

Price £1:50

FROM THE VICARAGE Julian E LI White

Dear People of the Parish,

This is the time of year when a gentle change appears in our life. Summer is past and autumn is upon us. It is, appropriately, the season of Harvest Thanksgiving and – for many –a time to reflect on the bounty of the past and an opportunity to anticipate the future. I have often preached (and you have suffered as a result!) on both issues.

I think that it is important to appreciate that 'harvest' is not some fossilised churchy tradition that never changes, but a fluid movement that seeks to, for example, impact on us in new and legitimate ways. For instance, harvest is not solely to do with cultivation of the land but equally concerned with developments in the industrial and technological world. In this respect the harvest theme is both far ranging and deeply personal.

The harvest season is overwhelmingly concerned with time. The Bible picks up on this when it reminds us that there is a time to undertake this or that, which includes the appropriate time to sow and harvest and to live and die. Such times might not always be of our choice or liking but it is God, not us, who sets the parameters.

When, like me, you are getting a bit long in the tooth, it is quite easy to argue that the harvest of life was better in the past than it is today and certainly when confronted with the future. This, surprisingly often, is an incorrect assumption.

I could, for example, drone on about how the church structure was better in the 'good old days'. Not only is this boring but one can understand why clergy are obliged to retire at a certain age. God forbid that I should become a sad old retread who desperately clings on to

Congratulations to our 200 Club winners in September:

- 1. Elizabeth Moore
- 2. James Bounds

3. Pip Penney

4. Brian Harper

some kind of ministry. I recall my first Vicar stressing the importance of "Knowing when to go and getting on with it." I apologise for making this statement in that it might have raised your hopes!

Yes, I could ramble on about – when I was ordained – there were over one hundred 'full time' dog-collars in this diocese. Now there are, I believe, less than fifty. Almost certainly connected with this, is the not insignificant closure of church buildings in the last few decades. Of the churches in which I have preached, a number no longer exist as such. One has long been converted into an accommodation block and another is a public car park. I just hope that this is not a reflection on my ministry.

And yet, such an observation — if left to stand alone - does not paint the whole picture. In the past the Vicar was frequently left to 'run the show' as best he saw fit. In parochial terms this meant that he (never a 'she' in those days) was chief cook and bottle-washer. Areas such as parochial finance and even the parish magazine were often the sole concern of the incumbent. Nowadays these aspects are undertaken by secular members of the parish invariably to a higher standard than before. The laity have reclaimed their church in many key aspects which is how it should be. Overall, and despite the frustrations of the clergy from time to time, this is indicative of a democratic society.



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Personal asides apart, it is time to thank Revd. Nansi Davies and Gilly Lambert for their unstinting support of Shirenewton Church during the difficult and demanding period of the 'lockdown'. The church has been able to re-boot a regular pattern of worship over the past few weeks and they have been instrumental in this effort. We are also indebted and grateful to the Churchwardens – Andrew Baker and Sally Saysell – who have organised much of the safety and regulatory issues which have enabled the Christian witness to continue.

The effect of the Corona Virus pandemic has had a profound effect on many church activities. Not least these include Harvest celebrations. Elsewhere in this magazine you will find details of how this time is to be recognised and I trust you will be able to contribute your time and support in this period of thanksgiving.

I wish you every blessing at this demanding time.

Julian E LI White (Rector & Vicar)

Passed away on Thursday evening 10th September, peacefully in his chair at home, **STEPHEN HENIG**, of Springfield, Mynyddbach. He will be missed by his many friends.

Amanda

Fully qualified, experienced Hairdresser / Barber

For a relaxing, friendly, one to one service in my new custom built salon at Bulwark, Chepstow NP16 5JY.

Contact jonesfreebird@aol.com or call 07753835984 / 01291620334 for a consultation.

Shirenewton Community Council

Extracts from the minutes of the remote Annual and monthly meetings held on 7th September 2020

At the Annual Meeting Councillor Butterworth was unanimously elected to continue as Chair until the next Annual Meeting in May 2021, and Councillor Jayne McKenna was elected as Vice Chair.

At the ordinary meeting Councillor Emma Nigogosian was co-opted to fill the vacant position in the Mynyddbach ward, leaving only one further vacancy in the Earlswood ward.

Please see list of contacts at the back of the magazine for Councillors details.

Council considered the following planning applications:

1. DM/2020/01053 The Larches, Usk Road, Mynyddbach Proposed demolition of an existing dwelling and garage and construction of a new replacement self-build dwelling and detached garage.

Council noted that the site sits below the B4555 close to the Carpenters Arms and on the outside of the bend where the topography falls away from the road, and the site is well screened from the road by trees and other green matter. The property itself currently comprises a typical post war bungalow and garage constructed from rendered block and brick with various gable elevations. The roof is concrete tiles and the windows are white upvc double glazed units. Overall it is of no architectural value and by today's standards is not an energy efficient building.

