

October 2008

Price: 50p

THE CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS A BECKET SHIRENEWTON



Parishes of Shirenewton and Newchurch
Magazine

READERS AND SIDES- PERSONS ROTA FOR OCTOBER

DATE	SERVICE	READER	SIDES-PERSON
Oct. 5th	20th Sunday after Trinity 9.45 a.m.	Kevin Bounds James Loney	Kevin Bounds Allan Saysell
Oct 12th	21st Sunday after Trinity 9.45 a.m.	John Nicholas Cynthia Smith	John Nicholas Cynthia Smith
Oct 19th	Family Service 9.45 a.m.	The Children & Cubs Church Parade	
Oct 26th	Bible Sunday 9.45 a.m.	Auriol Horton Barbara Davies	Auriol Horton Barbara Davies
Nov 2nd	4th Before Advent 9.45 a.m.	Mike Peirce Ruth Savagar	Mike Peirce Berrice Bowen

St Peter's Newchurch first and third Sunday of each month at 2.30 p.m.

PRIEST IN CHARGE.	Revd. Dr. William Ingle– Gilles	424984
CHURCH WARDENS:	Sally Saysell	641369
	Andrew Baker	641925
	Mrs Susan Lenthall – Newchurch	626389
PCC SECRETARIES:	Andrew Baker - Shirenewton	641925
	David Heritage- Newchurch	641549
PCC TREASURERS:	Kevin Bounds - Shirenewton	641818
	Enid Heritage - Newchurch	641549
GIFT AID SECRETARY	Ruth Savagar	641411
CHURCH MAINTENANCE & SAFETY OFFICER	John Nicholas	641368
ORGANISTS:	Karen Millar	650521
	Ruth Savagar	641411
	Kath Whittington	641600
SUNDAY SCHOOL:	Jane Smith-Haddon	641525
TOWER CAPTAIN:	Mike Penny	650653
MOTHERS UNION:	Auriol Horton	641844
CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER:	John Waters	641449
CHURCH FLOWERS:	Maureen Moody	641524
PARISH MAGAZINE:	Bob O'Keefe	641686
200 Club	Pauline Dutton	641677

NAMES TO NOTE

COMMUNITY COUNCIL	ROBIN MITCHELL	
Clerk to Community Council	Carole Jones	641791
WI:	Jenny Bonner	641929
SCOUTS:	Dave Richardson	620356
GUIDES:	Helen Cann	650835
BROWNIES:	Jackie Broughton	641797
BEAVERS:	Becky Lewis	650304
POLICE CONTACT:	P.C. Mike Cowburn	01633 838111
REC. BOOKING SECRETARY:	Beryl Saysell	641637
TRAIDCRAFT:	Marion McAdam	641316
Local History Society	Shirley Bonsey	641362

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH CO-ORDINATORS

S'NEWTON & MYNYDD BACH -	Beverley Moore	641532
Earlswood	Sue Leat	641207

Please send your notes, discs or emails for inclusion in the November magazine to Bob O'Keefe at: 15 Newton Manor, Shirenewton, (641686) or email to bobandwenche@aol.com by Friday 24th October.

SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2nd Oct	Whist Drive—the Recreation Hall—7.30
3rd Oct	"One Sick Lizard" at the Carpenters Arms—8.30
6th Oct	Community Council Meeting—7.30 Recreation Hall
8th Oct	History Society Resource Session –Recreation Hall from 2.00
15th Oct	Local Neighbourhood Watch meeting The Huntsman 7.30
18th Oct	Police "Surgery & Walkabout" 10—12 the Recreation Hall. See note inside
18th Oct	Barn Dance—Earlswood and Newchurch West Memorial Hall. See block inside for details.
19th Oct	Cubs Church Parade
28th Oct	History Society meeting the Huntsman 7.30 (See inside for details.
6th Nov.	Whist Drive—the Recreation Hall—7.30

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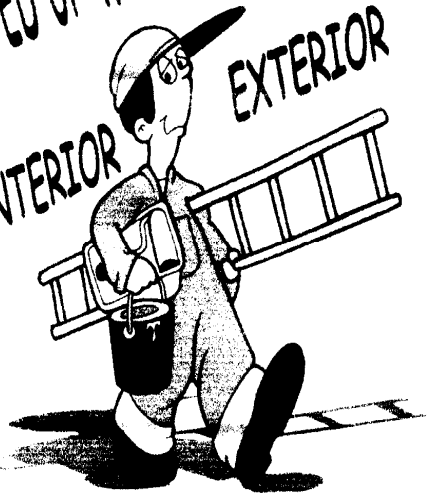
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WELCOME TO OUR NEW RECTOR

It's with pleasure that we welcome our new Rector The Reverend Doctor William Ingle- Gilles to the Parish. I'm sure that the community look forward to working with him in all the many activities that take place in Shirenewton and the other villages that make up this active parish community.

