

# Shirenewton

## Parish Magazine

### November 2014



*The Old Meeting House 1730*

Price: 50p

## **Dear People of the Parish (or should it be 'Ministry Area'?),**

The above is an example of how we live in a changing world. Time-honoured institutions tend to be reshaped (which can be sad and yet inevitable) whilst new ideas tend to come to the fore (which can be challenging and sometimes contain a lot of politically correct drivel). The issue, I guess, lies in the ability to discern what is genuine progress and what can be described as throwing out the baby with the bath-water.

It has to be admitted that Christianity is a movement which must speak with authority to present and future generations and yet must value long established traditions as well. Therein lies the issue.

I have droned on enough in previous editions of this magazine about the implementation of Ministry Areas and how it will affect us in this group. Let us leave this matter for a moment and consider other changes.

Harvest Thanksgiving for one. I know that by the time you read this (I live in hope) this season will already be fading in the memory. However, it has become an annual and established part of church observance and it is interesting to see how our centres of worship marked the occasion.

Mathern Church were grateful to see a local farming family present as this served to remind the regular congregation of the time-honoured link between us and those charged with cultivating the essentials of life which we tend to take for-granted. At the time of reading all generously donated produce should have been auctioned in the local pub and the resulting finances gone to benefit the Christian outreach of the local church.

Mounton Church saw a slight decrease in seasonal attenders and donated their produce to a local food-bank.

St. Pierre Church witnessed their church decorated superbly in the traditional fashion and their offerings will be included with those of Mathern at the aforementioned auction.

Shirenewton Church celebrated the occasion by hosting an excellent community meal following the service. The auctioning of their harvest gifts and the donation of ticket revenue financially supported the work of St. David's Foundation.

Few of us think about sourcing these items for daily use. All it takes is a quick trip to Tesco's, Waitrose – and now there is the option of Asda in Caldicot. No, the previous sentence is not meant to be a cheap attempt at advertising but a reminder to all of us that we need, from time to time at least, to reflect on the goodness of God's design and the labours of many for making available to us things of profound importance.

There have been significant changes in the application and practice of agriculture over past years and the way we mark the harvest season – if at all – has also altered dramatically.

The changing nature of Christian Ministry is another factor. We live – as already indicated – in a changing world and ministry is not unaffected by such circumstances. Parish (if we can still use that word) ministry falls into this category and the changes envisaged by the Church in Wales and the Diocese of Monmouth can be evidenced when attending local 'Focus Groups' (I, personally, cringe at the introduction of such jargon, and suspect that the intention is to have us 'all aboard the bus' – see, even I am becoming infected now!).

What all this means, is that 'Parish' structure will change and the situation with which we are familiar will, in part, alter.

For example, our group has increased in size and we can no longer assume that 'normal service' will continue as usual. We have been most fortunate to be in receipt of the ministry for a number of years of Revd. Nansi Davies and, following a period of incapacity, it is good to have her back among us. We should bear in mind, however, that Nansi gives of herself freely in this respect and also has weighty domestic considerations to consider.

We presently have four services of 'Midnight Mass' – one in each church - and there is an assumption among some that a priest will always be there to officiate. Most of my colleagues are, to put it mildly, stunned by this and assert that there should be just the one combined service for the group. Please do not misinterpret what I am saying; it is not my intention to travel down this path. What it does mean, in light of church and parochial reorganization, is that if the present pattern is to continue such services will have to be conducted by authorized Lay Ministers instead on a rotation basis to ensure a degree of fairness.

With every good wish and blessing,

Julian E LI White (Rector & Vicar)



## Meet and Share 14th November 7:30 pm Church Rooms

No charge, No collection, No raffle

A chance to meet people from the village  
Talk by Bill Clark will talk on Remembrance.

Bring along a bottle of wine, or beer and a plate of food.  
Place on the table to share

### **200 CLUB WINNERS**

157	Nerys Wilson	£40
3	Barry Remnant	£30
167	David Ward	£20
237	Amanda Jones	£10

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

Remembrance Service  
Sunday 9th November  
At 10.30 am

### **SHEILA HODGSON**

The family of Sheila Hodgson sadly wish to announce the death of Sheila on Tues, 30th September 2014. Sheila lived in Shirenewton for 40 years before moving to live with her family, earlier this year, in Scotland. Beloved wife of the late Griff, much loved Mum, Nana and friend she will be sorely missed by all who knew her.

Steve, Mike and Viv appreciate the many kind cards and messages received from Sheila's friends and neighbours

Viv Hodgson

# **ST THOMAS Á BECKET CHURCH HARVEST LUNCH AT EARLSWOOD HALL SUNDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2014**

After the Harvest service at St Thomas á Becket Church in Shirenewton over eighty parishioners sat down to a magnificent lunch in Earlswood Hall. The Reverend Julian White opened the proceedings by thanking Sally Saysell and I for organising this lunch and thanked the congregation for their generous donations of Harvest goods and finished by saying Grace. The hungry diners then queued up to help themselves to a dazzling display of food. I would like to say a huge thank you to so many of you who provided such sumptuous salads, quirky quiches, delectable desserts, choice cheeses and home-baked bread. No one, not even the team of the Great British Bake-off, could produce such a lavish lunch. Mark Tomlinson ably ran the busy bar which as unusual was well supported.

Once the food had been served David Cornwell enthusiastically took over the auctioning of the Harvest goodies – not only an amazing array of fruit and vegetables including giant marrows and fancy gourds but also jams, chutneys, marmalades and of course welsh cakes and leeks. The local butcher Andy Jones in Tutshill who provided the succulent beef and ham for the lunch also donated an impressive wheat sheaf loaf of bread to be auctioned. Glynis successfully bid for this together with a giant cabbage. I also heard that the Editor of the Parish magazine paid an extortionate amount for a 14 year old bottle of Arran malt whisky but it was all for such good causes! Thank you to Winnie Jones and Jane Summerhouse-Smith. They were rushed off their feet selling tickets for the generously donated raffle.