The applicant wishes to replace the bungalow and garage with a new construction - an oak framed building by Border Oak. This is a two storey building with dormer windows, exposed oak beams and rendered and brick walls. The proposed double garage will be in similar materials. The house will be aligned to take advantage of the sun's energy which necessitates a revised layout for approaching the house. Sewerage is to be treated on site.

The applicant says there are no trees or hedges affected by the proposed development. A bat survey confirms there are Lesser Horseshoe and Common Pipistrelle bats at varying locations on the existing dwelling requiring mitigation requirements.

MCC planning policy allows for replacement dwellings where there is no architectural significance and the design of the new dwelling is of a form, bulk, size and scale that respects its setting.

There is a third party comment that the track down to the site, which is also footpath 16 is incorrectly shown as being within the boundary. The footpath gives access to the Woodland Trust Whitemill Common and the redundant Whitemill WaterTreatment Works. Recommendation: Approval

2. DM/2020/00861 Bluebell Farm, Blackbird Farm Road, Earlswood

Proposed alterations and single storey extension.

Council noted that Bluebell Farm is tucked away on the far (northwesterly) side of the Castroggi valley and approached by its own drive. The house is a large two storey building and currently has a glass conservatory on the rear elevation off the games room. The proposal is to replace this conservatory with a larger more permanent single storey addition approx 6x3.5m and opening up the games room to provide kitchen dining and sitting area. The flat roof is to be manufactured slate and the walls finished in render and stonework in keeping with the existing building. The total increase in ground floor area is not given but is estimated at less than 20%.

As the roof is solid (apart from some velux units the light impact on nocturnal fauna should be minimal, though inevitably there will be some spillage from the large expanse of patio doors.

Footpath 156 runs through the site but does not appear to be affected by the application. Recommendation: Approval

Monthly police report -

<u>Crime - 14/07 - Burglary in Earlswood</u>

29/07 - Shed Break in Shirenewton

29/07 - Shed Break Shirenewton

03/08 - Animal Stolen from Farm in Shirenewton

07/08 - Theft of trailer in Mathern

19/08 - Assault in the Earlswood area

25/08 - Theft of aggregate in Wentwood

Public Safety -

The police cannot stress enough the importance of not giving personal information over the phone. If you have any concerns in relation to your

your bank account being hacked, or money supposedly being removed from your account. Hang up the call and ring your bank directly they can advise you. Never give information to someone who rings you out of the blue. For more advice please contact our cyber Team at cybercrimeunit@gwent.pnn.police.uk or check the Action Fraud website at www.actionfraud.police.uk or ring them on 0300 123 2040 if you think you have been scammed.

Operations

The police conducted a number off-road bike operation in Wentwood during this period, where the local Neighbourhood team from South Monmouthshire and Alway teamed up with specials to try and catch people using off road bikes.

Anti-Social Behaviour

A lot of the Anti-social Behaviour calls have been Covid-19 related and the police are warning, educating and issuing fixed penalties where appropriate, as well as off road bikes in the Wentwood Area.

Covid 19

There is no limit on the number of people who can be in an extended household but only two households can form part of the extended household. All the occupants of the two households will be part of the extended household, no matter how many people are in either household. The key rules are that

- Up to four households are able to join together to form an extended household. This means all the people living in these separate households become part of one extended household for the purposes of the coronavirus restrictions. Once you have agreed and joined an extended household, you cannot change this arrangement.
- always observe social distancing wash your hands regularly
- work from home if you can

Stay at home if you or anyone you live with has symptoms.

Your Voice Update - The Your Voice process has now closed and the police have processed the results. They will be in touch with partner agencies over the next few weeks to discuss the problems raised by the Community and will include them in the action week.

Other items of interest

Traaffic issues - Council debated a response to information received from Mon CC and expressed their disappointment following site meetings

in Shirenewton at the lack of positive assistance on traffic issues over a long period from Mon CC.

The latest response being — 'The traffic team are not aware of any reported accidents at this location (Shirenewton village centre) and with this scheme being cited as a good example to encourage better driver behaviour and a safer environment for pedestrians we do not propose any further review or changes to this arrangement at this time. With regard to the new proposed 20mph limit, I can report that we are still awaiting WG to introduce the new legislation however indications are that this will now be 2022.'

County Cllr Brown advised this Council that the proposed Welsh Government 20 mph speed limit will only apply to villages with street lights, villages without street lights had not been taken into account. She further suggested that when restrictions are eased in 2021 a traffic survey be undertaken in the community which she would then take forward.

Monmouthshire County Council Revised Local Development Plan The consultation on the preferred strategy has been postponed due to Covid19, it was expected that a report would go to the County Council in September 2020 with a new delivery timetable to be agreed with the Welsh Government, but this has now been amended to later in 2020: https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-current-consultations/

Temporary road closure – Gaerllwyd to PenycaemawrCouncil has been notified that the above road will be closed on 5th October, until works are completed on 7th October 2020, this is to allow Dwr Cymru to replace a water meter.