Our grateful thanks should also be given to Nansi Davies for here hard work over the last months carrying out the running of the Group almost single handed.

rok

Dear Brothers and Sisters --

I write this note about 5 days prior to my licensing as the priest-in-charge of your Church, and perhaps 10 cardboard boxes away from being completely unpacked and moved into the Caerwent vicarage! When I wake up in the morning, the view from my upstairs windows is still sufficiently new as to catch me by surprise on occasion, and this reminds me that I am, indeed we are all, entering new territory.

Of course, new can be relative, especially in the instance of newly-arrived clergy. In point of fact, the four communities into which I am coming -- Caerwent, Shirenewton, Llanfair Discoed, and Newchurch -- are all established places with long histories, unique traditions, and distinctive ways of doing things, not least when it comes to the Church. A new priest does not really change that fact. These aspects of village life in general and Church life in particular will be, for most of you, relatively old news -- and, in fact, I believe it is incumbent upon a new priest to recognise that, however long he or she may ultimately aim to remain in a place, the community has been here longer. The Churches which I am blessed to inherit are communities with which many of you have been involved for years, some indeed as far back as you can remember, and they are places which have been treasured -- in many cases by your parents and grandparents and beyond.

I certainly hope, with God's grace, to bring new and particular gifts of my own to the community -- both the Churches and the civil communities in general: a new perspective, a new voice (in fact, one with a Texan accent!), new ideas. Yet the challenge for me will be not primarily a matter of re-inventing the wheel. Rather it will be a question of integrating into your community life organically -- engaging in a new, unique way, but also

soaking in and treasuring the worthy things that have long been treasured and, no doubt, on occasion challenging that which deserves to be challenged

And, of course, that which I am most specifically trusted to bring to the community -- the Gospel and message of Jesus Christ -- is, at the same time, both the oldest and newest of all things: the story of a God who created a world out of love, so that he could come to it, and himself become a part of it. It is a story that reaches back to the beginning of creation, through to the coming of Christ some 2000 years ago. And yet, by God's Holy Spirit, the story of Christ does not remain trapped in ancient past, but comes to us new and fresh each day -- God's unique response of love to our particular needs in our particular places.

Pray for me, my brothers and sisters, as I begin this task amongst you. Give thanks for those who have laboured before me -- and for those who labour alongside. And let us open our hands and hearts to one another, as we take this first step on our journey together, learning about the rich interplay of old and new, and how God appears in the middle.

FROM THE REGISTERS

A Marriage service took place on Saturday 20th September of the Rhianon Gambold the daughter of Mike and Cynthia Gambold and Mr. Alun Gordon Davies.

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH 200 CLUB

The result of the September draw was:

Ticket No	Winner	Prize
143	Molloy Dutton	£40
124	James Baker	£30
40	Mike Lock	£20
123	Colin White	£10

holding it together! I had visions of the song "When the gasman came to call", where one job was going to lead to another and another! Fortunately I had some replacement timbers available, so a bit of woodworking later on a wet afternoon, and we were back in business again.

Although in many gardens things are now winding down, we are still busy sowing and planting. I've recently sown some more seeds for salad plants, including some over wintering lettuce. These will be grown under cover in the tunnel. I've also got some French bean plants, these may or may not survive in the tunnel depending on the weather over the coming months, but are always worth a try. Something that should survive are the late sown potatoes. These are planted in the greenhouse bed and should provide us with baby new potatoes ready for Christmas day. Although not planted yet, I've sorted out some of the best garlic bulbs that we have harvested ready for next month. All I need is some dry weather to get the bed prepared in time. The first seed catalogue arrived last week from Marshall's and I'm busy going through that to see what we can grow next year. Seems that there is no peace for the wicked with this gardening lark! Still I wouldn't have it any other way as I enjoy it so much. Happy gardening until next month. Steve Hunt.

Steve Hunt.

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to spreading a good layer of manure on the beds this winter that will stop the weeds from germinating.