After appealing for help, a bevy of beautiful girls volunteered to wash up and a crew of able bodied men tidied up the hall. After having been so well fed, this band of happy people went home clutching their bags of harvest goodies and raffle prizes.

It is just amazing how so many people devote their precious time and skills to make this lunch such a happy and successful occasion. Altogether we raised over eight hundred pounds which will be donated between St Davids Hospice Care and our church.

Barbara Walters  
01291 641338

**ps** After clearing the hall we found a wide silver bracelet on the kitchen windowsill. If it is yours please contact me on the number above.

## SHIRENEWTON BRING AND SHARE SUPPER 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER

Eating together, the newspapers often bemoan, is a thing of the past and the reason why many values are in decline. Well, those gloomy commentators would do well to come to a Shirenewton Bring and Share Supper! Eating together is alive and well in here; providing an opportunity for a convivial evening, a chance to meet old friends and make new ones, and to confirm the vibrant sense of community in the village.

As relative new comers to the village, we hadn't been to a supper before, but our experiences at other community events reassured us that we wouldn't feel left out. Making our way through the dark churchyard, the Church Rooms spilled out welcoming warmth, light and laughter. Inside the door, wine was available to buy for those who hadn't brought some along. The tables were set out and many groups were already forming. We were soon welcomed in and enjoying chatting to our acquaintances, but as the evening progressed, we were also making more new friends as tables mixed.

Everyone had brought along some food (the event is free), and there was a terrific spread. There was: coldhamcoldsalmonchickensaladsmokedsalmon-quichepatesausagespizzasandwichessaladfreshbread (as Ratty might have said) and much, much more, most of it homemade and utterly delicious. This was followed up by an array of cakes, cheese and meringues. Truly a feast!

We were entertained through the evening by Terry Walters, who gave a dramatic talk on the Severn Railway Bridge Disaster of October 25th 1960. Since it's opening in 1879 the railway between Berkeley, Sharpness and Lydney, with its four trains a day, had created a community which otherwise could not exist, divided as it was by the great river. The river itself, was used as a means to transport bulk goods, including oil and petrol, from the deep sea port of Avonmouth for distribution via the docks at Sharpness, amongst other small ports further inland.

The entrance to Sharpness docks was only accessible for a two hour window at high tide and because of the strength of the tidal current the only way for the barges to enter was to swing around, allow the tide to carry them past the entrance and then slowly sail in against the current; a tricky manoeuvre, even in perfect conditions. Their only way of navigating in poor visibility was to judge the relative bearing of the fog horn on the Sharpness Pier.

On that fateful night, in thick fog, the leading barges in the convoy overshot the entrance to the docks and became disorientated in the fog. After waiting, out of the main current, in the hope that the fog would clear, both were forced to try another approach. Although the two barges, the Arkendale and the Wastdale H, sighted each other, they were unable to avoid colliding and the fast flowing current immediately pinned the two barges together despite all their Captains' efforts to part them. In no time, they were swept upstream to collide with one of

the bridge piers, when the Wastdale H, which was carrying petrol exploded, bringing down the bridge pier and two of the 21 cast iron spans, fortunately just after a train had cleared the bridge. Arkendale's hull was also breached and the tide swept burning fuel from both tankers upstream. A considerable length of the railway lines themselves, which were not fixed to the bridge deck, now collapsed across the two barges.

Remarkably, three men from the stricken tankers survived the explosion and their subsequent immersion in the dark, cold, oily, burning river. Local men braved the fog and the current in rowing boats to try to rescue survivors, but sadly the rest of the crews perished.

The railway, never a money making concern, was doomed by the disaster and the bridge was scrapped in 1967, with even the stone piers set in the river removed so that there should be no hindrance to navigation. The remains of the two tankers came to rest on a sandbank where they are still visible today, a sad memorial to the disaster and the community it separated.

We look forward eagerly to the next Bring and Share on November 14th when Bill Clark will talk on Remembrance.



*Severn Railway Bridge before the disaster*

## **BECOMING A LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTER A PERSONAL JOURNEY**

As I arrived at church one sunny summer Sunday morning, I was rather surprised to be approached and asked if I would be interested in becoming an LEM. Not really knowing what one was or did, I promised to think about it and pushed the idea to the back of my mind, after all, I'm not an evangelist – I usually keep my head down when religion is being discussed.

But the idea seemed to have taken root and just wouldn't be ignored. Clearly people saw something in me that I didn't see myself, maybe this was "my call", my personal challenge to stand up and be counted; it still seemed very out of character to put my head above the parapet and agree. I made a few enquiries and decided that it didn't sound too onerous. In the end, still hardly decided, I rushed off a quick reply to say I'd have a go before heading off on holiday, still concerned that other longer standing members of our congregation might feel that I was being a pushy incomer; I needn't have worried, the response from the rest of the PCC was unanimous and whole-hearted support – for which I am very grateful.

An LEM, in case you, like me, had no idea, can support the clergy in distribution of the consecrated elements at the Eucharist, but can also take it to those who cannot come to church, because they are sick or housebound and can even, in exceptional circumstances, officiate at a Holy Communion by Extension, if no priest is available, distributing pre-consecrated elements in a shortened service. DBS check completed successfully, I awaited Training which took place over two Saturdays in October, with candidates attending from all over the diocese. The first day was a discussion of the theology of the Eucharist. We talked about four aspects of Eucharist: being, story, meaning and presence. It was a fascinating, moving and deeply inspiring experience, to be challenged to read, to discuss and express our own views of this mystery. The second day focussed on the more practical aspects of the ministry: when to visit, what to do and just as importantly what not to do. We were equipped with a daunting manual and orders of service. Although this day was enjoyable too, it was, for me, intimidating to realise what I had taken on, but it was clear many of us felt quite nervous and we were able to support each other.

I now await my license from the Bishop and look forward to serving the parish and taking the opportunities this offers to witness for the Church and justify everyone's faith in me!

Gillian



## **NEWS FROM ST PETERS, NEWCHURCH**

During June the Best Kept Village Competition was judged, with Newchurch entered in the Under 200 inhabitants' category. The churchyard won first prize for the best kept churchyard! The PCC are very grateful to those neighbours



who provided planters for the gate and mowed the approach to the church during June. It looked extremely smart and obviously paid off, thank you all.