Dates of next meetings are Monday 5th October and Monday 2nd November at 7.00 pm, by public meeting in Shirenewton Recreation Hall, if possible, or by a remote meeting if government coronavirus restrictions still apply.

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

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 1090167

The society has been busy during September making plans for the coming year hopefully to start our monthly meetings in January. Of course we are reliant on the *covid* regulations improving by January, for our plan to be successful, we must think positively.

Our plans for the unveiling of the Martha Gellhorn Purple Plaque is still on track and we hope to hold the event on Friday, 20th November at the moment we are restricted to 30 people at an outside event, we must wait and see what new regulations are put in place.

We have very kindly been given a large collection of local history books and maps for our archive, which will need to be sorted and catalogued. Our archive is out of bounds at the moment due to the pandemic but we look forward when restrictions are eased to be able to add these to our existing collection.



Gardening Corner

As the initial lockdown period started, I remember thinking a lot about nature but particularly the normality that this might bring to our everyday lives. Just the simple things like trees coming back into leaf, blossom bursting forth, the arrival of the first cuckoo, and the first house marten. To people living in urban conurbations, these seemingly minor things probably pass by without many really noticing the changes going on in spring. If like us living in a rural community, these and many other signs are probably noted much more frequently, and they often become the subject of much conversation. With a relatively mild winter last year, the garden in particular, started to wake up much earlier than usual. Normally we struggle to get a single daffodil out in bloom for St. David's day but his year they were out in numbers and I can remember the first ones in full bloom two weeks earlier than usual. Not something that I can remember happening so early in previous years. A few days of early sunshine and increasing warmth meant the bees were out and about and making the most of the early pollen, especially from the willow and hazel, that was also in bloom earlier than usual. With things moving ahead so fast,

I expected to hear the first cuckoo at least on time (cuckoo Sunday), but it didn't arrive until a fortnight later, almost into May, but not guite. It's first arrival was (as bizarrely often seems to be the case) on a Sunday though – so some normality. Similarly, the house martens were also slightly later arriving. Fortunately, the artificial nests we put up, were up and ready for their arrival, but there was a bit of 'how's your father' when a resident sparrow took exception to being booted out of the one. It sat on the edge of the roof telling the martens in no uncertain manner what it thought of them. We thought all eight nests were soon inhabited, and waited to see how many 'natural' nests were also built. We usually end up with three or five others. The most families we have had was thirteen, but after a few weeks it was clear that we weren't going to get any more which was not a good sign. It wasn't long before the first broods were being hatched and we were soon enjoying the constant chattering of adults and babies alike. It looked like things were on for a second brood with the weather remaining fairly good, but then of course we had August, along with warnings from the bee-keeping association to be watchful, as there were reports coming in of bee colonies starving, especially if early honey had been extracted. That is never a good time to hear this message, but it can often happen as there is often a distinct gap between the flowers of summer and those of autumn especially where we get a prolonged dry spell. It is a time when numbers in the colony are at their highest, although the gueen will be starting to lay less eggs, as she prepares the hive for the coming winter. Now the summer has gone. Our bees survived this period. Although I had

extracted honey, I never try to be too greedy and leave ample supplies on just in case. We think the house martens have left, probably being blown south by the current, unseasonal North-east winds. We thought they had left a couple of weeks ago, but we had a few days where they returned to the house and valley below. No longer using their nests, it was time to take them down, clean them out and sterilize them with a blow torch to kill off any mites and disease. What I found wasn't good. Of the eight nests, one had never been used – we have never had that before. Of the others, one had been used and was empty, so that's a good sign, the next had a clutch of addled eggs, so the parents had obviously abandoned the nest or fallen prey to the sparrowhawk. The next had one dead chick in, but hopefully the others got away, although normally any fatalities often end up on the ground below the nest. The remainder were a disaster in that each nest had a full clutch of dead chicks. All I can think was that the bad august weather must have affected the parent's ability to catch food, and so the second families all failed.

In early spring, as I start sowing seed and re-potting plants into larger pots, I always discover over wintering gueen wasps in amongst the trays and pots. I always kill whatever I find, and continue to kill any that are stripping wood fibre off our summerhouse or pergolas scattered around the garden. As a gardener, this may seem perverse, as wasps in the early nest stages devour an awful lot of caterpillars and other bugs. But as a beekeeper, wasps can be a nightmare if nests are left completely unchecked and numbers build up as a result. Fortunately, the local badgers love wasp nests too so some that I never find are often dug out of the ground with the badgers enjoying a midnight feast. The trouble starts when the worker wasps turn to sweet things later in the season. Unfortunately, my mind was off the ball for a bit as I normally reduce the size of the entrances to the beehives but this year, I was late, mainly because of the wet and windy weather. As a result, I have lost four hives. The dead bees and wasps on the floor by the entrance telling a tale of what had gone on. It takes something like ten or twelve bees to inflict the killing sting on a wasp, and once the sting is used the bee dies. The wasp on the other hand can carry on stinging and one sting will also kill a bee, so you can see that it doesn't take many to weaken a hive, or drive the bees out altogether. We are now on top of the problem, and there are plenty of pears fallen on the ground as an alternative source for the wasps, so hopefully we won't lose any more hives. Another hard lesson learnt.