The first large job I've started to tackle is the large quantity of hedging around the perimeter of the garden and creating the numerous "rooms" internally. They are a bit of a mixed bunch in that the external ones are derived from the old field hedges, so are mostly hazel, holly and thorn of various varieties. The internal ones are all newly planted since we moved here some twenty years ago. These are almost exclusively beech. Last year I failed to cut the tops, and so they have grown taller than necessary. The good thing with all these varieties is that they can be cut pretty drastically, happy in the knowledge that they will shoot out again and re-grow. If necessary they can be cut down to the ground and left to shoot out again as coppice growth, and then cut as required. This is a bit too drastic though in my case, so decapitation is the order of the day. This task is now well under way, but there is a couple more days work before the job will be completed. In addition to this, many of the main beds were established between ten and twelve years ago, and most have some shrubs forming the back-bone of the bed. Some of these also need some drastic attention, and one or two may well get the big heave-ho. We have one New Zealand flax that has got enormous, so he is definitely one for the chop. Some years ago we planted a number of clematis armandii. These are evergreen clematis that have almond scented flowers early in the year in their way and are excellent nesting spots for the garden birds. They are quite spectacular when in flower. They are also, as we have discovered, quite thuggish in that they are very strong growers. Again excellent if you have something that needs covering over or hiding, but not good in the general gardening context. We have one growing over a seating area and it has been so vigorous that we have been unable to fit into the said seat. The under-gardener attacked it with loppers back in the summer (well at least the excuse for one!), but we couldn't get rid of it altogether as there was a blackbird's nest in it. This can now be cut back and despatched for good, allowing the other two clematis to grow on unhindered. We also had one growing over a large pergola in the middle of the garden. I attacked this with the chainsaw the other day when I was cutting some of the hedges. Once cut and removed I was amazed just how much lighter the garden was around where it had been. This was the plus side as the shade was starting to badly affect the flower plants near by. The downside is that the following morning the pergola had collapsed, where sections of the woodwork were rotten. I can only think that the clematis was actually

SHIRENEWTON SUNDAY CLUB

Dates for the next month

Date	Time	Venue
5th Oct	9.45	The Chantry
12th Oct	9.45	The Chantry
19th Oct	Family Service 9.45	The Church
26th Oct	9.45	The Church Room
2nd Nov	9.45	The Church Room
9th Nov	9.45	The Church Room

We shall be starting rehearsals for the Nativity Play after Half Term. Get in touch if you would like to join in—we'll be needing a whole flock of sheep, shepherds a host of angels and who knows what else besides.

**Shirenewton Sunday Club welcomes
all children from 3 years. Do come and join us.**

Jane Smith-Haddon 641 525

Glynis MacDonald 641818

A MESSAGE OF THANKS

Allan and I would like to thank everyone for the tremendous support received during the last few difficult months. The good wishes prayers and cards and offers of lifts, etc. have been very much appreciated.

We both feel very privileged to live in such a caring community.

Allan and Sally Saysell

PCC NUTSHELL NOTES

Here's the gist of what was discussed at our last PCC.

MEETING HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2008

THE NEW PRIEST IN CHARGE: Our new Priest in Charge, the Rev Dr Will Ingle-Gillis has settled into the vicarage in Caerwent and is due to be licensed on 25 September in Caerwent Church. Everyone is welcome to attend but as the official guest list is quite substantive – it will probably be standing room only for the rest of us – but that should give us a head start to the refreshments table!

THE NEW CHURCH ROOM: The floor has been laid by James Leney, Bob Millar, Dave Cornwell and Charles Eickhoff, it looks fantastic – thanks chaps. We're almost finished now – just a few bits of skirting board and some internal doors to go. John Nicholas unearthed an old set of coat hooks that used to be used by the church choristers donkey's years ago, it still has the names of the choristers on it, he has put it up to be used in the foyer.

GOLF WEEKEND: It was as wet and windy in Cork as it was over here for the annual golf weekend – but did that deter Mike Pierce and his fellows? No – of course not, for they are made of as sturdy stuff as their trusty clubs! A great time was had by all, a handsome donation given to a local Cork charity, and Kevin is still counting up the proceeds for the extension fund. A big thank you to Mike for organising a fantastic event.

LIVING CHURCHYARDS: We're all going to be looking somewhat scruffy in church next Sunday morning as we've been asked to don our gardening wear and bring scythes, secateurs and shears to get the wild flower area of the churchyard ready for next season.

HARPING ROUND THE STONES: Surprise, surprise, the rain prevented Jemima Phillips from giving her harp concert in The Chantry garden, but everyone de-camped into church, the concert was wonderful and Glynis's cream scones were delicious.

MONMOUTH SCHOOL ORCHESTRA has been booked to give a concert in church on 1 May next year.

That's all for now folks!