Three members of St Peters congregation are among six candidates due to be confirmed by the Bishop of Monmouth at Penhow Church on Sunday 19th October. Our prayers are with them all.

### **Forthcoming Events at St Peters, Newchurch, November and December 2014**

#### **Autumn Fayre Saturday 1st November, Earlswood and Newchurch West Community Hall**

Crafts, confectionery, Xmas decorations and presents will be on sale from 11 until 4 pm.

Light refreshments will be served throughout the day, so come and look, buy and then rest your feet and have a drink and some home baked goodies!

#### **PLUS!!!! THE BEST RAFFLE!!!!**

With a first prize of £100 in cash, garden vouchers, wine cases, chocolates, a Christmas cake and many more items, there something for everyone!

#### **Carol Service Sunday, 21st December 2.30pm at the church**

St Peters Carol Service heralds the start of Christmas week, and is usually that little bit different. There are rumours that the service this year will be even better than last year, when a real donkey was persuaded to take part. Come and start your Christmas with a memorable service, followed by mince pies and a drink.

## SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

[www.shirenewtonchurch.com](http://www.shirenewtonchurch.com)

So the big news in the last couple of months has been the Shellshock vulnerability (aka the Bash Bug) which, needless to say, the mainstream press has generally wrongly reported as a virus. Technically it's a bug which leaves open a method by which various nefarious people can attack and gain control of machines (i.e. it is a vulnerability). It's a pretty major vulnerability because, if successfully exploited, an attacker can control the compromised machine and, with control, comes access to everything.

The 'good' news is that the vulnerability only affect Linux and Macs. The better news for Mac users is that it does not appear that the standard Mac operating system, if used in the standard way, is vulnerable. So, this means for standard home PC users (whether Windows or Mac) there is nothing for you to do. If you are running Linux on your home PC you almost certainly know more than me so you'll know what to do.

So why is everyone so upset? The answer is that a lot of the machines which run the internet run Linux and are therefore vulnerable. It is precisely these machines which the aforementioned nefarious people wish to attack and gain control of. They then have access to \*unencrypted\* data passing through these machines. What does this mean to you? Well it's the same old security stuff which everyone talks about. Never place confidential information (i.e. credit cards numbers, passwords, etc.) in ordinary emails or any other unencrypted system. Things like online banking, Facebook and many other services are automatically encrypted (using SSL – look for the padlock symbol in your web browser) as is Skype, so even if a nefarious person compromised a machine through which this traffic passes they can't get access to the information transmitted including your passwords, etc. as it is encrypted. So, it's the same old rule: use your common sense and keep your private data private.

So, back to the church website. The good news here is that it still continues to attract traffic. Google tells me that, as of the end of September, we have had 2,425 sessions (an average of 9 sessions per day in 2014) with just under 6,000 page views (an average of 22 pages per day) from 1,923 unique users (an average of 7+ people per day). The UK accounts for 67.26% of hits, the USA for 12.6% and then, for some reason, Brazil comes in third with 9.57% of the hits. It's then a large drop fourth which is Italy with 0.82%. Others making up the top ten, in order, are: Thailand, Argentina, Portugal, Spain, Russia & Columbia. Maybe it was the local NATO summit which brought in the traffic – who knows?

For those interested in such stuff, access by Chrome leads the way accounting for 41.9% of traffic, closely followed by Safari with 32.45% of traffic. Internet Explorer languishes in 3rd with a mere 15.46% of traffic. Firefox in 4th with 6.56%. It's interesting (for me anyway) that, according to StatCounter (<http://gs.statcounter.com/>), the Chrome usage matches global trends (43.71% of all internet traffic in the last 12 months) but the others don't tally. StatCounter has Internet Explorer 2nd on 23.62% of all internet traffic in the last 12 months, followed by Firefox (18.41%) and Safari (9.58%). Who know why get more Safari hits than we would expect based on standard internet traffic – perhaps there are lots of Mac users in the village.

Anyway, whatever your browser of choice, please keep shopping via the shopping portal: [www.shirenewtonshop.com](http://www.shirenewtonshop.com)

Safe Browsing David Cornwell

## **SHIRENEWTON, MYNYDDBACH AND EARLSWOOD COMMUNITY SOCIAL EVENT NOTIFICATION**

To be notified of community centered social events and other such community activity via email. To register please send an email to:  
[Shirenewton.events@gmail.com](mailto:Shirenewton.events@gmail.com)

If you send an email to [Shirenewton.events@gmail.com](mailto:Shirenewton.events@gmail.com) we will add you to the mailing list and you will receive notification by email of appropriate events. To unsubscribe please send an email to the same address indicating you want to be removed.

If you want your event publicised please contact me on [Shirenewton@outlook.com](mailto:Shirenewton@outlook.com) with details of the event and I'll send it out if it is appropriate and meets the criteria of being a community centered social event.

As a general guide, events which will not be considered community centered social events include things like an agm and other such society or regular meetings (it is assumed you have a membership list for this type of thing). Things which will be considered community centered social events are things like quiz nights, coffee mornings/afternoons, open days (which do not require membership), and other such events open to the entire community where you can meet other like-minded people living in the village or be advised of what is happening in the community. So, if there are public meetings over things like the recent solar panel planning application, I will consider it a valid community notification opportunity!

David Cornwell (contactable via numerous email addresses!)

# SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## Planning applications considered at the October meeting

### 1. DC/2014/00718 **Land adjacent to Tre Newydd, Ditch Hill Lane, Shirenewton**

Proposed construction of detached residential dwelling.

**Recommendation: Refusal**, with the following observations:

- Council noted that this was a renewal of a 2010 planning application, that the proposed house would be approximately double the size of the original which was 125 sq m, the proposal now being around 250 sq m.
- The house is too large for the site, cramped closely to the host house and inappropriately close to the road. It would be more acceptable if the whole property was moved back 5 metres on the site.
- The area of parking has been significantly reduced and with a 5 bedroomed house it is likely that parking/visitor parking will take place on the already congested road.
- The proposed rendered finish is not in keeping with neighbouring properties and the finish does not include stonework.
- Council recommends that a report from Welsh Water is sought on the suitability of the current sewerage/drainage system.

