65 people who helped to make this such a fantastic local production. And as well as the old regulars we were delighted to have some new faces too. And, of course it's fantastic to have so many keen young actors wanting to tread the boards. One day, when they are rich and famous we'll be able to say 'You know, they owe it all to SODS'

Yes 'Ali Barber' was a great success and once again, I was told it was 'The Best Ever'. But if Kevin doesn't say that, he'd be in trouble. Nevertheless, the rehearsals were really good fun and I haven't laughed so much for ages but maybe that was just the hysteria. The red wine helped too.

As ever all the money donated for the programmes and the refreshments goes to charity. This year we raised £863 and so we were able to send £431.50 each to The Alzheimer's Society and to the St David's Foundation. (And I'd like to thank Marion McAdam for donating the Fairtrade Tea and Coffee)

On Tuesday 6th May, at around 6.00 ish we are going to have a big Earlswood Hall Big Basement Tidy Up. Yes it's fun, fun, fun all the way. All Sods, old or young would be welcomed.

Also the photos at the back of the Hall are a lovely record of past and present triumphs but we are short of photos and programmes of some of the pantos. So if you happen to have any old panto photos that you don't want, we'd love to montage them up. Just get in touch with Christine Stanley 641 616 chris@earlswoodmarketing.com or myself Glynis 641 818 or glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com

Once again, huge thanks to everyone who helped make Ali Barber such a fun show to be involved in. See you next year.
Glynis MacDonald

Advanced Warning! Earlswood Hall AGM will be held on Monday 28th April up at The Hall at 8.00 . Any volunteers? Please? Pretty please?

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GARDENING CORNER

As I sit and write this month's article the wind is howling outside and the rain continues to fall. Will it ever end we ask ourselves. Ironically the newspapers are already saying that this summer will be one of the hottest on record! Must be a slow news day I tell myself. The law of averages suggests that if we are flooded now, it is bound to be dry eventually – nature has a way of balancing things out at the end of the day, although think it struggles more and more as we stack the odds against it through our determined efforts to increase greenhouse gas emissions. I remind myself not to bother reading that particular paper again. My thoughts turn to the garden and consider what jobs I can do today – there are only so many weeds in the beds in the greenhouses and tunnels, and at the moment they number zero, unless there is one lurking in the corner somewhere. With the bad weather outside there is little to do apart from cleaning up and that assumes that you are able to stand up for longer than five seconds! I've had to change several wet and muddy trousers in recent weeks where I have fallen base over apex attempting to do something. At the moment, finishing the hedges and strimming blackberries are the only outside jobs I'm left to do, but these can wait until the next sunny day, otherwise I'll have no trousers left to wear.

So it's back to the greenhouse for me. The hot bench is on and the first seeds have been sown. As usual the first to go in are the broad beans and sweet pea seeds, but these were soon followed by salad crops such as lettuce and spring onions. I've also sown the tomatoes and peppers as these require a long growing season. Hopefully we won't have a prolonged cold spell once the rain stops, although I'm not holding my breath. Some of the first sowings have now grown enough to require potting on and this will be the first job this morning. The early calabrese and tomatoes are now a decent size and will need single pots in order that they are not checked in their growth. In their place I'll sow some more broad beans the first mangetout peas and a mix of flower seeds for growing out in the garden later in the spring. Hopefully time will permit me to clear up some of the 'out of flower beds, so I'll need some new plants to fill the holes! It is going to be some time before the soil outside is going to be dry enough to do anything. I know that conditions will improve and as experience has always shown, nature will catch up on any delays, but as always I'm impatient. So in order to keep things moving on, I've planted all the French shallots into individual pots which, when the soil warms and dries out a bit, will then be transplanted into the raised beds – hopefully having gained a few weeks. This will hopefully allow me to harvest at the best time of year and allow them time to dry in the warm summer sun. At least that's the plan! Last year we had a very good crop of shallots, both pickling and cooking. The former have almost all been pickled and the latter have almost all been cooked and eaten. Shallots slowly roasted with the Sunday lunch, or stewed slowly with braising steak are a real joy. In the small tunnel I have planted some winter lettuce, which are now established and starting to grow well. I've also planting the first broad beans inside as well. These are a dwarf variety known as