*Jane Smith-Haddon
One of the PCC Secretaries*

Gardening Corner

I've started writing this month's instalment slightly earlier than usual as we are shortly off for a break in the Lake District to visit number one daughter and to make some wedding plans! Oh yes its finally caught up with us so I can see next year we will be trying to grow even more in the vegetable patch in order to save money. As I'm writing this it is absolutely lashing it down with rain outside. I can't believe that there appears to be no end to the current weather pattern. It is now getting very serious for us amateur growers and one doesn't dare think about the professionals whom we rely on to put food on our plates. One local vegetable grower that we know supplies food to the local Farmers Market. He has lost half of his potato crop and is sure that his root crops are going to go the same way as the rot sets in. Fortunately our losses here at Barn Farm have not been any higher than a normal year, just in a different way!

One advantage of having the vegetables in raised beds, is that the soil drains more easily and there is less risk of crop failure, through plants rotting off. Crops are easily picked without damaging the soil through compaction, which all helps. The grey days have taken their toll on the crops in the greenhouse however and mould has become a major issue this year on the tomatoes in particular. I also grew aubergines for the first time this year and although fruits have formed, many have rotted off, as have the peppers. There is little that can be done in this respect. Any door or window that can be opened up to let air circulate, have been – all that is needed is some nice dry sunny days to help reduce the moisture. Maybe we'll get an Indian summer, but as time moves on this becomes less likely.

Generally it has been a very bad year for the garden at Barn Farm in the way of neat and tidy! I like things to look right but with weeds coming up everywhere and the soil too wet to do anything about it, I've decided to right the year off. From now on all my efforts will be concentrated on sorting some of the larger jobs, and I'll just have to ignore the flower beds. Hopefully the majority of plants will still be there when I eventually get in to remove the buttercups, fireweed and other bi-annual weeds. The annuals will by then have disappeared, but no doubt will have left a nice legacy in the way of a good seed crop for future years. The old saying of one years seeding, seven years weeding is ringing well in my ears, but there is little that can be done about it! Maybe I will get around

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ANDREW W GRIFFITH AMIH BSYA (IRID)

**Shirenewton Community Council Notes - Monday 1st
September**
Reporting this month – Glynis MacDonald

Police report

- Wed 6th - Report of speeding motor cycles
Thurs 7th Vehicles in Wentwood Forest – but it was an organised event
Fri 8th A white horse was reported in the road by The Carpenters Arms. But it disappeared.
Mon 18th Faulty house alarm in Shirenewton
Mon 18th An accident happened on the Usk Road. Minor injuries occurred.
Wed 20th Faulty house alarm – this time in Mynyddbach
Thurs 28th A minor accident occurred in the lane behind the Golf Cours but there were no injuries
Thurs 28th A report of criminal damage to a car in Lower Shirenewton
Fri 29th A vehicle crashed on the Usk Road near the pumping station.

Planning

Little Folly, Bluebell Lane, Earlswood.— Erection of balcony and decking
Application refused
Green Lane, adjacent to Recreation Ground.
Widening of field gate and improving public access to existing green lane

Financial Matters

It was decided not to contribute to MCC's request for a donation to repair Shire Hall, Monmouth as the council preferred to spend its limited resources here in the locality.

Matters of Local Concern

Update on the Best Kept Village. Carole Jones our clerk reported that we have won an award but whether it is for the Rec, the church or the village is not known yet. The award will be announced on Friday 16th at County Hall. Sadly there will be no cash prizes this year because of sponsorship issues. But we will get a nice certificate.

Alternative venues for Council Meetings. It has been suggested that Earlswood Hall could be used on occasions but it was pointed out that at moment the council had paid rent to the Rec until March – and that Earlswood is used on Monday evenings from March to June for Kids Ad Lib. It was agreed to revue the situation later.

CEDS grants:


The councillors were reminded that applications for grants needed to be in by October and could think of any small project that could be funded through CEDS. Some interesting ideas were put forward for discussion.

The way Forward re: The Allotments. This continues to be a long and protracted issue. The various departments at MCC are finding it difficult to respond.

Clerks Report

- 1 Repairs to the road by the Old Engineers Arms have been completed.
- 2 The road from Llanvair through to Shirenewton will be repaired this summer. Well this autumn then.
- 3 The path to school at Cox's Well is all overgrown but hopefully this will have been cut back before school starts.
- 4 The School route from Mynyddbach to Tan House Court will be inspected by MCC who are aware of the big drainage problem.
- 5 The history of the Blethyn Close field Open Space was outlined and was very complicated. But it seems that the UDP adopted the proposals that the field was to be a Green Wedge between the two villages.
- 6 BT is planning to remove telephone boxes in rural areas if they are not being used very much. (There are two such boxes within the Shirenewton area.) MCC though, are not happy with the way that BT has consulted with them over the planned closures and so have employed the 'local veto' which means BT can't remove the telephone kiosks. (Yet)
- 7 A notice will be published regarding enforcement of planning permission. This will appear on the notice boards in due course and details will be published in the Parish magazine at a later date.