### 2. DC/2014/01092 **Vyne Court, Shirenewton**

Erection of a single storey timber framed garden room replacing existing garden room. **Recommendation: Approval**

### 3. DC/2014/01111 **Dyer's House, Itton**

Installation of Air Source Heat Pumps at rear of property.

**Recommendation: Approval**

### 4. DC/2014/00939 **Rhewl Farm, Shirenewton.**

Provision of photovoltaic solar park and ancillary infrastructure.

**Recommendation:** (submitted to Mon CC on 20.9.14) **Refusal**, with the following observations:

- The solar panel farm is an intrusion into open, unspoiled countryside (against Policy EP1),
- The site is adjacent to St Pierre Great Wood, it is visible from several locations, so increasing the detrimental visual impact (against Policy DES 1),
- The size of the farm is bigger than expected at 40+ acres and 42,000 panels,
- Access via the Crick Road is for construction only and future access will be off Trelenney Lane, we suggest that Highways report on the suitability of this lane for increased/heavy traffic use,
- Recommendation that, if approved, the land remains classed as agricultural throughout the duration of the solar farm and is not classed as a brownfield site,
- The company making the application makes assurances that all equipment will be removed and the ground restored to its original condition after the lifespan of the project. If the company no longer exists, or has sold the enterprise on, could the County Council make planning consent (if given) conditional on a bond being paid (either outright or in instalments) to cover the cost of removal of all equipment and restoration of the ground?

## **Extracts from the minutes**

**Best Kept Village Competition 2014** - Shirenewton won the following categories - Best Kept Village, Best Kept War Memorial and Best Kept Village Hall. Council heartily congratulated all involved. Clerk to cost signage for entrances to village.

**Telephone kiosk** - Refurbished kiosk returned to site on 6.9.14 (glass panels still need to be inserted but contractor awaiting delivery of beading). Meeting to be arranged between SCC Chair, Clerk and owner to confirm and sign lease. Council accepted a quote from A-ply for the provision of an internal notice board and shelving.

**Update on traffic problems on the B4235** - County Councillor Down explained that the responsibility for speed restrictions are not in the remit of the Community Council, but lie with Highways and excessive noise/speed control with the police, although the Community Council does feed back the concerns of residents to these authorities.

C Cllr Down further advised that he has a meeting with Highways on 9.10.14 when he will raise these issues, along with progress on the feedback from the public meeting held in July 2014. Wpc Parker explained that new initiatives should be in place by next spring. Clerk to contact Highways and Wpc L Thorpe for updates on these issues.

**Good Old Days Show** at Earlswood Hall - Congratulations were given to all involved with the Show and all agreed that it was an excellent evening.

**Mynyddbach notice board** - the board has not withstood external use/weather and started to fall apart. It was returned to Usk Prison on 16.9.14 by Cllr B Moore for examination and repair/weatherproofing.

**Pruning of cherry tree at Mynyddbach village green** - permission given on 16.9.14 to Western Power Distribution to prune a tree that was causing the power supply to short out in Mynyddbach.

**Reminder of Remembrance Sunday on 9 November 2014.**

**Dates of next meetings:** Monday 3 November and Monday 1 December at 7.30 pm at Shirenewton Recreation Hall.

**Mobile Police Station visits during November:**

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November, 9.30 - 10.30 am, Tredegar Arms Car Park

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November, 9.30 - 11 am, Great Barnets Wood Car Park

**Find full 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: [Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com](mailto:Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com)

## **FAIRTRADE NEWS**



Many high-street retailers now stock fairly traded goods. Traidcraft is well known for promoting and selling fairly traded goods but one of its most important roles is instituting projects that enable producers to access the benefits of fairtrade. Before Traidcraft can launch the products that support hundreds of thousands of poor producers, it's vital that wide-ranging research is carried out. The Catalyst Programme exists to fund this initial research stage. The information is used to guide project planning and then it is presented to large grant-makers (like the UK government, or the European Union, or the Lottery ) to secure wider funding. In 2012 Traidcraft invested £6,000 to research drought-prone areas of Kenya and to see how small farmers could be helped to cope. The information, sent to the Big Lottery released almost half a million pounds to carry out the proposed work which means that almost 30,000 people will be able to get organized and acquire new skills to help combat the effects of climate change. This year Traidcraft has worked on 43 projects in 20 countries which helped over 532,000 beneficiaries.

Christmas is coming and I know we've got to buy stuff to keep this capitalist world turning - but why not try a bit of fairly traded stuff as well!  
Have a look at the Traidcraft website or e-mail me for a catalogue or info.  
Marion McAdam 641316 msm316@gmail.com

## **WANTED HELP WITH GARDENING**

Would possibly suit a retiree who is interested in "pottering" to keep paths, borders and shrubs tidy, also maybe a little light digging

Perhaps a couple of hours occasionally to suit with other work commitments

Phone us for a chat  
Contact: David or Lynne Prosser 01291 641666

## **PROPERTY FOUND:**

A ring was found in the Recreation Ground children's play area.  
Contact Roger Hamer 01291 641342

On clearing the Earlswood Hall after the Harvest Lunch a wide silver bracelet was found on the kitchen windowsill.  
Contact Barbara Walters 01291 641338

## SHIRENEWTON WI OCTOBER 2014

October, and definitely the 'Fall' judging by the amount of leaves covering everything. The temperature isn't doing to bad even with the wet and windy weather.

We were sad to hear that Sheila Hodgson, a long time member, has died. Earlier this year she had moved to Scotland to be with family.