'The Sutton' and, provided I leave the tunnel doors open at the critical time, any early bees should soon find them and pollinate the flowers. Alongside the lettuce I have sown the first early carrot seed, which has germinated and are currently looking well. Alongside the beans I have planted the first early potatoes. I have just put the last of the main crop from last year into the kitchen bucket. These will last for probably another six weeks (two of us don't eat many) but the earlies won't be available for probably eight weeks at the earliest so it looks like we may get a spud gap this year, which will be the first for a couple of years so we can't really complain. This is probably because I've made more fish pies this year as we try to eat up some of the trout from the freezer. The new season isn't far away so need to get on and thin the fish supply down.

The bad weather has brought about the demise of two of our apple trees in the orchard. They had been dying for a couple of years and we hadn't picked any apples for several years. The wind has blown these flat so the chainsaw will have to come out and log everything up for burning on the home fires. I had ordered three new apple trees, and a lull in the weather saw these planted elsewhere in the orchard. Unfortunately the site of the other trees is getting shaded out by a high hedge, so the new planting site is higher up the slope and in- hopefully – a bit more sun. Some time ago I planted a number of trees around our field. One of these has also broken in the wind, so I'll have to take this down as well in order to make it safe. Whilst I'm at it I'll get the little saw out and prune some of the fruit trees. There is still time to complete this task. We might lose a few of the fruits, but what remain will hopefully be larger. Talking of fruit trees the apricots and nectarines are starting to bud up in the big tunnel. Hopefully the weather will stay milder than last year and some early bumblebees will be about to pollinate the flowers, resulting in bumper crops. The apricots are the most difficult to get to set and are by far the nicest to eat even when they have been frozen. Ironically I need to make sure they are well watered so that the buds swell and the flowers fully open.

I've still got a lot of dried beans to pod and to save the seeds for cooking, and the last of the shallots to pickle. If the rain continues to fall I know what I'll be doing later today!

I did look at the bee hives the other day as the sun was shining a little but it was quite cold. There was no sign of any bees flying at all, and I would have expected to have seen some. I didn't though, so hopefully that isn't an ominous sign. The two hives of bees cost a lot of money to purchase. I'm not sure whether I can start all over again if I have lost these as well. I'm currently keeping the fingers crossed that they are just tucked up right in the top of the hive keeping themselves warm.

Happy gardening until next month. Steve and Felicity Hunt.

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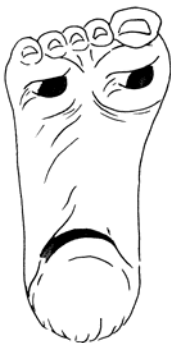
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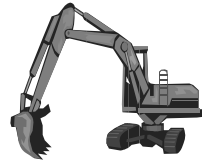
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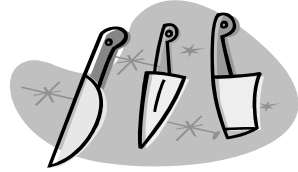
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NERYS'S NATTY NOSH



The secret of Chinese cooking lies, in fact, in the preparation. Food is sliced, shredded or cut according to certain predetermined rules. For really successful short-cooking dishes, all the ingredients should be cut or chopped to as near the same size as possible to ensure that they are all cooked to the same degree. For very tender, almost velvety meat, the meat should be sliced along the grain; for slightly crunchier texture it should be sliced against the grain. Slightly frozen meat is often easier to slice into very thin strips in this way rather than meat at room temperature. Vegetables, particularly, are often sliced on the diagonal both for aesthetic appeal and for regularity of cooking. Stir-frying is an umbrella term used to describe two techniques for cooking food in a wok while stirring it- *chao* and *bao*. The *chao* technique is similar to the western technique of sautéing. In the *bao* technique the wok is heated to a dull red glow. With the wok hot, the oil, seasoning and meat are added in a rapid succession with no pause in between. The food is continually tossed, stopping for several seconds only to add other ingredients such as various seasoning, stock or vegetables. The two techniques differ in their speed of execution, the amount of heat used and the amount of tossing done to cook the food in the wok.