In the garden generally it has been a reasonable year as we reflect on another season gone by. We have been inundated with vegetables, so the neighbours have been benefitting as well as us. We had grown some varieties especially for the upcoming summer vegetable produce shows, but obviously with none being held, the glut resulted! It has also been a good year for fruit of all shapes. Our three freezers are now full, which is a problem as we still have to harvest the pears and usually, we poach them in mulled wine and then freeze them, one serving a time. To try and reduce the amount of waste the assistant head gardener has been busy in the kitchen as we have tried various recipes out. We are not big iam eaters but thought we would try a sugarless blueberry jam recipe that only took 25 minutes to cook. The results are looking good. The pickle cupboard is nearly full with various trail batches of chutney, the latest being pear, date, and walnut. That reminds me that I need to get on and "pickle my walnuts" as dear old Len Goodman used to say on strictly come dancing – well onions really in our case. This is a job I always have to do as I can tolerate the tears more than the assistant can (mainly because I have longer arms and can hold the onions further away! Mind you, there are a number of bottles of alcohol in the cupboard as well, as we have made several batches of Damson, as well as cherry gin. We also discovered a very old bottle of vodka in our drink's cupboard as well, which has been turned into cassis (using some of our excess blackcurrants). So, if we have a chilly winter, we will be well prepared. Generally, the results from this year's gardening effort have been guite good but there have been some noticeable failures. I tried some new tomato varieties this year and now wished I hadn't. The one lot in the tunnel was like the 'Day of the Triffids' as they tried to take over, ending up in a mass of tangled, rotting vegetation with very few tomatoes. The cucumbers started off well, but never really got going after that and this was a similar outcome for the outdoor melon as well. These have started flowering at long last, but they will never make a single melon before the end of the summer. To make things worse, despite all my best efforts with ground lime (to reduce the ph level in the soil) when planting, many of my vegetable beds now have club root disease, a nasty that lasts in the soil for over twenty years, just waiting to infect any new brassica crop. I did fortunately trial some new varieties of seed that are meant to be resistant to this disease. Purposefully planting these in infected beds, we have had guite good results, so there is hope. The trouble is, there is only one choice of calabrese, one cabbage, one cauliflower and one Brussels sprout variety available, so little option for the future. Many of you may have tried gardening for the

first time this year. If you have struggled with getting a worthwhile end result, please don't lose heart. There are many things that can be done to improve the end result and there is nothing like settling down to dinner where almost everything on the plate has travelled feet, not miles, and was harvested less than an hour before rather than several days. Until you taste home grown produce, you don't know what you are missing, so hang on in there, things will be better next time.

With extra time on my hands it has been nice to catch up on a list of jobs that I've been wanting to do for a long time. Seating areas and pergolas have been renovated or new ones built, new compost bins made as well as a few 'odder' jobs. So, the birds have several new boxes to try next year and as you can see below, we haven't just built a 'bug house' but a veritable 'bug hotel'! Yes that is a pallet and 9 inch concrete blocks you can see!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

All planned events are, unfortunately, very much subject to changes in the restrictions imposed to combat the coronavirus-covid19.

The Harvest Festival will take place on Sunday 4th October.

There will be a service in the Church as usual, observing the covid restrictions, but it will not be possible to hold a community lunch. It is suggested that people give more generously to the food bank that day or make a cash donation.

Other dates for your Diary:

Saturday 17th/Sunday 18th October—Shambles—see pages 22 and 23 Saturday 12th June 2021—Village fete—to be opened by the Bishop. Sunday 13th June 2021 —service to commemorate the renovation works in the Church, led by the Bishop

Friday 8th October 2021—Bring and Share in the Church Room—Mark Smith from the Antiques Roadshow will talk about the Victoria Cross.

REGULAR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CHURCH

A number of people have recently asked how they can make regular contributions to the church when perhaps they are unable to attend e.g. because they are shielding, or because they prefer not to use cash or cheques. There are two easy ways in which you can make a regular financial contribution to the church:

- 1: The Church in Wales runs a "Gift Direct" scheme which collects your contribution by direct debit on a monthly basis. The scheme also allows you to Gift Aid your donation so that the church can claim a basic rate tax refund, making your money go even further. Details of the scheme can be found here: https://churchinwales.contentfiles.net/media/documents/1798-Gift-Direct-English.pdf. Alternatively please contact me and I will email the leaflet to you.
- 2: You can set up a standing order with your bank. Please contact me and I will let you have the bank details. You then need to contact your bank to set up the standing order.

