



Shirenewton

Parish Magazine

December 2018

January 2019



Price: £1

FROM THE VICARAGE

Julian E LI White

Dear People of the Parish,

It has been a somewhat trying time for me over the past few days.

For a start, my prized mid-life crisis convertible car was rammed by a mini-bus and – a few days later – my work diary vanished. On both counts I was heard to proclaim “Oh, Golly Gosh!”. Or words to that effect.

I would have you believe that the loss of my diary was a grievous blow. Especially as I have bored countless persons with the claim that I have kept all such books for the last forty or so years. Despite my claims, they do not contain information of widespread interest. Look in vain for the private telephone numbers of South American drug barons or dodgy massage parlours and content yourself instead with hand scribbled notes pertaining to the condition of Vicarage sewage systems and the torque-wrench settings for an exhaust by-pass unit relating to a 1971 Austin A60 Half Ton Pick-Up Truck. Yes, even I can see why these would not headline the majority of gossip column articles.

But I am bereft with the loss of my diary! It feels as though a long-standing friend has been whisked away. A friend so much more intimate than some modern electronic ‘note book’ for pity’s sake. I can’t even use this loss as a reason why most of my life is utterly inept and why a variety of appointments are not honoured – I have been accused of such behaviour anyway over the course of many years.

My diary has provided a degree of stability for me over (it seems) a vast period of time. I feel rudderless and unsure of my daily footing. OK, I can feel a sermon approaching so I will strive to resist. So, don’t be surprised if in the following pages I declare that Christmas falls in the middle of July or that the Diocese of Monmouth has scrapped Parish Share. Be assured (I already hear you sneer in disbelief) that any vagaries in my ministry is the result of this bereavement and I shall struggle manfully on.

On a more serious note I must commend the grouped parish for the way it observed Remembrance Sunday

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RECENT 200 CLUB WINNERS

October

1. Pauline James
2. Janet Horton
3. Sylvia Cullimore
4. Joanna Bounds

November

1. Linda Dobson
2. Gareth Thomas
3. Mike Penney
4. Pauline James

Many thanks for your support.

LOST PROPERTY

LOST Grandmother's engagement ring. possibly on 31st October while leafletting in Mynyddbach.

The ring is a Gold Band with small inset 'diamond like' stone. sentimental value. 07598 345 115

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Shirenewton Bible Study Group is a friendly group who meet on one evening a month in the home of one of our very hospitable members to study the bible.

We focus to the readings from the lectionary for the Sunday preceding our meeting, so you can come along at any time, you won't have missed anything! Although many benefit from attending regularly, there is no obligation to do so and many members come when they can.

Meetings in 2019 are scheduled for the following dates:

Thursday 3rd January	Thursday 27th June
Thursday 31st January	Thursday 1st August
Thursday 28th February	Thursday 29th August
Thursday 28th March	Thursday 26th September
Thursday 25th April	Thursday 31st October
Thursday 30th May	Wednesday 27th November

If you would like to join the group or to be kept informed of the location of meetings, please ask to be added to our distribution group by contacting me via lem.shirenewton@gmail.com or calling 01291 641175.

REPORTS FROM ST PETERS CHURCH, NEWCHURCH

REMINDER

Carol Service 16th December 2.30p.m followed by Sherry and Mince pies. Everyone is most welcome, please come and support our little church.

Also our Christmas Day service will be at 10.00am

**Life
Changes**

**COFFEE
MORNING**

at the **TREDEGAR ARMS**
Shirenewton

1st FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH

10 am to 12.00

Have you experienced changes ?

We all experience so many changes as we travel along life's journey.

Come and join us for tea/coffee and chat

Meet new people . Tell funny stories
Talk about things that concern you.
Help someone else cope with changes they are going through/ask for ideas.

or Call in an expert ?

TRY SOMETHING NEW - craft, poetry , art, watching the world go by, outings, walks, etc

IT IS UP TO YOU.

NEXT COFFEE MORNINGS: FRIDAY, **DECEMBER 7th** and FRIDAY, **JANUARY 4th** 2019

SEASONS GREETINGS TO YOU ALL

Christmas
Starts at
Gaerllwyd Baptist Church
on
Monday, 3rd December
at 7.30 pm

Soup & Carols

Come and enjoy the singing of Carols and a Mug of Home Made Soup.

Get into the right spirit for Christmas

FLOWERS FOR THE FALLEN AND THE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The PCC would like to thank Glynis MacDonald for organising "Flowers for the Fallen" in the Church over the weekend of 10th/11th November, and also all those who kindly gave their time to produce such a wonderful diversity of flower arrangements.

The PCC would also like to thank Dorothy Brabon and the Shirenewton Local History Society for displaying their World War One memorabilia in the Saysell Centre during the same period; and all those who volunteered to provide teas and coffees and cakes and biscuits for all people who came to view the Flowers for the Fallen and the History Society displays.

These were two very appropriate and well-attended community events for the commemoration of the centenary of the end of the First World War.



You are invited;

To come to the TA
at
7.30pm on Thurs 31st January 2019

For a cordial get-together to discuss ideas and plans for the celebration of 800 years of Shirenewton (June 2019 – June 2020), over a glass of wine and some nibbles (provided)

Please do come along for some convivial company and to plan how we can really make a celebratory splash!



Come Along to the
**Shirenewton Church Sunday Club
 Advent Fair**

Sunday 3rd December

In the Church Room

11:00 - 12:00

Jams, Jellies, Mincemeat, Marmalade,

Cakes, Cookies and Biscuits

Christmas Crafts and Cards

Coffee and of course, mince pies!