Our speaker for the evening was Helen Beverage, otherwise known as the 'Fudge Fairy'. Helen has been the Fudge Fairy since 2010 and now has a shop in Caldicot selling her fudge and other traditional sweets. She started out making fudge for her family, and having come up with a recipe that they thought was wonderful was persuaded to turn it into a business. Helens first shop was the Bon-Bon at the bottom of Vinegar Hill Undy, which opened in November 2011. There was not a lot of parking available there so when a shop in Caldicot came up Helen took it. Helen's fudge is scrumptious and comes in lots of flavours and some seasonal specials. When the G8 summit came to Newport, Helen was asked to make fudge for the welcome packs, they also wanted her to do a pop up stall as part of the 'Taste of Wales' for the world media attending. David Cameron had a reception for all the 'Taste of Wales' suppliers at which he talked to everyone about their products and business. They were all shown round the venue and had a photo call. Helen said it was very strange having a police escort whilst on site.

Lots of people enjoyed Helen's fudge including President Obama. One of the problems of producing a very natural product without preservatives is that the shelf life is not very long, for the fudge it is about 6 weeks. This means that Helen can't make large stocks ready for when they are needed. Helen is hoping it is possible to increase the shelf life without adding anything else, possibly by altering the cooking or the packaging. So at present fudge for Christmas can't be made before the end of November, that's a lot of work with everything else for Christmas and family. Helen makes up special packages of fudge and sweets for all sorts of celebrations especially weddings. We all enjoyed a taste of Helens fudge, some members bought packets to take home, we were sorry that it was too early to buy for Christmas but if we go to the shop there will be lots more to choose from.

Everyone enjoyed the talk and the fudge. We know it's not something to be eating all the time but it is delicious.

On November the 13<sup>th</sup> our speaker will be Bill Clark with a talk about his experiences arranging the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

On December the 11<sup>th</sup> we are having our Christmas meal and get together at the Huntsman.



**CHRISTMAS FOOD &  
DRINKS FAYRE**

**28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2014  
AT  
SHIRENEWTON RECREATION  
HALL  
DOORS OPEN AT 7PM**

**ADMISSION CHARGE £2  
FREE GLASS OF MULLED WINE  
LOCAL PRODUCE**

Proceeds to Shirenewton Recreation Hall



## STARGAZING



The seven stars of the Plough lie to the North in the evening. It is also known as the Great Bear or Ursa Major. Ursa Major was one of the constellations listed by the 2nd century AD Egyptian astronomer Ptolemy. The constellation of Ursa Major has been seen as a bear by many civilizations. In Greek mythology, Zeus, the king of the gods, falls in love with a young woman named Callisto. Hera, Zeus' jealous wife, transforms the beautiful Callisto into a bear and places her in the heavens.

The cross of Cygnus is high in the western sky. The "W" of Cassiopeia lies nearly overhead in the Milky Way.

The Milky Way is a faint band of light visible on clear dark nights. It is the combined light of an enormous number of stars that make up our galaxy. There are approximately 200 billion galaxies in the Universe. Each galaxy contains very approximately 200 billion stars. So that's very approximately a mind-boggling 40,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 stars in the Universe.

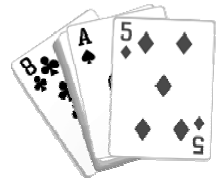
The planet Mars, which is slightly orange in colour, can be seen in the evening to the south-west, close to the horizon and just after sunset.

In the early morning the very bright planet Jupiter is high in the south. On the 14<sup>th</sup> it is joined by the Moon at last quarter (half light and half dark).

Higgs Boson was late for church – the service was already under way. He ran into the church and shouted you can't have Mass without me!

## WHIST DRIVES

Our numbers went up a little in October as our holidaymakers returned and we had four tables. 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. Our next Drive is on the 6<sup>th</sup> November and we will have our Christmas Special on the 4<sup>th</sup> December but we are going to have a rest during the rest of the Winter months. We will resume on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and continue on the first Thursday of each month until the end of the year – we would love to see some more new faces.



Auriol Horton. 01291 641844

## SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The subject for our September meeting was 'W.W.I', given by Bill Clark. He recalled the historical events leading up to the war and gave us an insight into the experiences of those brave soldiers. The second part of his talk was giving an account of the organisation leading up to the Remembrance Ceremony for the fallen at the National Cenotaph at Whitehall in which he was in charge of the organisation and preparation of this special day. We can only imagine the amount of work involved and how many people he had to organise.

To continue the W.W.I. theme there will be a daylong conference at the Drill Hall, Chepstow on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November starting at 10.00 am – 5.00 pm. Please see further information below.

We are looking forward to the talk given by Roger James on *'Mr Rolls & Mr Royce'*

### **Dates for your Diary:**

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Monday, 10 <sup>th</sup> November  | Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall,<br>Shirenewton 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm   |
| Tuesday, 25 <sup>th</sup> November | Meeting at the Huntsman Hotel 7.30 pm<br>Talk entitled <i>'Alfred Russell Wallace'</i> given by<br>Prof. David Collard |
| Monday, 8 <sup>th</sup> December   | Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall,<br>Shirenewton 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm   |
| Tuesday, 16 <sup>th</sup> December | Visit, Tour & Talk at St Pierre Church, with<br>mulled wine and mince Pies.  |

As usual we will be walking up to Grey Hill on the 27<sup>th</sup> December to greet the sunrise on the Winter solstice and afterward we will be breakfasting at the Woodland Tavern. Meeting at the Woodland Tavern car park at 7.30 am.

**GWENT IN THE GREAT WAR  
DAY SCHOOL**

**THE DRILL HALL CHEPSTOW  
15<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2014 10.00-5.00**

10.00: Registration and reception

10.20: Chair's opening remarks

10.30     **The Monmouthshires: a territorial regiment at war.**

-11.30   **Speaker: Dr John Dixon** (author of three books on the  
Monmouthshire Regiment).

11.30     **The First World War and Conscientious Objectors in Gwent.**

-12.30   **Speaker: Wayne David M.P.** (author of 'Remaining True: a  
Biography of Ness Edwards').

12.30     **Kit and equipment from the Great War** demonstrated by

1.00     **Steve Trew.**

1.00     **Lunch.** (There are plenty of eating places in Chepstow)

-2.30     (Coffee will be served during the lunch break.)