Lamb Stir Fry - Easy - Serves 2

Ingredients.

175g lamb leg or fillet (fat removed and chopped)
2.5 cm piece fresh root ginger- peeled and chopped
2 garlic cloves
1 red pepper deseeded and thinly sliced
2 spring onions, diagonally sliced
225g mushrooms, thinly sliced
1 tbsp. dark soy sauce
1 tbsp. hoisin sauce
Coriander to garnish
Noodles for 2
Spray oil.

Method

- 1 Cook the noodles.
- 2 Spray a wok with oil and heat. Stir-fry the lamb for 2 minutes.
- 3 Add all the vegetables and fry for 2-3 minutes, stir in the sauces and drained noodles.
- 4 Serve and garnish with the coriander. **Enjoy!**

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Squash and Sweet Potato Soup Serves 6-8

Ingredients.

- 1 tbsp. Olive oil
- 1 large onions finely chopped
- 1-2 red chillies, deseeded and chopped
- 2 tsp coriander seeds, crushed
- 1 butternut squash, about 750g, deseeded and roughly chopped
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 tomatoes, skinned and diced
- 1.7 litres (3pints) hot vegetable stock
- Salt and pepper

Method

- 1 Heat the olive oil in a large pan, add the onions and fry gently for about 10 minutes until soft. Add the chillies and coriander seeds to the pan and cook for 1-2 minutes.
- 2 Add the squash, potatoes and tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes. Add the hot stock, then cover the pan and bring to the boil. Simmer gently for 15 minutes or until the vegetables are soft. Cool slightly.
- 3 Whiz the soup in batches in the blender or food processor until smooth. Adjust the seasoning and reheat to serve.

Tips

You can add some diced bacon and fry with the onions. This will make the soup saltier so take care when adding the stock.

Serve with crusty brown bread or savoury cheese straws.

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DIARY DATES

Mar	Event	Location
3	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
6	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
10	Shirenewton Local History Soty	Recreation Hall
13	Shirenewton WI Birthday Party	Recreation Hall
14	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation Hall
19	Village Supper	Tredegar Arms
25	Shirenewton Local History Soty	Huntsman Hotel
26	Community Lunch	Tredegar Arms
29	Brownies Mothers Day Coffee Morning	
31	Recreation hall AGM	Recreation Hall
April	Event	Location
4	Chepstow Male Voice Choir RNLI Concert	Shirenewton Church
5	Messiah Chepstow Choral Socty	St Mary's Priory Church Chepstow
10	Shirenewton WI	Recreation Hall
12 to 14	Chepstow Walking Weekend	
23	Community Lunch	Tredegar Arms

	Saint Thomas a Beckett Shirenewton	Sunday Services	Start 10.00 a.m. Unless stated otherwise
Date	Service	Readers	Sides-persons
2 nd March	Sunday Before of Lent	Bob Grattan James Lenev	Claire Lewis Bob Grattan
9 th March	First Sunday of Lent	Jane Smith-Haddon Diane Marlow	Jane Smith- Haddon Diane Marlow
16 th March	Second Sunday of Lent	Bill Clark Janet Horton	Bill Clark Janet Horton
23 rd March	Third Sunday of Lent	Mark Broughton Margaret Lock	Mark Broughton Margaret Lock
30 th March	GROUP SERVICE AT MATHERN CHURCH MOTHERING SUNDAY		

Earlswood
Chepstow



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EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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The views expressed are those of the contributor.

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