The members of Sunday Club continue to sponsor a child through 'Compassionuk,'



**Carols Around The Village
 Christmas Tree!**

with The Chepstow Town Band!

Sunday 9th December at 6:30

In the Tredegar Arms carpark

(or in the candle-lit church if it's raining)

Collection to:

'Medicines sans Frontiers'



All are Welcome to Our

'Christmas Praise' Service

in Shirenewton Church

on

Sunday 23rd December at 10 o'clock

With readings, poems and carols.

Followed by coffee and cake in

The Church Room

Shirenewton Church

Our Nativity and Christingle Service

Christmas Eve

Monday 24th December 2018 at 4.00



What a lovely way to start Christmas!

If you have ever wanted to be an Angel or a Shepherd or whether you just want to be part of the crowd waiting to welcome the Baby

Jesus, come along to our Nativity and Christingle Service on Christmas Eve at 4:00.

And this year, we can accommodate 'families' joining the journey.

With, of course, Mulled Wine and Mince Pies afterwards in the Church Room

Our Village.

We are really lucky to have some people who do that little bit extra. John Burrows and Sandra Bushell, for example who did an amazing job of tidying up that rather rough patch on the left of the path from the War Memorial up to the Church. They dug over where the leylandii hedge had been, arranged for a contractor to clear the ground, planted some daffodil bulbs and got it all reseeded. It has made such a difference to the path, opening up the land near the churchyard and making it much more pleasant. I look forward to seeing it in the spring.



And then we've got Jane Smith Haddon who organises gangs to work on the SAMFAL fields and the church grounds, cutting down brambles, clearing the paths and pulling up the invasive Himalayan balsam. And who with Hilary Counsell recently cleaned up the village sign boards. And then there's Rachel Bowler who can't go past a piece of rubbish without picking it up and taking it home. We have so many kind people in our village who care about our environment and our countryside. It's good to hear about positive things to counter the default diet of doom and gloom. Thank you!

The Old Time Music Hall, The Flowers for the Fallen Festival, the Remembrance Day Service, the Lighting of the Beacon and the Ringing of a Peal. Friday 9th, Sat 10th and Sunday 11th November 2018

Yes, that was some weekend and the village certainly did its bit in commemorating the Centenary of the Ending of WW1.

'**The Good Old Days**' up in Earlswood Hall, ably hosted by the indubitable, the inimitable, the indefatigable Will Smith Haddon was a wonderful community event and a great success. It was sponsored by SCC, supported by local people and made possible by a wonderful bunch of homegrown entertainers, young, old and in-between. Not only was it a jolly good evening but it also raised an amazing £2007 for 'Help for Heroes'.



The Flower Festival in the church over the weekend was a moving testimony to those who lost their lives in conflict and war. Many village societies and individuals contributed to the flower displays including the WI, SCC, Shirenewton School, Mothers and Toddlers and the Sunday Club and many others. The arrangements were so beautiful and a big thank you to all the arrangers and also to Jackie and her team of helpers who manned the refreshments in the Church Room. The donations for the refreshments also went to 'Help for Heroes'. And it was especially moving to have so many of the uniformed brigades attending the Remembrance Day Service in the Church and observing the 2 minute silence at 11 o'clock by the village War Memorial.

Ringing the Peal on the Sunday afternoon was almost a stretch too far for me – and so I was particularly pleased when after ringing for 2 hours and 50 minutes we were successful. The ringers then came back to celebrate at The Chantry. Sadly, the small dry sherry was my undoing and I was quite unable to do any more and so failed to get the Lighting of the Beacon at 7 o'clock up at The Rec but by all accounts that was well attended and it was a great success.

No, apparently I had left my front door wide open and was found fully clothed sound asleep on my bed. All I can say was thank goodness I was fully clothed. Glynis

THE BELLS, THE BELLS

To commemorate the fallen from Shirenewton in the two world wars, together with those who risked their lives and survived, the ringers will on Sunday 11th November this year attempt to ring a peal of mixed doubles. Traditionally on Remembrance Sunday the ringers ring the bells half muffled prior to the service at 11.00 a.m. This will be the same this year. Half muffled means that the clapper striking the bell has one side covered with a leather pad and this results in a normal strike note for the six bells in changes followed by a muted strike note for each of the six bells. Ringing half muffled is the standard for commemorative ringing. The only time the bells are rung fully muffled is when the monarch dies. However, at 12.30 p.m. when the peal attempt begins the bells will be stripped of their muffles and ring out fully to celebrate the peace.

Ringling a peal is an arduous task. It requires that an uninterrupted and continuous piece of change ringing occurs for at least 5000 changes, the standard being 5040 changes. 5040 changes happens to be the maximum permutation on seven bells – that is the total number of orders 1-7 can be rearranged without repetition. For example one change might be 1234567 and the next 2143657. It may come as surprise to some that rearranging this row of numbers without repetition can occur 5040 times, which for the mathematicians amongst you is factorial 7 ($7 \times 6 \times 5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1$). Now Shirenewton has only six bells and we intend to ring changes on 5 bells (which is denoted as doubles) with the heaviest bell (the 6th bell called the tenor) ending each row in the same place. Thus the maximum number of changes we can deliver is factorial 5 ($5 \times 4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 120$). So to reach the magic 5040 changes we must repeat our 120 changes forty two times – that is 6x7 times. In order to achieve this without constant repetition of the same order we intend to ring 4 different methods using as many different orders as achievable. So when you hear the bells ringing on the afternoon of 11th November and it seems to go on for a while, remember the purpose of this ringing. Ringing a peal on Shirenewton bells usually takes of the order of 2 hours and 40 minutes.