2.30     **Remembrance.**

-3.30     **Speaker: Dr Angela Gaffney** (author of 'Aftermath:  
Remembering the Great War in Wales').

3.30     **Walking tour of Great War sites in Chepstow** led by

-5.00     members of the **Chepstow Society.**

For tickets, return this form to: Peter Strong, Gwent County History  
Association, 27 Woodstock Way, Caldicot, Mon NP26 5DB.

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## GARDENING CORNER

The seed catalogues are arriving thick and fast at the moment, so the next rainy day I get it will be a case of coffee mug in hand, sitting in the reclining chair, and then browsing through what delights are in store for next year. If you are looking for just bog standard everyday varieties of seeds then you can do no better than Wilco or Lidl's as many packets are less than a £1. Seed catalogues on the other hand are usually £2 plus, sometimes even over £3, but you do get the latest bred varieties, or the unusual ones. So it's a case of paying your money and taking your choice! There is a huge drive on at the moment in respect of everything 'heritage' whether it's seed varieties, gardening tools or other ancillary accessories – even down to your box for storing seeds, or taking your lunch down to the allotment! I must admit that I am a mug for some of these (talking of which I do have a retro tin mug for out in the garden, but I do draw the line at the lunchbox!). Nearly all my gardening tools have ash handles (well being a forester all my life, how could you do anything other) and stainless steel heads. The assistant head gardener will confirm that I'm not the tidiest person at times at home, but there is something satisfying in the autumn with rubbing down the stainless steel so that it is nice and shiny, sharpening those edges that need it, and rubbing oil into the ash handles. There's a certain smell about it all that reminds me of the old style hardware and seed merchant stalls that every, especially country, small town had on some back street. This is one of my fondest childhood memories as I went along to our allotment with my dad, and we then visited the allotment store, where they sold all manner of 'smelly' things, such as blood, fish and bone. Maybe that's why I swear by this old fashioned fertilizer even now. Other things that remind me of my earlier life are the smell of Wright's coal tar soap (and yes I still insist on using it), and linked to this, creosote – both relying on a by product of the petrol industry – tar. When I worked on a private estate in Hampshire in the early 1970's, one of my favourite jobs was heating up the 'hot and cold' treatment plant, which we used for ensuring that fencing stakes lasted for years once they were in the ground. This was a large tank of creosote, that was heated from underneath with a wood burning fire. Stakes were lowered into the tank of creosote, this was then heated almost to boiling point, and then after a period of time, the fire was raked out and the tank allowed to cool, before lifting the stakes out and leaving them to drain over the tank. The smell of this process stays with you for a lifetime and was an excellent cold cure. If you had a heavy cold, then all you had to do was hang your head over the tank, breath in a few times, and repeat – end result, the head cold was gone in no time! I guess it's just a big version of holding your head over a bowl of hot water! Any way I digress, this desire for heritage even extends to tins of string made with jute, so all good environmentally friendly stuff.

Outside, the weather is turning for the worst and everything is giving up the ghost in the garden and it is now time to start doing some of the tidying up jobs and finishing harvesting. From the latter point of view, we are still picking a few strawberries each week, as well as salad crops such as lettuce, cucumber and tomatoes.

These are coming to an end though, but we haven't done too bad this year. We have the last lot of passata sauce cooking on the stove and yesterday I harvested the pumpkins and winter squash. The various bean varieties that are used for dry storage over the winter were fortunately picked prior to the rain starting, and these are in boxes in the conservatory, finishing drying before we pod them and store in glass, air tight jars. They will then be used in soups and casseroles.

We had a delivery of daffodil and tulip bulbs a couple of weeks ago. Most of these are being planted into pots for later planting out. I can't plant them at the moment as the existing bulbs in the garden are not yet showing, which usually means that I end up digging most of the existing bulbs whilst trying to plant the new! So they go into pots to start them off, and once the old bulbs start to show, I look to plant in the gaps. I also bought some to naturalise in some grass areas down our drive. To help plant these I have invested in a long handled bulb planter, which is making life very easy. If you are wondering, yes this has a stainless steel head and an ash handle. It was more expensive than the mild steel version, but does look a lot better. Plus I get to oil the handle!

Some of the raised vegetable beds are starting to look a bit sick now, so I will shortly be buying some more timber to replace the sides, that achieves the 'raising' bit on the beds. I will store the timber for a few weeks in the tunnel or greenhouse to make sure it is dry, and the timber will then be treated with a wood preservative- and yes this will be the modern version of creocote (now spelt with a 'c'). It might smell the same, but I'm sure it's not as good as the 'proper' stuff that I remember from my youth – ah the memories!

I have almost finished cutting the hedges, and then it will be a case of tackling the wild areas of the garden, where ash trees and bramble have now taken over. We also have a number of large ash and oak trees around our boundary hedges and over the years some of the lower limbs have grown to the extent that they now need cutting off to lift the tree crowns up, and let more light into the garden. I'm looking forward to this as it is one of the most satisfying jobs in the garden, clearing up and having a bonfire. The so called fruit cage is a high priority. This was once great, but squirrels biting holes in the netting, followed by a heavy snow fall bending all the top poles (by dragging the net down) meant I lost interest. There are no fruit trees or bushes there now, just large ash trees and bramble – but not for much longer. This cage is situated at the end of the big tunnel and because things have grown so tall, this is now cutting out any air flow through the tunnel itself, causing major damp and disease problems inside. So it has to be sorted. Ah, sounds like the rain has stopped so it's off to work we go. Happy gardening until next month.

Steve and Felicity Hunt.