Graham Lambert

FAIRTRADE NEWS SEPTEMBER 2020

This is part of a report written by Robin Roth who works for the fairtrade supplier Traidcraft:

Before our lives were upended by the pandemic, we had been thinking long and hard about the future, and the future of fairtrade in particular. Just a few months ago our main concern was about the medium term effects of



climate change on producers' livelihoods. We knew that some farmers were struggling to maintain crop yields in the face of weather events that were becoming increasingly severe, such as droughts, floods, locust storms and parasitical invasions and we worried that in 10 years' time we would no longer be able to find co-operatives able to produce fairly traded coffee and cocoa.

It felt a bit extreme expressing these concerns quite so bluntly. Now with a pandemic raging across the globe we need to revise that 10 year figure down to **one.**

Farmers sit at the farthest end of the supply chain, out of sight and out of mind. In Britain we worry if the supermarkets are running low on items but there is always an assumption that the shelves will be restocked overnight and everything will return to normal soon. With ports locked down, internal transport disrupted, a major health crisis and migrant workers across the developing world being thrown out of work, there is a clear risk to the normal cycle of planting and harvesting across the globe. Added to this is the reality that in the fight for survival, companies and governments will be tempted to play dirty to get what they need.

I recently received a note from our colleagues at Traidcraft Exchange (the charity arm of Traidcraft) who have been following the chain of events in the fashion industry closely.

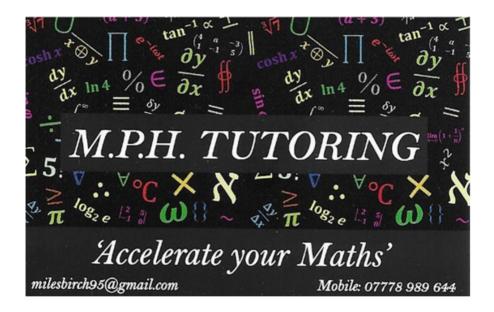
'At Traidcraft Exchange we have been very concerned to hear from contacts in India and Bangladesh, and read in the media about the behaviour of British fashion brands in response to the coronavirus crisis. One supplier told me on the phone from India that a high street retailer was asking him to accept a 50% discount in payment on an order which had already been manufactured – and that they would only pay him when 70% of the stock is sold. This leaves him with nothing to pay his workers and leaves them with no income whatever.'

In response, we have pulled together a new campaign which is calling on the brands to make a public commitment to honouring their contracts in full and supporting workers. Go to <u>www.traidcraftexchange.org</u> to read more.

More than ever it is so easy to feel powerless in the face of various global catastrophes, but we in the rich west can affect genuine positive change in the world, simply by choosing our purchases more carefully.

Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316@gmail.com

Marion McAdam 641 316 msm316 gmail.com



Miles Per Hour Tutoring is an online tutoring service giving extra tuition in Mathematics to students or parents ranging from Primary School to A Level.

It also caters for those who want a challenge furthering their knowledge or for students needing to catch up on work and helping to reach their desired target.

Charges are £25 an hour and can be arranged by telephoning 07778 989 644, by email to milesbirch95@gmail.com or by Facebook (MPH Tutoring)

Parish Magazine Outstanding Subscriptions

We have now reached the last quarter of the year with the delivery of the October copy of the Parish Magazine. The large majority of people who have their magazine delivered each month have paid their annual subscription- thank you! We are very grateful for your support.

However, there are still a small number of people who continue to have their magazine delivered each month but who haven't yet paid their subscription. Please will they pay their £12.00 annual subscription a.s.a.p. to the person who delivers their magazine or alternatively, please send it to Aileen Doggett, Church House, Shirenewton, Chepstow, NP16 6RL. Please make cheques payable to **Shirenewton Church PCC.**

Many thanks.

HUNTSMAN HOTEL

Wednesday Curry and chefs special takeaway £10

Friday fish and chips or chefs special takeaway £10.

Sunday lunch ready meals £12.

Sunday lunch served inside or outside £13.95.

Text or call 07766 237915 or Voice only 01291641521



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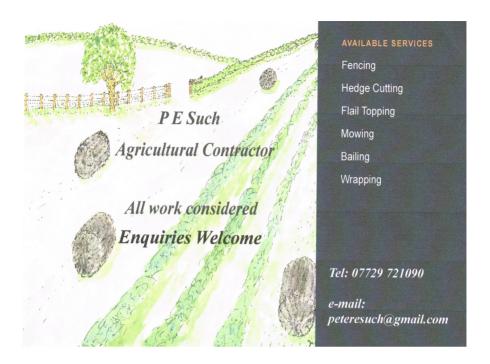
Shirenewton Babies and Toddler Group

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)



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:

The Bible Study Group will not be meeting during the current coronavirus-covid19 outbreak, but will start again as soon as possible

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.