PUTTING THE CLIENT FIRST

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The value of pensions and investments can fall as well as rise, you may get back less than you invested.

Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage.

The FCA do not regulate Inheritance Tax Planning.

Please contact Dr Josh Lewis for a free initial consultation on:

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SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Extracts from the minutes of the meeting held in November 2018.

URGENT

Vacancy on the Community Council

There is now only one vacancy on the Council in the **Mynyddbach ward.**

**It is important that the vacancy is filled by a local resident who is interested in the surrounding community and wishes to join the Council –
if that means you - please contact the Clerk (details below).**

Planning applications considered –

1. DM/2018/01370 Bushes Farm, Chapel Road, Earlswood

Conversion of an existing redundant agricultural barn into holiday let accommodation.

Council recommended refusal for the following reasons:

- this is a large, modern, single storey agricultural barn which does not appear to be redundant as it contains farm machinery. Its conversion would fail to comply with Policy H4 (e) which states that modern/utilitarian farm buildings will not be considered favourably.
- The proposal also fails to comply with Policy T2 in that the building is not within the curtilage of an existing and occupied farm property and is of modern construction.
- A new access is proposed from the far corner of the plot which will involve the removal of the roadside hedge and a vision splay either side. Given the curving of the road at that point visibility, even with vision splays, will be compromised.
- Conversion/reconstruction would mean the change of use from agricultural to residential. No business case has been produced to support a need for holiday letting in the area. In addition, were consent to be given, it risks setting a precedent for some 6 other derelict outbuildings close by.

2. DM/2018/01486 The Old Sawmill, Itton Court Road, Itton

Change of use and linking of an existing garage to form a granny annexe.

Council recommended approval with the following conditions:

That the additional accommodation should be ancillary to the existing dwelling and limited to the occupation of the entire premises by a single family unit.

That no new garaging be constructed without prior planning approval, and the suspension of the general development order.

3. DM/2018/01618 St Annes, Wentwood Mill Road, Earlswood

Demolition of existing single storey garages/store and construction of new flat roofed double garage with adjoining utility room. Council recommended approval.

5. Statutory Pre-application consultation – Land adjacent to Clearview, Shirenewton, from LRM Planning, 22 Cathedral Road, Cardiff.

This relates to a planning application for the development of 11 dwellings and associated works at Clearview. Closing date of consultation 30.11.18. Clerk to request a site visit with planners and landowner.

Other items of interest

Centenary celebrations to mark the end of WW1 on weekend of 9 – 11.11.2018: Old Time Music Hall, Friday 9th and Saturday 10th November at Earlswood Hall – the performances were wonderful and a great time was had by all – both the cast and the audience. Many thanks to the organisers and the performers for an unforgettable show.

Beacons of Light, on Remembrance Sunday, 11th November at 7pm on Shirenewton Recreation field – the Last Post was played at 6.55pm, with the beacon lit at 7pm – one of over 1000 that was lit across the country. A reading of Tribute to the Millions took place at 7.10 pm, followed by the church bells ringing out for peace. It was a bright, dry evening and Councillors were pleased to see that around 100 people took the time to come along to watch the beacon being lit. Another beacon could be seen in the distance towards Cwmbran.

School and playgroup 'street' parties, Friday 9.11.2018 – following WW1 themed projects, the bunting went up and the children had lots of fun at their street parties

From the monthly police report:

15/10/18 – Report of a padlock drilled to gain entry to a works site in the Wentwood area. There is large works machinery at the location but nothing was taken.

24/10/18 – Report of a break in to an outbuilding in the grounds of Shirenewton Hall. A large amount of garden machinery including a ride on mower and a quad bike were taken from inside.

28/10/18 – Report of a group of off road bikes in Wentwood Forest. Officers attended and spoke to the group. Advice was given and the motorbikes left the area.

29/10/18 – Report of a rural outbuilding broken into in the Pen-y-cae-mawr area. An Ivor Williams white box trailer and bulk dog food were taken from inside. The cctv cameras were also tampered with/damaged at the location.

There was only one call to Brookacre during the month.

Please remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity/crime at the time via either 101 or 999 if you deem it an emergency.

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Update of Village Plan - Shirenewton Community Council Consultation

Here is an opportunity to have your say on the public services and facilities available in and around Shirenewton and Earlswood. Shirenewton Community Council puts its opinions on your behalf into Monmouthshire County Council's planning for the future of Shirenewton, Mynyddbach, Earlswood and Newchurch West (which runs up to Penyaemawr). We would like to hear from you on what we do right and what we don't, and the changes you think would improve the village and surrounding area. Local matters we try to deal with include:

Recreation and Leisure activities
Conservation, planning and development
Roads, traffic and police liaison
Responding to government surveys

We are preparing a questionnaire for home delivery so as to reach all ages but if you are willing to provide us with your email address we can let you know when the form is available online. Just email us at <http://www.shirenewtoncc.org.uk/get-in-touch/>

In addition we are also holding a drop in session at the Shirenewton Village Market on 15th December, when you can come in and talk to us directly. We will also be consulting local groups and the primary school to give everyone a chance to contribute their thoughts for the future of the area.

Mynyddbach bench - if anyone locally is interested in making or sourcing a new bench for Mynyddbach village green please contact the Clerk (details below).

Christmas greetings from all Community Councillors and very best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.

Dates of future meetings –Monday 3rd December and Monday 7th January at 7.00pm at the Recreation Hall, Shirenewton. **(Please note change of time of future meetings)**. Members of the public are welcome to attend and may speak with the Council for the first 15 minutes of each meeting.