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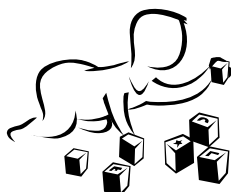
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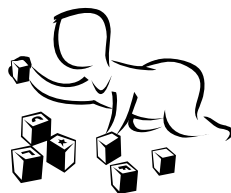
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Dates for your Dairy:

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3.00pm – Commemoration Concert

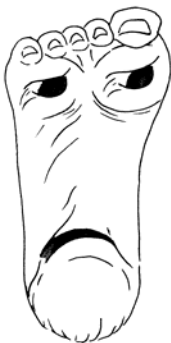
SUNDAY DECEMBER 14<sup>th</sup> – 3.00pm – Festival of Christmas Music & readings

SATURDAY MARCH 21<sup>st</sup> 2015 – 7.30pm – Spring Concert, with CCS Orchestra – Haydn's "Nelson" Mass, Schubert's "Mass in G" & Vivaldi's "Gloria".

SATURDAY JUNE 27<sup>th</sup> – Summer Concert featuring popular Choral classics with organ.

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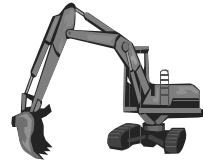
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## NERYS'S NATTY NOSH

The autumn harvest brings a bumper crop of seasonal fruit and vegetables, from colourful squashes to sweet figs. And, of course pumpkins, just in time for Halloween celebrations.

Fresh and dried figs are rich in fibre and high in iron, boosting energy and promoting healthy blood. Fresh figs deteriorate quickly and should be eaten the day they are bought or picked. They are best eaten accompanied with ham, served as a starter or as part of a meal. Some varieties of fig have edible skin while others need to be skinned.



### *Figs Wrapped in Ham* serves 4

#### **Ingredients**

- 4 fresh figs
- 4 slices Parma ham
- 4 oz(100g) unsalted butter
- 4 tbsp soft brown sugar
- 4 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 4 tbsp port

#### **Method**

- 1 Wrap the Parma ham around the figs.
- 2 Gently melt the butter on **low** heat in a medium frying pan.
- 3 Fry the figs until the ham begins to crisp and the figs soften. Put to one side.
- 4 Add the brown sugar and balsamic vinegar into the pan, reduce the heat, then simmer for 2- 3 minutes.
- 5 Pour the port into the pan and reduce for further 2 minutes.
- 6 Remove from the heat and serve.

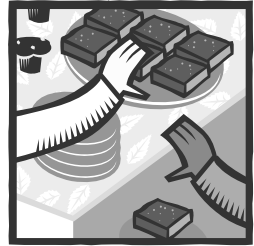
#### **Tips**

A cocktail stick can always be placed into the fig wrap to secure the ham. Once the wrap is cooked the cocktail stick can be removed. Serve as a starter on a bed of shredded salad leaves, place the fig wrap on top. Drizzle the warm sauce over the figs. Serve immediately. Cream cheese can be served as an accompaniment.

**Enjoy !**

## NERYS'S NATTY NOSH

When my sister in law Fran comes to stay with us, she always brings dairy free brownies and truffles. They are very popular amongst the family. She has kindly sent me the brownie recipe to share with you.



## *Dairy Free chocolate Brownies*

### Ingredients

200 ml vegetable oil  
150 g golden granulated sugar  
100 g dark brown sugar  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
3 medium eggs  
60g cocoa powder  
100 g self-raising flour  
¼ tsp salt  
¼ tsp sodium bicarbonate  
100g dairy free chocolate Chips

### Method

Preheat the oven to 180C (160C fan assisted), 350F, gas mark 4. Prepare a 23 cm square baking tin.

Put all the ingredients into a large mixing bowl and beat well together.

Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 25-30 minutes (22 in our oven) depending on how chewy you like your brownies.

Let the brownies cool in the tin, and turn out.

### Decorate

Add a topping if you want – a jar of chocolate spread works well or chocolate buttercream etc.

Thank you Fran Wilson for sharing your recipe.

Enjoy!

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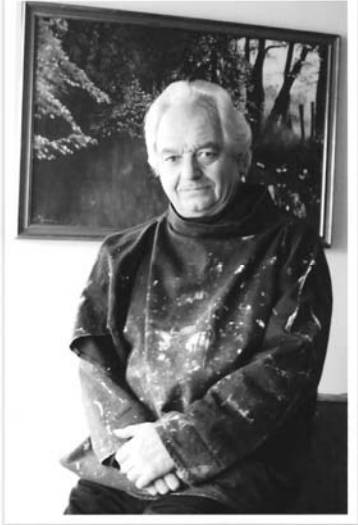
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Rehearsals have started but we are still looking for junior cast members if anyone in your family is interested then contact Glynis on 641818 or Alison on 641739, children’s rehearsals start on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

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*If you know of any changes or omissions please contact the Editor Terry Walters  
Telephone 01291 641338 or email [terencewalters@hotmail.com](mailto:terencewalters@hotmail.com)*

### Church of St. Thomas à Becket Shirenewton

<b>Rector</b>	Revd. Julian White	01291 622317 <a href="mailto:jel.white@btinternet.com">jel.white@btinternet.com</a>
<b>Parish Priest</b>	Revd. Nansi Davies	01633 400519
<b>Parish Visitor Co-ordinators</b>	Revd. Nansi Davies Diane Marlow	01633 400519 01291 641407
<b>Secretary and Church Warden</b>	Monnica Williams	<a href="mailto:monnica.williams@virgin.net">monnica.williams@virgin.net</a>
<b>Church Wardens</b>	Sally Saysell Andrew Baker	01291 641369 01291 641925
<b>PCC Secretaries</b>	Bill Clark	01291 641783
<b>PCC Treasurers</b>	Kevin Bounds	01291 641818
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### MP/Monmouth CC & Community Council Representatives

<b>Clerk to Community Council</b>	Hilary Counsell	01291 421307 <a href="mailto:shirenewtoncc@gmail.com">shirenewtoncc@gmail.com</a>
<b>Shirenewton Ward:</b>	David Adams Tony Hughes Mario Lenza Phil Moles Beverley Moore	01291 641792 01291 641360 01291 641333 01291 641521 01291 641532
<b>Mynyddbach Ward</b>	Lynne Prosser Ian Moore, Chair	01291 641666 01291 650766
<b>Newchurch West</b>	Louise Dyke	01291 650076
<b>Earlswood Ward</b>	Paul Harris Ken Morton	01291 650871 01291 650268
<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>	Louise Thorpe	01633 642068 louise.thorpe@gwent.pnn.police.uk
<b>Shirenewton &amp; Mynyddbach</b>	Beverley Moore	01291 641532