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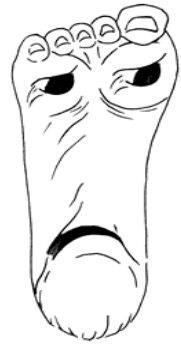
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8. Signs will be erected for Mynyddbach this year, but still MCC is still denying need for Earlswood, this will be actively pursued. MCC is also still resisting the call for horse warning signs and again SCC continues to pursue this along with residents in Earlswood themselves.
9. MCC removal of unauthorised signs, they have a leaflet available spelling out their policy should anyone need it.
10. Speed checks in Shirenewton in June from the TA car park, recorded the highest speed on approach at 47 miles per hour.

The next meeting will be Monday 6th October 7.30

JOINT POLICE / COMMUNITY COUNCIL SURGERY

This will be held on Saturday 18th October at Shirenewton Recreation Hall.

PC Mike Cowburn and Cllr Robin Mitchell will be available from 10am until 12 noon

They will be at the Hall from 10am until 10.30. and will then walk around the village until 12 noon (weather permitting)

If you have any queries /comments please approach them

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

There will be a resource day on the Monday 8th October from 2.00 p.m. at the Recreation Hall.

The October meeting will be held at the Huntsman Hotel on:
Tuesday 28 October at 7.30 p.m.

Where the speaker will be Julie Reynolds
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FAIR TRADE

Although I order regularly from Traidcraft there are now many other companies supplying fairly traded goods. One I have mentioned before is People Tree (www.peopletree.co.uk) which has a much more interesting range of clothing. They also supply me with many apposite facts and figures. Here's one:

'If you're born into the 'pode' caste in Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, you are expected to clean the sewers and streets inhabited by higher castes. In return, you would have been paid a pittance - sometimes no more than scraps of left-over food'

People Tree has become involved with KTC an organization that provides education, vocational training and then paid employment to these underprivileged people. People Tree sells knitted goods produced through KTC.

'The influence of the KTC projects has spread throughout the entire pode community, providing individuals with a developed sense of awareness with regard to their rights. Even those who remain sweeping streets are starting to charge a proper fee for their services' Short selling, this is not!

Traidcraft winter catalogues are now available. The range of goods is growing all the time and I am rather disappointed that few of my acquaintances have tried the new products such as spaghetti (made with durum wheat and quinoa -the queen of grains) which tastes just the same as any good quality pasta. There are many new products!

Contact me for more info or a catalogue Marion McAdam on:



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CAROLINE'S COOKERY CORNER

I am having month off, so this month my daughter helped me out. As the summer has been so horrible we are going to move straight onto autumn with pumpkin soup (very fitting with Halloween coming up).

Pumpkin soup

Approximately 2 1/4 lb of deseeded, diced into 1inch chunks, of pumpkin
1 onion chopped
1 clove of garlic chopped
2 tbsp of honey
A pinch of thyme
Oil
Stock
Seasoning
Juice of half a lemon
1/4 of a pint of cream or milk

Roast the pumpkin, onion and garlic at 200C/gas mark 6, in a large baking tray, drizzled with the oil, honey and sprinkled with the thyme, for 25-30 minutes until the pumpkin is cooked and brown, stirring from time to time. Add enough hot stock to cover, also adding the lemon juice and seasoning. Cook for a further 5 minutes. Cool and liquidise adding the cream or milk and enough stock to make the right consistency. Season to taste.

If any of you are lucky enough to have any quinces, crab apples or elderberries, they make gorgeous jellies to be eaten with meat.

Place the fruit in a large saucepan, cutting up the quinces and crab apples into small pieces, and just cover with water. Bring to the boil and simmer until the fruit is cooked. Drain in muslin over night. To every pint of juice add 1lb of sugar. Bring to the boil, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Boil as for jam until setting point is reached. Pour into sterilised jars. Enjoy!!!

Thanks once again to Cazza Davies



1ST SHIRENEWTON CUB SCOUTS.

On the 10th September the recently reformed 1st Shirenewton Cub Pack held its first Investiture Ceremony at the Village Hall. During the ceremony twenty three boys and girls received their World Membership Badge and their red neckerchiefs making them official Cub Scouts. The District Commissioner for Monmouth Chris Munslow also invested assistant leader Diane Marlow into the family of Scouting. Guests at the ceremony also included Assistant District Commissioner Debbie Davies plus all the children's parents.