Find more information in draft copies of the minutes on the Community Council notice boards. Previous, approved minutes of meetings, can be found on the Council's website www.shirenewtoncc.org.uk

Contact the Clerk to the Community Council - Mrs Hilary Counsell

Tel: 01291 421307

E-mail: Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com

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Shirenewton Babies and Toddler Group

**Thursdays 1.30 – 3p.m. (term time only)
Shirenewton Recreation Hall**



**Great toys, good company – everyone welcome
(please bring your Carers too!)
Contact Jackie Broughton (01291 641797)
for further**

WELSH WELLY WANGING OPEN

In 2012, when we wanted to publicise the Shirenewton village fete, I invented the Welsh Welly Wanging Open (www.wwwopen.info). As you may know, every year we wang away at the village fete and occasionally the local paper mentions it. However, thank to Harry and Megan having a wang off in New Zealand, it went 'big time'. I was recently interviewed on the BBC Radio Wales 'Good Evening Wales' (aka drivetime) program because, I assume, that as the organiser of the WWW Open I'm considered to be a wanging expert! If you are interested in listening to the interview, in which I managed to get in a good plug for the fete, it's on the church website (www.shirenewtonchurch.com)

Shirenewton Church Website - Fund Raising, Church Information and Community Information
Shirenewton Church Website - Fund raising information and shopping portal, Church Information and Community Information (www.shirenewtonchurch.com). Simply select the 'News, Social events and community updates' option in the blue strip towards the top of the home page and look under 'Recent events'.

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

www.shirenewtonchurch.com
www.shirenewtonshop.com

Firstly, apologies for not having made the deadline for the November magazine. I was in Belfast and it was the Titanic museum or sitting in the hotel room and writing the parish mag entry on an iPad – no contest! I am able to report that the Titanic museum is well worth a visit. In fact the whole of Northern Island is well worth a visit. The Giants Causeway, various venues associated with The Game of Thrones and a great food and pub music scene in Belfast itself.



So I've had a request. Could I please cover mobile security. This is very important as your phone holds a considerable amount of personal data and you wouldn't want that falling into the wrong hands. Virus writers recognise this and target mobiles. iPhones are generally considered more secure than Android phones simply because iOS (the iPhone operating system) is a much more closed operating system (this is why it's a lot more expensive). It also has a much smaller market share (~15% worldwide) so Android represents a much bigger target. iOS is closely guarded/monitored by Apple and the general advice is that you don't need anti-virus for iPhones and iPads – just keep your iPhone/iPad up-to-date every time you are prompted to do so and you are good to go. This is unless your device is 'jailbroken' and, if you have a jailbroken iPhone, I assume you know what you are doing and don't need my advice!

Various software companies do offer security apps for the iPhone but these are not anti-virus but security apps which focus on data back-up, lost device location, etc. Most of these services are available through the Apple environment anyway and therefore there is little point in paying more for something you already have.

Moving onto Android. I am an avid Android users and, yes, I run a security/anti-virus application on my phone. The app I run is 'Lookout' – mainly because it was one of the first and I've got lazy and simply renew the subscription. I may change my mind at the next renewal having done the research for this article! There are many options for anti-virus and security available. All the popular names (Avira, Avast, AVG, BitDefender, ESET, MalwareBytes, McFee, Norton, Sophos, etc.) are featured as well as Android specific apps. Most offer a 'lite' version and then a 'pro' version running between £10 and £20 ish per year. If you are paying a computer based AV subscription you may find you get the mobile version included as part of the deal.

The bottom line is you won't go far wrong with any of the major brand names or even Lookout or other Android specific apps for that matter. You just have to be aware that some of them are 'ad supported' meaning that they display ads in the app. I have no personal experience (except of Lookout) but the following is a brief summary of my research: Sophos is free and good. The Android Authority review (<https://tinyurl.com/y9s5zo43>) says 'if you're going to have one, try this one first'; AV-Test.org (<https://tinyurl.com/jpkgye6>) broadly shows most of the top names are level pegging when it comes to protection; and, TechRadar's summary (<https://tinyurl.com/y9lwazu3>) singles out Sophos and Antiy AVL (which scores just as well as the 'big boys' in the AV-Test rankings), the latter is particularly lightweight which may be a consideration on underpowered devices. So, what would I do if I didn't have Lookout? Install Sophos or Antiy AVL. One last consideration is that if you want parental controls apparently the Trend Micro app has these as well.

On another subject, one more thing highlight: There is a real increase (it seems) in malicious phone calls telling you that (i) your internet is about to be cut off, (ii) Your computer has a virus; (iii) you are under investigation by HMRC and so on. Some of these calls are automated and encourage you to press '1'. All this does is link you to a fraudster potentially on a premium number. Don't do it. Laugh and hang up and get on with your life!

So as Christmas approaches and gifts are being purchased, please do your shopping via www.shirenewtonshop.com. There are over 100 stores on the shopping portal with a healthy 'gift ideas' section which can help you for those 'hard to buy for' people. Also, this year, under the 'Stuff for kids' section, is an a shop from which you can order a letter from Santa! As Christmas is a Christian festival, surely it's fitting that your local village Church benefits in some small way from the orgy of spending which accompanies the festival?

Safe browsing

drc
Webmaster

HARVEST FESTIVAL



Reception and Year 3 entertained us with a "Rock 'n' Roll" Harvest Festival this year and we were joined by Rev Waters who led the prayers. Thank you to everyone who sent in groceries for our Harvest Tables ... they were all donated to the Chepstow Food Bank.