MUSICAL DIRECTOR: GRAHAM BULL

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

www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk

CHEPSTOW CHORAL SOCIETY UPDATE

Like every other choral society or singing group, CCS has inevitably been out of action singing-wise since mid- March. At the time of writing we cannot say when rehearsals will resume.

CV19 has devastated the Performing Arts sector, with musicians, orchestras and particularly choral groups very badly affected. It is good to now see that small groups (6 persons) are to be allowed to sing in church services with stringent social distancing, other measures etc - so still a long way from 65+ singers together!

CCS committee has been meeting on-line and sent newsletters to our members. We are pursuing the possibility of trying some "Zoom rehearsing" in the autumn, although we know that is no substitute for normal serious rehearsals.

Importantly, on resumption, we will be actively promoting a membership recruitment campaign and would welcome anyone reading this now who would like to join us, or learn about what is involved, to make contact via the details below.

CCS is hopeful that we will be able to find a way of presenting some carol singing for the people of Chepstow and surrounding areas in December – although this is <u>very</u> unlikely to be our usual "Christmas Music" presentation!

Please watch this space for more news and log on to our website for updated information, contact details, or telephone the number below ---Thank you

Marjorie Duerden – on behalf of CCS. Tel 01291 623310

www.chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk





Shirenewton And Mynydd Bach iLlumination Extravaganza 2020 – the latest

So 2020 may not have turned out to be the year that we were all expecting; at the time of writing there are whispers of second lockdowns, 'circuit breaks' and other such helpful imagery — BUT redoubtable bunch that we all are in The 'Newton, ShAMBLE continues undaunted! Here's a round-up of everything you need to know about the 2020 extravaganza

What is this 'ShAMBLE' thing again?

Shirenewton and Mynydd Bach iLlumination Extravaganza (or ShAMBLE to its friends) is an annual event in which the residents of the village are invited to decorate their windows at dusk over one weekend in October, with the aim of creating a spectacular outdoor gallery for everyone to enjoy. 2020 will be its third glorious year!

When is ShAMBLE 2020?

The evenings of Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th October – starting around 6.30pm. Get it in your diary!



Follow us on social media!

Instagram: shirenewton_shamble

Twitter: @ShireShAMBLE

Facebook: Shirenewton, Mynydd Bach and Earlswood Community Page

Is there a theme?

Yes, but it's completely optional, there to give you a little bit of inspiration; if you'd rather do your own thing that's fine – anything goes!

The theme for 2020 is... 'What a Wonderful World'

How do I take part?

If <u>you'd</u> like to decorate your window, that's great. So that we can include you on our map please follow this link and complete the very simple form: <u>www.shirenewtonshamble.org.uk</u> Please, please, please register by 9th October as this gives us time to get the maps printed

Will there be a party at the Rec this year? Unfortunately, this part <u>can't</u> happen this year because of the need to keep everything Covid-safe and to maintain social distancing.



Where can I get craft materials and ideas for decorating my window?

There is a supply of craft materials that are free for anyone who'd like them to use available outside Paula and Tom's house at **11**, **Clearview**. Please do come and help yourself!

We're hoping to post a few videos on social media with ideas and tips for creating your masterpiece.

Keep an eye on our social media channels for more

information.

Where can I get a map? There will be copies of the map and also lots of high-vis jackets in the phone box near the Tredegar Arms on the evenings of 16th and 17th October (please return the jackets when you've used them so we can use them again next year). We will also make the map available online.

Let's make ShAMBLE 2020 the best year yet. CRAFT "CREATIVITY "COMMUNITY

Jude, Paula and Hazel - a.k.a. the ShAMBLE crew xxx

Nerys's Natty Nosh

We all sometimes crave a little comfort food. There is nothing wrong with that now and again, but always source the best you can afford. These sausages are organic, meaty and delicious. I cooked them in the air fryer. I served them with mushrooms, onion, courgette, red pepper a dash of Worcester sauce and garnished with fresh chopped parsley.



Either serve them with bread, mustard and a dash of tomato ketchup, Or on their own with a selection of wholesome vegetables.



Gin-soaked Blackberry & Apple Crumble Slice.



Thank you Janet Horton for the blackberries.

We have eating apple trees in our garden and they are juicy and ready to eat so I decided to make this delicious pudding.

Ingredients:

For the blackberries:

200g blackberries

100ml gin

2tbsp sugar (remove if using sloe gin)

For the apples:

500g cooking apples, like Braeburn. I used eating apples.

2tsp cinnamon

1tsp nutmeg

1tsp vanilla

50g light brown sugar

2 tbsp cornstarch

For the crumble:

200g light brown sugar

220g plain flour

1tsp baking powder

100g porridge oats

see over

200g slightly salted butter, melted Flaked almonds, to top For the cream cheese filling: 250g cream cheese 25g icing sugar 1 egg 1tsp vanilla 1tbsp lemon juice

Method:

To macerate the blackberries, toss them in a container with the sugar and gin. Leave to soak for a few hours, then strain out the gin and set aside.