Cubs who received their awards

Rory Ayland, Megan Bennett, Matthew Bovisin, Ben Cole, Isobel Davis, Fleur Evans, Will Farrant, Matthew Gough, Benjamin Harris Chadd, Max Hitchcock, Harvey James, Will John, William Jones, Harry Lewis, Harri Lord, Joshua Phillips, Isabel Smith, Samuel Smith, Bethan Taylor, Jacob Tyson, Catrin Williams, Daniel Williams.

Leaders Diane and Geoff Marlow , Matthew Smith

Over the next few weeks all the cubs will be working towards their athletes badge

For further Cub Pack details please contact Geoff on:
geoffmarlow@btinternet.com or telephone 01291 641407

BROWNIE REPORT NEW PLACE, NEW GIRLS, NEW ROTA, GREAT FUN

Brownies started the new term on September 9th. We have had to adjust to several changes over the summer holidays, including a new venue and change of leaders, but in true guiding spirit everyone is rising to the challenge. Lucy Kirkham, our Snowy Owl and much valued assistant leader, is having a break from Brownies as she has a full time teaching job for this academic year. We are all really pleased for Lucy, but we shall miss her enthusiasm, knowledge and many skills – Dorothy and I will have to brush up our campfire lighting skills! Many thanks to the parents who have rallied round by arranging a parent rota and allowing us to continue running Brownies. A particular thanks to Karen Ostler who is always willing to step in and help.

We are also saying farewell to many girls who are moving on up to Guides this September and welcome to the new girls who will join us at the end of this month. If there is anyone in the community who is over 18 and interested in coming to help at Brownies, please get in touch with Jackie on 641797. Also if there are any girls who are interested in joining Brownies, please contact Dorothy Thomas on 641660. Brownies now meet at Shirenewton Recreation Hall on Tuesdays during term time, from 6-7.30p.m.

GRASS ROUTES and RING a RIDE

These two schemes are demand responsive flexible bus services operated using low floor, fully accessible vehicles with volunteer drivers.

The scheme, run by Monmouthshire County Council, is operated on a membership basis and is open to all members of the community.

The service is door-to-door taking passengers to (or collecting from) venues such as local Health Centres, dentists or opticians, Railway or Bus Stations, supermarkets, hairdressers or even visiting friends.

To book a journey on the bus members of the scheme need only to call 0800 085 8015 (freephone number) and speak to Tricia, the Grass Routes Co-ordinator.

Interested? Then ring Tricia today for more details or to make a

THE BELLS, THE BELLS.....

Dizzy tag is dangerous. It's official. This is what you do. You spin round with your eyes shut until you are completely dizzy and then you run off in any random direction. Unfortunately, when Tom Mitchell decided to play, he chose to play on a raised lawn. He ran off, through a rose bush, scratching both arms, hit a fence, pitched forward over the top of it catching his chin on it as he went and then travelled the 12 feet to the ground breaking his left ankle his right knee and his right thumb. The paramedics quickly arrived and gave him painkillers. Unfortunately, they could not get him into a car so they had to send for an ambulance. Tom spent 2 days in the Royal Gwent Hospital and when he came out he was not allowed to stand on one leg as it was in plaster and he couldn't bend the other as it was in a splint. Sooooo...he couldn't walk. So poor old Tom will not be ringing for a little while, although he is managing to go to school now on crutches. We all miss you Tom and look forward to when you are better again.

The 18th of September was Charles' birthday. Shirenewton bell ringers wanted to mark the occasion. We decided to do something difficult. That difficult thing was to ring a quarter peal of a method called Cambridge Surprise Minor. This method is the first of the really difficult methods and only two other towers in the area can ring it with just their own ringers. It takes about 40 minutes - we rang for 30 and then crashed out. Shame, but we still celebrated the (very important) birthday with a bottle of bubbly.

We will have another attempt at 6.00pm on Tuesday 30th December. So listen out and keep your fingers crossed for us.

**One Sick Lizard
@
The Carpenters Arms
On
Friday 3rd October
From
8.30 p.m**

Chepstow Choral Society

Chepstow Choral Society has commenced their 2008/2009 season. The Society welcomes new singing members, particularly prospective Tenors and Basses, but there are vacancies in all four vocal sections.

Rehearsals take place at Chepstow Leisure Centre (Drama Room) on Wednesday evenings, 7.30pm, during term time.

If you require further information regarding singing membership, please contact Marjorie Duerden (tel. 01291 623310) or log onto the website (chepstowchoralsociety.org.uk).