WWI COMMEMORATIONS



The children enjoyed coming to school dressed in Union Jack colours and having a "Peace Tea" street party, kindly funded by Shirenewton Community Council. They made their own sandwiches and Victoria sponges and our pupil committee, the Community Ambassadors, invited the members of our Young at Heart club. A few of our Y5 and Y6 pupils also enjoyed performing a Hedd Wyn play, written and directed by Emlyn Powell, at Caerwent Church on Armistice Day.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

PTA Christmas Fayre on Saturday 8th
December 11am to 2pm

FLOWERS FOR THE FALLEN



We made poppies out of recycled plastic bottles and sold them to be planted in a poppy field, raising £218.37 for Help for Heroes.

'CROESO' COMPETITION



As part of our work towards a Language Charter award called Cymraeg Campus - our Criw Cymraeg pupil committee organised a design a welcome to our school poster competition. Foundation Phase winners were Fenton and Jalal and the KS2 winner was Joshua. The runners up were Jasmine, Harry, Max, Katie, James, Evie, Seren, Lauren & Milo ... bendigedig blant!

CHILDREN IN NEED



The School Council organised some fun activities for Children in Need including a Pudsey Bear raffle, a drawing & model making competition and sold hot chocolate & a biscuit at playtime. We raised a credible £367.60 for this good cause; thank you for all your support!



Chepstow Choral Society

Musical Director – Graham Bull

A Christmas Music Celebration....

SUNDAY DECEMBER 9th, 3.00pm

Please save the date!!!!

This year's Christmas music by the choir and guests will take place on **SUNDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 9th, 3.00pm, at St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow** and will include a mix of well-loved carols and readings. CCS is delighted to be joined by pupils from **ST JOHN'S-ON-THE-HILL SCHOOL and also organist PETER COOK.** Tickets £8.00 (u/18s/students FREE) now available from choir members (01291 623310, 620414, 650472 and Chepstow Bookshop).

SUNDAY DECEMBER 9th, 3.00pm

St MARY'S PRIORY CHURCH CHEPSTOW

Peter Cook (organ), Richard Kubiak (Piano)

St John's-on-the-Hill School Chamber Choir

(Director – David Mitchell)

Musical Director CCS –Graham Bull

Give yourselves a break from the hustle and bustle, and come and enjoy some lovely Christmas music!

**Please view our website (www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk) for further information (contact details available).Chepstow Choral Society is affiliated to

Ty Cerdd – Music Centre Wales  and Making Music – The National Federation of Music Societies. Registered charity no. 1127098

GARDENING CORNER

I'm all behind at the moment and I have so many things I want to do that I'm struggling to know what to do first! Mind you that is a general problem here as there is always plenty to do and seemingly not enough hours in the day. That said, I'm not one to sit down with my feet up reading the paper – I have to be busy. We recently took down an old UVPC conservatory. It had seen better days and had been moved once before when we extended the house. In its place we have had an oak framed 'garden room' built, something that we have always wanted but had to save up to afford. With glass designed to reflect the heat from the sun's rays, and a solid slate roof, the plan is that we can use it both summer and winter. This was something that the old conservatory could never cater for as it was either way too hot, or way too cold. With the building up, it has taken a long time to finish off – four coats of paint on the ceiling, the same on the walls, old flooring up and replaced. It seemed a never ending job, but we are nearly there. One thing we have promised ourselves are some nice comfortable chairs in which to relax and read the paper – well you get to that age when sometimes it has to be done, and we have both reached that age!

I'm a bit concerned about the bees at the moment. The last time I opened them up was some weeks ago, when I removed all of the queen excluders. This allows the queen to move around in the hive during the winter. This is because the bees group together in a ball in order to keep warm, and then gradually move through the hive, eating their food supplies as they go. The ball of bees need the queen, and the queen needs the ball of bees, so where one goes, they all go. The excluder would stop this free movement, and the bees would die as they would refuse to leave the queen to perish. This is loyalty to the extreme, but is one reason the bees are still here after so many million years of evolution. Anyway, I was saying. When I opened them up last time, I couldn't get over how many thousands of bees there were in most of the hives. Normally by the end of November the numbers of bees surviving has plummeted to some five or six thousand. These are the bees that are 'designed' to last the winter out and to kick start things again in the spring. They will live for up to six months when the normal, summer life span is only some five or six weeks. With a good year for bees, numbers were high anyway, but the exceptionally mild weather meant that many of the bees were continuing to forage, but with so many bees about, the food reserves will not last and that is going to be a major problem. Fortunately some colder weather has now arrived, and this will mean that numbers will fall rapidly, but the damage may already be done and food supplies are likely to be short. I'll need to get some stores bought in ready. This usually comprises of 'bee candy' – in essence fondant icing. As this is much drier than a sugar syrup mixture, the bees don't have the problem of excess water in the hive which is a major problem this time of year, as it results in diseases. Not good news. So it will be a case of keeping a close eye on things next year in order to get the bees through the winter successfully.

I have managed to get some jobs done outside in the garden. The rose garden is almost complete, although I have to construct a pergola over the seating area as soon as the weather allows. I have bought some climbing roses and two of these will be for growing over the timber frame. I'm also intending to create two small beds alongside the house wall with just one climbing rose in each. This will hopefully help break up the large amount of render, making it look a little more attractive, and also provide some evening scent for when we sit in the new garden

room as the roses will be close to the door, and the varieties selected are supposedly the best for scent. We have two long strips of grass alongside the drive which were planted at one time with daffodils. Over the years the daffodils have gradually got less and less, and the grass has given way to dandelions and other weeds. The plan was to cut the daffodil foliage down once the bulbs had a chance to replenish their food stocks for next year, but as the areas are made-up ground the soil level has sunk and I can no longer mow the grass. I sprayed the weeds off some weeks ago and have planted a load of new daffodil bulbs. I'm currently tipping loads of top soil on top, to bring the soil level back up to the right height and once this has settled and been levelled out I intend to put some more grass down. These beds border on to a neighbouring field and we have a fence that tops the boundary wall. I have been nurturing some wisteria plants that I bought over a year ago. They are a new variety that are highly scented and meant to flower in the first year. The intention is to plant the three at some six metre spacing along the fence, and then allow them to grow along, creating a whole boundary fence of scented wisteria. That is the plan, but I may need to do consider what to do in order to keep the neighbouring sheep away and stop them eating them!