- 1. Preheat the oven to 200C Line a 20cm square tin with baking parchment.
- 2. Peel, core and dice the apples. Add to a medium saucepan with 50ml of water, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla and brown sugar. Heat on a low simmer for 5 minutes. Combine 50ml of water with the cornstarch. Add the mixture to the pan along with the leftover gin and simmer for another 5 minutes, until the apples are soft.
- 3. In a bowl, mix together the sugar, flour, baking powder and oats. Pour in the melted butter and combine until you reach a sandy consistency. Keep 1/3 of the mix aside for the topping and press the remaining $\frac{2}{3}$ of the crumble into the base of your tin. A bit of parchment wrapped around the bottom of a glass works well here to get a densely packed base.
- 4. To make the cream cheese filling, beat together the cream cheese, icing sugar, egg, vanilla and lemon juice until light and fluffy. Use a spatula to layer this on top of your crumble base.
- 5. Evenly scatter the macerated blackberries on top of the cream filling, then cover with the apple mix. Finally cover with the remaining crumble.
- 6. Bake on the middle shelf for 20 minutes. Scatter the top with flaked almonds then bake for another 10 minutes until the top is golden and crispy. Leave to cool for an hour, then refrigerate for a few hours before removing from the pan and slice.

Enjoy!

If you would like to see more recipes, please join me and friends on Facebook. Look for Groups and Click on Happy Recipes to Share.

Shirenewton W.I.



Photo: John Burrows

I am sure that we have all come to appreciate our local surroundings so much more since March. But did you know that we have a bridge of world heritage and record breaking status in the heart of Chepstow? Well you would if you have listened to John Burrows' excellent talk on Chepstow Bridge 1816.

Shirenewton W.I.'s meetings resumed with John's talk via Zoom in September. He explained the history of John Urpeth Rastrick's design and construction of this elegant regency bridge over the River Wye. Not only is it the largest iron road bridge built pre 1845 in the world, but it also spans the Wye at Chepstow which has the fastest tide rise on Earth – quite a challenge for Rastrick.

John's talk was illuminated by some stunning photographs which reminded us to feel grateful that we are lucky enough to live here. Our W.I. members all agreed that this talk would help us appreciate Chepstow's beautiful bridge so much more in future. Thank you John.

Our next W.I. meeting will be on Thursday 8^{th} October at 7.15pm – it will be a Zoom talk by John Sheen titled 'Five Boys and a Pasty'. Please contact Jane Butterworth 01291 641704 if you would like to join us.

Jackie Broughton

THE BELLS

Not much more to report over the last month. We continue to have a short practice each Friday evening and this not only allows to hone our skills ringing the bells in the current unusual way (3 from the nave and 3 from the upstairs ringing room) but it maintains the cohesion and camaraderie of the band. We also ring each Sunday for service but for a much shortened period that in more normal times – just 15 minutes as opposed to 45 minutes.

What I have also done over this period (and not strictly to do with the bells) is to complete the production of a complete spare set of keys for the main doors of the church – these are the main entrance door, the door to the Parvis (room above the porch), the door into the tower and finally the side door in the chancel. It is this last door key that has been recently made. To make keys for these old early Victorian locks requires the lock to be removed and taken to my workshop and if anything the recent lockdown made this process easier than usual when the church was closed. Blanks for these keys have in the main been provided by Newport Locksmiths – a company I have found to be extremely helpful in this regard.

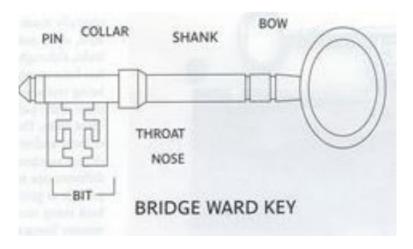


Figure 1

The keys are not cut in the conventional way (as might happen at Timsons) but are drilled and filed until a smooth action is achieved on the lock itself. This can be quite a drawn out process taking up to 4 hours to complete. To illustrate the process I have included 4 Figures. The basic parts of a key are shown in Figure 1. Figure 2 shows the original side door key and the blank for the reproduced spare key. Figure 3 shows the original key in the lock and figure 4 shows the original key and the new spare. There is a bit more finishing to do on the new key before it is presented. Keep safe. Mike Penney.





Figures 2 and 3



Figure 4

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

www.shirenewtonchurch.com www.shirenewtonshop.com

Well the shop website has been totally removed and archived. We still have the affiliate account with Amazon and there is a link to Amazon from the front page of the Church website. If you click through to Amazon from this link the church will get a small commission on your purchase.