The Society strives to promote and encourage music within the community, fostering young and aspiring musicians. This can only be done with support from music lovers who wish to see that Chepstow continues to enjoy concerts of four-part choral music with orchestra each year. Anyone interested in becoming a patron of the Society can contact membership secretary Jean Parkes (620414).

The Society's next concert & 2009 programme :

Saturday December 13th --- Christmas Music & Family Carols
with Lindsay Kidd Churchill (soprano)
Wydean School Choir
Peter Cook (organ)
St Mary's Church, Chepstow, 7.30pm

Sunday March 29th 2009 -- Passiontide Concert
J. Stainer -- Crucifixion
Karl Jenkins -- The Armed Man (Choral Suite)
Henry Purcell -- Funeral Sentences
St Mary's Church, Chepstow, 7.30pm

Saturday June 27th 2009 – A Handel Celebration – 250 years
G. F. Handel (1685 – 1759)
Dettingen Te Deum
Coronation Anthems
With CCS Orchestra
St Mary's Church, Chepstow, 7.30pm

Musical Director : Graham Bull

1ST SHIRENEWTON GUIDES.



As I sit and write this Girlguiding Gwent is preparing for a week of publicity to highlight the need for additional volunteers and also, in some areas, more girls to fill existing units. This will be an incomprehensible idea for parents in this area where waiting lists are the norm. Chepstow Division has many units providing weekly meetings for Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Senior Section girls and we still have waiting lists. Those lists could get longer as many units are struggling to keep going with insufficient adult help. Volunteers willing to undertake basic training are needed to provide cover for units where leaders sometimes struggle to attend due to work commitments. Do you know anyone who might be able to help? They need to be enthusiastic, enjoy the company of our members and having a sense of humour helps! Girlguiding does not allow leaders over retirement age to run meetings but locally, we are always looking for people with specialist skills to act as badge testers or to come in to meetings to share their skills or hobby with the girls.

At unit level we are planning an overnight camp before it gets too cold and looking forward to learning more about Mexico and its traditions.

Yours in guiding

Kestrel	Helen Cann	01291 650835
Kitten	Amanda Turner	01291 650763

and our two new helpers Koala and Kangaroo (I feel an Australia evening coming on).

RNLI

CHEPSTOW MALE VOICE CHOIR CONCERT.

The Chepstow Branch of the RNLI would like to thank the Church PCC for the cooperation in allowing them to use the Church for this charity concert on the evening of 19th September, and to all those that attended.

The evening was a great success, not only will the Branch be able to make a good donation to this great life saving organisation, that is totally dependant on voluntary contributions, the hundred folk that attended were provided with a wonderful evenings entertainment with a great diversity of music ranging from sacred to secular and blues to the Beatles from this very talented choir.

Thank you. Tom Boyd-Meaney—Chairman Chepstow Branch RNLI

Shirenewton W.I.

September saw us back at the Rec. Hall enjoying a nice fine dry evening, and a talk entitled 'Nature Art'.

I felt privileged to be the speaker and have the opportunity to talk to our members about my experiences taking part in the 2005 & 2007 Nature Art exhibitions at Hulsenbecker Tal, Ennerpetal, Germany. Around 40 artists, both local and international are invited to take part, and to produce an Art Installation out of natural materials found in the area. The items are expected to reflect the natural world and our perception of it.

Our members were able to see photographs of my exhibits and those of the other artists, also the newspaper photos and reports (in German, but I do have some translations). To make my talk a little more real I made some samples of the sort of items I had produced for my exhibits. I was very happy that members wanted to take them home for their gardens. Everyone thanked me and asked questions. I was very happy to receive such a positive response for my very first ever talk. Thank you.

Our next meeting is 9th October, 7-15pm at the Rec. Hall.
Meandering though Mongolia with Margaret and Ron Kinsey.
Our competition for the month :-

An Unusual Souvenir

Please remember to bring items for our sales table.

Any questions please ring Margaret Woodliffe, our secretary.

Tel. 01291 641384

Diana Such

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Mary Vittle
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With caller
Glynis MacDonald



Adults £6 Children £4 Family Ticket £18
Buffet Included!
7.00 for 7.30
Tickets in Advance from 641 616 / 641 818
Raffle
Proceeds to Earlswood and Newchurch West
Memorial Hall

LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Your Local Neighbourhood Watch Needs your support.

The Lower Wye Valley LNW scheme has proved very successful in its efforts to keep crime at a minimum in this area. The area including: Shirenewton, Mathern, Itton, Devauden, Llanishen, Trellech and St Arvans have one of the lowest crime rates in Wales; part of this success is down to the efforts of the local community scheme.