We are still busy harvesting winter vegetables. Generally things have done quite well despite the weather. AS always, some things have thrived and others have suffered badly, to the point of being a total loss. Root vegetables in particular seem to have done extremely well, although some of the carrots split as they were short of water, and when it did arrive of course they started growing again, splitting their skins. I have always struggled to grow parsnips as they have suffered badly from bacterial canker – brown gooey marks on the outside of the skin. I had said I'd give them one more try this year. The germination wasn't brilliant, but the parsnips have been great and until now, have showed no signs of canker. Similarly carrots and celeriac have been badly affected by carrot root fly, but this year they have been relatively fly damage free. Some of the carrots were protected by a very fine mesh net, the same as I used for the cauliflowers, so this explains why they have been bug free, but even those not protected (I just never got around to covering them over), have also survived well. At the moment it is too wet to get on any of the vegetable beds or flower borders so we have to be a little patient. Normally I have ordered and received all of the seeds for next year, but apart from marking the catalogues up with potential purchases, I haven't splashed the cash. I need to get on with this as soon as possible otherwise the varieties that are most popular may disappear. Encouraged by the assistant head gardener, I'm intending to be a bit more decisive this year with what I grow. Normally I grow lots of everything, and end up composting a large percentage, as we simply can't eat everything. Things like hot chilli peppers. There are only so many that you can eat, and we have a good store of dried chilli flakes for cooking, so enough is enough. We also have pickled onions to last a couple of years, so think we can rest from growing these at least for one year. I also like to grow my own garlic, but have never had a great deal of success, so will probably not bother this year and see how we get on. So I'm going to try and grow smaller amounts, but more often, in order to get a constant supply, without the need to freeze too much. That is the plan, but we will see how we get on! Nature has a habit of producing its own timetable, so experience tells me that everything will still come in for harvesting at the same time – even if there is several weeks between sowing the seed! As well as the vegetables, we are still eating our own apples and pears. They have done well this year, although the warmer weather

Continued on page 20

Continued from page 19

was making it more difficult to store for any time. The colder spell has arrived in time, and there is nothing better than a chilled cox apple for flavour at this time of year.

So with it too wet outside to get on the soil I'm starting a plan of attack to tackle the hedges, trees and other clearing up jobs. Fortunately all but one of the hedges were cut earlier in the year, but I need to go over these once more to tidy them up. The beech hedge that missed the cut had a lot of Scottish flame flower growing through it and it seemed such a shame to cut all this off at the time. This was much later flowering than usual, I think because of the very hot weather. It seems to flourish in warm, moist summers. It finished flowering some time ago, but has beautiful seed heads of quite vivid purple after, so provides interest for some time. The seeds have now fallen, so it's time to give the hedge a good short back and sides. The fruit and ornamental trees also need some attention, so I'll make a start on these in the next day or so. Old, damaged wood and crossing branches will be the priority, as I try to create a nice 'open' shaped head. Several of the apples are badly affected by canker however so I will need to be a little more drastic with these. First on the list however is the weeping beech alongside the house. It's main attraction, apart from the weeping habit is that it is used as the bird feeding station and also as the support for our outside Christmas lights. I like to keep it in shape as it leans with the weeping habit and has all its weight on one side, so want to make sure it doesn't get too heavy, that the weight pulls it over. I need to get on with this as lighting up day is always the 1st December and time is getting on. Which is a timely way of us saying a merry Christmas and a happy New Year to everyone. We hope that you have a wonderful time with family and friends. We have the four grandchildren (all under four) arriving at some time over the season (and their parents of course), which we are so looking forward to. Happy gardening until February.

Steve and Felicity Hunt.

SHIRENEWTON WI

REFLEXOLOGY EVENING

Our October talk on Reflexology was given by Annabelle Hancock. Annabelle works as an alternative therapist, specialising in reflexology, but she also offers reiki, Thai foot massage and Indian head massage and is trained in the Emmett's Technique working on muscle release. She explained the benefits of these therapies and in particular reflexology which uses acupressure points in the feet to maintain or restore the body's healthy balance and to de-stress the mind. It can be used to treat ailments and as a preventative treatment.



I was the lucky chosen one and enjoyed a very calming treatment. The photograph does not show the tranquil aura that surrounded me during and after the treatment, but believe me, it was there. Annabelle runs a mobile alternative therapy service. You can contact her on 01291 650309 or 07910 096848.

LINE DANCING FUN

At our November meeting, Shirenewton W.I. members were treated to an evening of dancing. Noreen's Line Dancing group came along to show us some 'new moves', and under Noreen's clear instructions we were taught four new dances including Nothing New and Ho Down. We all had lots of fun even if our 'grapevines' did get a little tangled at times. We all agreed that line dancing is a great activity for all ages and abilities as it involves being active and having a good laugh – always an enjoyable combination.



Noreen teaches line dancing at the Bulwark Dance Studio on Monday and Tuesday mornings and at Mathern Village Hall on Friday evenings. She also runs 'Foxtrot Friday', a social dance for the disabled and people with dementia, and offers classes in conjunction with Chepstow Parkinsons Group on Wednesdays. For further details please contact Noreen on noreenwall13@googlemail.com

Our December meeting is a Christmas meal at the Tredgar Arms on Thursday 13th December at 7.15 pm.