I can't see any point in keeping the <u>shirenewtonshop.com</u> domain and intend not to renew it in November (I think) when it is up for renewal. If anyone local wants to take over the domain please get in touch with me to discuss a transfer.

There was some sort of power surge in mid-August in Mynyddbach. It knocked out the power to the house, tripped the entire system and fried my video doorbell.

We were in Spain but I knew the whole house was down as I couldn't view any of my CCTV cameras. After a neighbour kindly restored the power, the main CCTV system came back but the doorbell just refused to re-connect to the WiFi. On my return I tried to reset the doorbell but it simply wouldn't connect to the WiFi so I assume the power surge knocked out the relevant components.

After some research I decided to replace it with the new v2 Ring doorbell. Ring is an Amazon company and the doorbell is available via the aforementioned Amazon link on the church website for £89. I think this is a bit of a steal. You can also purchase WiFi ringers (£29 each) which you can position anywhere in the house which has WiFi and power. You simply plug them into a power socket. The doorbell can also power a standard doorbell chime.

I already have wires for doorbell power and the Ring offers the option of permanent power or battery power. The battery allegedly offers around 6 months operation before a recharge is necessary. The installation process was straight forward and no technical skills are required. The app works well and the quality of the video is stunning. So, once again, wherever I am in the world if the doorbell is pressed it will ring on my phone and I can answer and have a conversation with whomever is at the door.

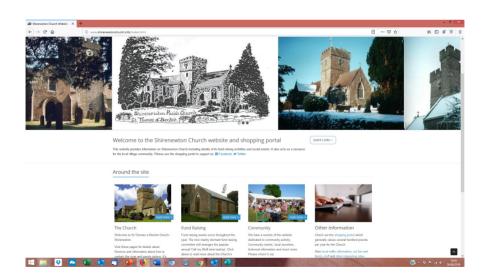
I'd absolutely recommend the Ring but warn you that it's bigger than you might think. It was certainly too big for our doorframe so I installed it on the adjacent wall.

My home automation is slowly coming along. I'm still using the WiFi plugs I wrote about last year and they are working flawlessly - and survived the power surge!

Needless to say the spam telephone calls continue unabated. The favourite seems to be warning you that your Amazon Prime account is renewing. However, we've had calls 'from' HMRC telling us that we were being investigated, from Microsoft explaining we had a virus and BT warning is about our phone line. Just hang up.

Safe browsing drc Webmaster

Www.shirenewtonchurch.com



RE-ENGAGE

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, we at Re-engage (formerly Contact the Elderly) suspended our regular social gatherings and created a new service for older people called call companions. Our call companion volunteers make regular telephone calls to lonely and isolated older people providing a lifeline of friendship. The regular chat and companionship offers a vital link with the outside world to older people, many of whom are at risk of falling further into social isolation as a result of social distancing measures.

This free service is available across the UK and is aimed at people who:

- are 75 or older
- live alone or in sheltered housing with little or no contact with family or friends
- struggle to leave their house in normal times

As the member for Shirenewton ward , we would really appreciate your help in letting the relevant staff members at your council know about the call companions service so that we can reach as many isolated older people as possible. Please also feel free to share this information with any of your constituents who you feel might be interested in having a call companion. Our website provides further information about call companions, including a leaflet and an online form for referrals.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this email. If you have any questions about this service, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Warmest Wishes Marion Lowther

development officer Wales (Monday – Wednesday)

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

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Huntsman Hotel (on the Usk road

Tredegar Hen Storoq (Shirenev

Tredegar Arms (Shirenewton village)

(House half way between Blethyn Close and the

School in Mynyddbach)
Earlswood Hall (Earlswood)
Shirenewton School

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STARGAZING

The constellation of Cygnus the Swan lies pretty much directly above. It is in the shape of a cross – in fact it is sometimes called the Northern Cross. According to legend, Jupiter the king of the Gods changed himself into a swan when he wanted to visit Leda, the wife of the King of Sparta. In memory of the episode, he placed a swan in the sky.



The seven stars of the Plough are to the North and the four stars forming the Great Square of Pegasus lie to the South.

In the evening, the bright planets Jupiter and dimmer, slightly yellow-coloured Saturn can be seen to the south-west. On 23rd October the Moon, at first quarter, is close to the two planets. Orange-coloured Mars lies to the south-east and is joined by the full Moon on 2nd October.

Edward Lowe, a Victorian gentleman-scientist lived at Shirenewton Hall from 1880 until his death in 1900. He had many scientific interests including astronomy. In particular he studied the "haloes" that sometimes form around the Moon, and sun-spots. His memorial plaque in Shirenewton Church records his wide interests – he was a Fellow of the Royal Society, the Royal Astronomical Society, the Meteorological Society and the Linnae-an Society.

The evenings are drawing in, providing glorious views of the night sky at relatively social hours. This is particularly true after the clocks go back on 25th October, giving extra darkness in the evening.





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