<b>Earlswood</b>	Sue Leat	01291 641207
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## **Other Local Organisations**

<b>Beavers</b>	Julie Hitchcock	01291 650548
<b>Brownies</b>	Bev. Leaf	01291 641680
	Jaci Crocombe	01291 641681
<b>Church Fete</b>	Seirian Edmonds	07980 757802 andyandseze@aol.com
<b>Earlswood Hope</b>	Mrs Sylvia Jeremiah, Mr Raymond Jeremiah	01291 641726
<b>Earlswood &amp; Newchurch West Memorial Hall</b>	Glynis MacDonald	01291 641818 glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com
<b>Earlswood Valley Methodist Chapel</b>	Avril Smith	01291 650733
<b>Gaerllwyd Baptist</b>	Mrs E Remnant	Brooklands, Usk Road NP16 6SA
<b>Girl Guides</b>	Helen Cann	01291 650835 cannhelen@gmail.com
<b>Recreation Association</b>	Gordon Hughes	01291 641356 gordon.hughes3@tesco.net
<b>Recreation Hall booking</b>	Beryl Saysell	01291 641637
<b>St Peters Church Newchurch</b>	Enid Heritage	01291 622708
<b>Shirenewton Local History Socty</b>	Dorothy Brabon	01291 641376 brabonnl@hotmail.com
<b>Shirenewton and Mynyddbach Fields Association Ltd (SAMFAL)</b>	Alison Broughton:	alison.broughton10@gmail.com.
<b>Shirenewton &amp; Mynyddbach Initiative for Local Enterprise (SMILE)</b>	Charles Eickhoff	01291 641716 eickhoff@shirenewton.org
<b>Caerwent Group Mothers Union</b>	Rosemary Carey	01291 425010 crcandkili@tiscali.co.uk
<b>Treasurer</b>	Auriol Horton	01291 641844 aur10l@btinternet.com
<b>Shirenewton Operatic and Dramatic Society (SODS)</b>	Glynis MacDonald	01291 641818 glynis.macdonald@btinternet.com
<b>Shirenewton Play Group</b>	Beverly Lindsay	Shirenewtonplaygroup@gmail.com
<b>Shirenewton Primary School</b>	Jayne Edwards	01291 641774 jayneedwards@monmouthshire.gov.uk
<b>Shirenewton Tennis Association</b>	P Brabon	01291 641376 brabonnl@hotmail.com
<b>Shirenewton Toddler Group</b>	Jude Langdon	07981 368213
	Paula Rimmer	rimmerpaula@mac.com
<b>Fairtrade/Traidcraft</b>	Marion McAdam	01291 641316
<b>Whist drive</b>	Auriol Horton	01291 641844 aur10l@btinternet.com
<b>Womens Institute (WI)</b>	Jenny Bonner	01291 641929

<b>Nov</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
1 11:00am	Autumn Fayre	St. Peters Church Newchurch
2 3:00pm	CCS Commemoration Concert For WW1 Outbreak 1914	St Mary's Priory Church Chepstow
3 7:30pm	Shirenewton Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
6 7:00pm	Whist Drive	Recreation Hall
6 9:30am	Mobile Police Station	Tredegar Arms Car Park
8 7:00pm	Earlswood Hall Barn Dance	Earlswood Hall
9 10:30am	Memorial Service	Earlswood & Newchurch West Memorial Hall
9 9:30am	Mobile Police Station	Great Barnets Wood
10 2:00pm	Shirenewton Local History Socty.	Recreation Hall
13 7:15pm	Shirenewton WI	Recreation Hall
15 10:00am	Gwent in the Great War Day School	Chepstow Drill Hall
15 7:00pm	ShireWinterfest	Huntsman Hotel
25 7:30pm	Shirenewton Local History Socty.	Huntsman Hotel
28 7:00pm	Christmas Food & Drinks Fayre	Recreation Hall
<b>Dec</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
1 7:30pm	Shirenewton Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
4 7:30pm	Whist Drive Christmas Special	Recreation Hall
8 2:00pm	Shirenewton Local History Socty.	Recreation Hall
11 7:15pm	Shirenewton WI Christmas Meal	Huntsman Hotel
16	Shirenewton Local History Socty.	St Pierre Church
21 2:30pm	Carol Service	St. Peters Church Newchurch
27 7:30am	Shirenewton Local History Socty.	Grey Hill from Woodland Tavern

	<b>Saint Thomas a Beckett Shirenewton</b>	<b>Sunday Services</b>	<b>Start 10.00 a.m. Unless stated otherwise</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Readers</b>	<b>Sides-persons</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> November	All Saints Sunday	Bob Grattan Cynthia Smith	Bob Grattan Cynthia Smith
9 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>REMEMBRANCE</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b>	
16 <sup>th</sup> November	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday before Advent	Bill Clark Janet Horton	Bill Clark Janet Horton
23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Christ The King	Gillian Lambert Mark Broughton	Gillian Lambert Mark Broughton
30 <sup>th</sup> November	<b>Group Service St Pierre Church</b>		
7 <sup>th</sup> December	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent	Jane Smith Haddon Wendy Baker	Jane Smith Haddon Wendy Baker
14 <sup>th</sup> December	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent	Bob Grattan Mark Broughton	Bob Grattan Mark Broughton
21 <sup>st</sup> December	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent	James Leney Margaret Lock	James Leney Margaret Lock
24 <sup>th</sup> December	Christingle	Service at 4 p.m.	
25 <sup>th</sup> December	Midnight Mass	Andrew Baker Sally Saysell	Andrew Baker Sally Saysell
25 <sup>th</sup> December	Family Service	10 a.m.	
28 <sup>th</sup> December	The Holy Innocents	Gillian Lambert Francis Grey	Clair Lewis Gillian Lambert

Earlswood  
Chepstow



# Parsons Grove

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## EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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The views expressed are those of the contributor.

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