The New Year kicks off at 7.15 on Thursday January 10th at the Recreation Hall with a talk on **Saving the Oldest Pyramid in Cairo by Peter James**, in which Peter will also explain his theories on how the pyramids were constructed. Everyone is welcome. Please contact Diane Ashton Smith (01291 628838) or Jane Butterworth (01291 641704) for further details.



A selection of photographs from the "Flowers for the fallen" in the Church







Trust

Rick Hayes

I was asked at work to write about trust. This is something that I should feel comfortable writing about, after all I am a minister and chaplain. But trust is a two-way thing. I can show trust, but if the person or other living creature I trust in doesn't trust me, things will never get any better, there will be no love and growth in the relationship. In fact, there may even be a moving apart because in the end neither side trusts the other.

Trust goes a long way. When I go back to when I was a young lad, my dad used to say if you shake hands on a deal, then the deal is sealed, and you must carry out what has been agreed. What about today, would you trust a hand shake to seal the deal? I know when I offer someone my hand, they sometimes look slightly nervous, they look at the offered hand for a few moments and then they take it and shake, then a smile comes across their faces.

After the hand shake, a bond can be formed, and trust built on. Sharing then comes into the trust, where a little is shared to start, then as the trust grows, more is shared and so on.

Luke 16: 10 *"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.* But how easy it is for trust to be broken. A broken word can cause too much hurt to another. Not fulfilling a part of the trust with another can cause the bond to fall apart, and the hand shake may then be accepted a little more grudgingly. Have you ever felt that way? Where you feel you have trusted someone and then that trust has been let down. How have you acted towards the other party? Now think of a time when you may have broken a trust, what did you try and do to get that trust back? How did the other party treat you? And most importantly how did the situation make you feel?

When we have trust with each other we also have a genuine respect for each other, we will know that when the chips are down, we will be there for each other. This comes also from being in the Lord's family; we should all have that trust with each other, we should all know that we are there for each other, ready to help each other in whatever way we can.

Trust can also bring quality, because none of us has all the gifts that God can give. But there are two important issues about God's gifts: one is identifying what gifts He has blessed us with and two is knowing where and when to use those gifts. The trust comes where I am not able to help someone, but I know someone else who can, trusting that that person will be able use their gifts for the benefit of the other person.

Another thing in trust is trusting that God will always give us the gifts we need to use when we need to use them. Praying for the Lord to give you a certain gift in a certain situation always helps, well it does me. Prayer is a very, very powerful tool, and it is a gift we can all use, however, wherever and whenever we pray. Some people think if we go around trusting everyone, we are naive, simple and possibly a walkover. Not true. Doesn't our law state innocent until proven guilty?

Well why not trust until proven untrustworthy? Of course, if we find we encounter untrustworthy people, which we sometimes do, we can always give another chance, trust can be earned again, don't you think? I do, I am always giving others a second and third chance, and I trust where I fall short, they will do the same for me.

So, remember, trust takes two, trust can be built on, and it can also come crashing down if the trust is broken in any way.

Nerys's Natty Nosh

Merry Christmas savoury platter



***Glamorgan sausages**
Stuffed Peppers with herbed cream
cheese and asparagus
Crispy toast with salmon mousse and
smoked salmon
Cheese biscuits with olive tapenade,
tomato and goats cheese
Parmesan crisps
Rye bread, salami, brie and chopped
olives*

Glamorgan Sausages -vegetarian.

Serves 4- makes 12 sausages.

Ingredients .

150g grated Caerphilly cheese
125g fresh breadcrumbs
2 tablespoons finely chopped leeks or spring onions
3 egg yolks
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
½ teaspoon thyme (optional)
1 teaspoon prepared English mustard
Seasoning to taste
Coating; 1 egg white and 1 cup breadcrumbs
Oil for frying

Method

- 1** Mix the cheese, breadcrumbs and leeks/spring onions in the food processor.
- 2** Whisk the yolks, herbs, mustard and seasoning together.
- 3** Add to the breadcrumbs and cheese mixture and whiz again in the food processor.
- 4** The mixture should be quite moist and come together easily in your hand but if not add another egg yolk or a little milk.
- 5** Divide into 10- 12 pieces and roll each into a sausage to about 5 cm.

6 You can make them ahead to this point and store in the fridge for up to a day.

7 Dip in egg white, roll in the extra breadcrumbs and fry until golden brown in the hot oil.

8 Serve with potato chips and salad.

Tips

If you can't find Caerphilly cheese, use Lancashire cheese or strong cheddar.

Parmesan Crisps.



Ingredient

Parmesan

Method

1. Grate the Parmesan finely.
2. Cover a baking sheet with greaseproof paper.
3. Using a 2" circular pastry-cutter, place the cutter on top of the greaseproof paper and sprinkle a heaped teaspoon of cheese inside

the cutter to make a complete disk. Do NOT press the cheese down into place - it will melt and collapse delicately into itself as it bakes.)

4. Move the cutter along, and repeat the process. Continue until the greaseproof paper is covered in cheese disks. Leave a few millimetres between each disk - they don't spread in baking like biscuits do.

5. Bake at 175C for 8-10 minutes until golden brown. They start to brown when they stop bubbling, so watch them carefully. When golden brown transfer them to a wire rack to cool and crisp. Store in an air-tight container.

You can also make a sweet platter.

Make your own biscuit mixture into spoon shapes or hearts cover with melted chocolate. Chocolate fruit. Truffles.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Nadolig Llawen a Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.

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SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Another Annual General Meeting, it only seemed like yesterday that we had the last! Our A.G.M.'s are famous (or is it infamous?) the officers and committee were reinstated, as we said, 'if it's not broken don't mend it'!

The speaker for the evening was Chris Dale who gave an excellent talk entitled 'The Old Moun-ton House'. He had discovered foundations of a house in a garden in Moun-ton and had been intrigued to find out who owned it. His research into the history of this old house was amazing. It has a connection with Shirenewton as the Hollis family had once owned it at one time and of course that family had owned Shirenewton Hall also.

Dates for your diary:

- Monday, 10th December Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall
2.00pm – 5.00pm
- Tuesday, 18th December Visit to Portskewt Church (minced pies &
Mulled wine) Talk & Tour. Afterwards supper at the
Tredegar Arms.
- Thursday, 27th December Winter Solstice walk up to Grey Hill
Meeting at the Woodland Tavern at **7.30am**
Sunrise 8.10 am (approx).
Breakfast afterwards at the Woodland Tavern.
- Monday, 14th January Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall
2.00 pm – 5.00 pm
- Tuesday, 28th January Quiz at the Recreational Hall, 7.00 pm 2019

DEFIBRILLATOR LOCATIONS

(Cabinets do not require codes, they are unlocked although they have a key pad)

- Carpenters Arms (on the Usk road)
- Huntsman Hotel (on the Usk road)
- Tredegar Arms (Shirenewton village)
-  (House half way between Blethyn Close and the School in Mynyddbach)
- Earlswood Hall (Earlswood)
- Shirenewton School



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Contact my mum
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I am a 15 year old girl who lives in Mynyddbach. I am looking for work.

I have learned basic CPR and First aid in Guides and Life Saving.

Richard Kopp

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LOCAL DIARY DATES

December	Event	Location
1st 7.30pm	Winter Shirefest	Huntsman Hotel
2nd	Advent Fair	Saysell Centre
3rd 7.15pm	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
9th	Carols around the Christmas Tree	TA Car Park
10th 2.00pm	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation Hall
15th 10.30am	Village Market	Recreation Hall
16th 2.30pm	Carol Service Sherry Mincepies	St Peters Church
18th	Shirenewton Local History Society	Visit Portskewitt Church
24th	Cristingle in Church Mulled wine & Mincepies	Shirenewton Church Saysell Centre
25th	Christmas Day family service	Shirenewton Church
27th 7.30pm	Shirenewton Local History Society	Huntsman Hotel
January	Event	Location
4th 10.00am	Life Changes	Tredegar Arms
7th 7.00pm	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
18th 7.00pm	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation Hall
31st 7.30pm	Shirenewton 800 years celebration mtg.	Tredegar Arms

Readers and Sides Persons St Thomas a Beckett Church, Shirenewton		December 2018 to February 2019	
December	Sunday Service	Readers	Sides Persons
2nd December	First Sunday of Advent	Aileen Doggett Diane Marlow	Aileen Doggett Diane Marlow
9th December	Second Sunday of Advent	Mark Broughton Glynis MacDonald	Mark Broughton Glynis MacDonald
16th December	Third Sunday of Advent	Cynthia Smith Paul Morecombe	Cynthia Smith Paul Morecombe
23rd December	Fourth Sunday of Advent	Aileen Doggett James Lenev	Aileen Doggett Claire Lewis
24 & 25th December	Christmas Day Midnight Mass 11.30 p.m (24th) 10.30 a.m Family Service	T.B.C.	Claire Lewis Graham Lambert
30th December	First Sunday of Christmas	Group Service at	Mounton
January	Sunday Service	Readers	Side Persons
6th January	Epiphany	Chris Sturke Margaret Sturke	Chris Sturke Margaret Sturke
13th January	Baptism of Christ	Aileen Doggett Frances Grey	Aileen Doggett Frances Grey
20th January	Third Sunday of Epiphany	Mark Broughton Ruth Savagar	Mark Broughton Graham Lambert
27th January	Fourth Sunday of Epiphany	Aileen Doggett Cynthia Smith	Aileen Doggett Cynthia Smith
February	Sunday Service	Readers	Side Persons
3rds February	Presentation of Christ In the Temple	Bill Clarke Janet Horton	Bill Clarke Janet Horton
10th February	Fourth Sunday before Lent	Mark Broughton Jane Smith-Haddon	Mark Broughton Jane Smith-Haddon
17th February	Third Sunday before Lent	James Leaney Glynis MacDonald	Claire Lewis Graham Lambert
24th February	Second Sunday before Lent	Chris Sturke Margaret Sturke	Chris Sturke Margaret Sturke

LOCAL CONTACTS

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Church of St. Thomas à Becket Shirenewton

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PCC Treasurer	Mark Broughton	01291 641 797
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Organists	Mike Penney	01291 650 653
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Tower Captain	Lynn Morcombe	01291 641 671
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200 Club		

Church of St Tewdrics's Mathern

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SHIRENEWTON PARISH MAGAZINE EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Published: by The Church of St. Thomas á Becket Shirenewton

Editor: Terry Walters 01291 641338 email: terencewalters@hotmail.com

The cost of the Magazine is £1 per issue/10 issues for £10. Copies are delivered free by local distributors to those who have pre-paid. Monthly copies are available at the Church.

To order your regular copy, contact Bob O'Keefe 01291 641686

Advertising Rates for Commercial organisations

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Advertising for Local and Charity organisations is free.

Editorial policy is to print what you provide, space and technology permitting.

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Deadline for February 2019 issue is 9:00 am 28th January 2019