Further support is needed in Shirenewton and Earlswood. The demands on the individuals acting as local co-ordinators are very little. Meetings last about an hour are held every 2 – 3 months, it requires the volunteer to pass on information to neighbours in their immediate vicinity; either by email, phone or a short note, information that they will receive directly either from the police, or the area co-ordinator by telephone through an automated system or via e-mail.

Coordinators are needed to cover areas which include Clearview, the Row, properties adjacent to the shop, and neighbouring barns, School Hill and the Lower Lane, Crick Road.

If you can help the next meeting of the Local Group will be held on Wednesday 15th October at the Huntsman Hotel at 7.30 p.m.

Alternatively please feel free to contact Beverley Moore on: -

SHIRENEWTON M.U.

Eight members enjoyed an afternoon of prayer, meditation and discussion at the home of Mrs. Joan Stickland at Coedybaen. Mr. John Waters kindly administered the Holy Sacrament and we thank him for his positive contribution to our meeting.

It was unfortunate that due to the previous successive days of rain the ground was too wet for us to enjoy the garden from outside, however the sun was shining and the outlook very pleasant.

Our **next meeting** will be at The Recreation Hall, Shirenewton on **Wednesday, 8th October at 2.30 p.m.** when we will be planning next year's programme. In November we will be welcoming our Diocesan President to our meeting. Visitors are always welcome to join us at 3 for tea.

Auriol Horton.

Polite Notice about the Bins in the Rec

Now because the council will not come into the play area at Shirenewton Rec to empty the rubbish bins, Bev Lindsay of the playgroup has kindly volunteered to do this. I helped her last week because the bins were very full. And very, very nasty. People had put **used nappies** in there. And not even wrapped used nappies! I didn't have any rubber gloves with me and it was horrid.

It would be so much more pleasant for other users of the park, and for the young children who use the playground and for Bev who empties the bins, if parents and babies could take their dirty nappies away with them and dispose of them at home.



Glynis - who is fast becoming a grumpy old woman.

SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE -

www.shirenewtonchurch.com

Finally the new shopping portal is available in beta from the home page. Its not fully populated but the links work so you can try it out. Let me know what you think. I'll keep populating it, tart it up a bit and then it will take over from the other shop page which will disappear. This will make shop maintenance much easier for me and, hopefully, shopping more pleasurable for you!

I've also been through updating the 'Be a whizz' features so these are now fully up-to-date.

Next item is a must for all of you with laptops and many people with home PCs. Following the vast publicity of the data leaks for multiple government departments, my company conducted a security review and now all out laptops have fully encrypted hard disks (previously we had hard disk passwords but we concluded that the disk needed to be encrypted as well). Why may you want to encrypt your laptop disk? The answer is, of course, that it contains a lot of confidential data. If someone nicked your laptop they would have access to all the information needed to steal your identity. The same is true of home PCs. The good news is that encryption is free and easy using Truecrypt. Following the tutorial under the 'Be a whizz' section and you will be encrypted. Note: this is not some theoretical stuff the laptop being used to type this is completely useless to anyone who does not know my secret encryption password. I type in once as the laptop boots up and then the laptop works perfectly normally. There is no performance overhead - why would you not encrypt?

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David Cornwell
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Stargazing in October

As it is now getting darker earlier there are more opportunities for stargazing.

The planet Venus is very bright but is rather low in the south-west just after sunset. Venus is approximately the same size as Earth. If the Sun is represented by a sphere six feet in diameter, Earth and Venus would be approximately the size of two marbles at about 150 and 200 yards away respectively. On the same scale, the nearest star Alpha Centauri would be about 30,000 miles away.

Jupiter is also becoming less obvious as it sets during the evening twilight.

Saturn lies to the south-east at dawn. It sits just under the constellation of Leo, the Lion.

The Moon lies near Jupiter on 7th October. The crescent moon is near Saturn on the morning of 26th October.

The Moon passes just below a cluster of stars called the Beehive Cluster on the night of 21st October. The cluster's 350 stars are over 700 million years old, having their origin in the same cloud of dust and gas.

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.

Dave Thomas

WHIST DRIVES

In spite of the wet and windy weather (and the flooded car park) 43 players gathered on the 4th September for the usual enjoyable game. The **next drives** will take place on **2nd October and 6th November**, both on Thursdays starting at 7.30 p.m. promptly at The Recreation Hall. New players are always welcomed.

Auriol Horton. 01291 841844

COUNTRY LIFE IN OUR COUNTY

Autumn.

The Dairy Farm in autumn, if nature were left alone the cow would give birth to her calf in the spring, probably at the end of April, to coincide with the rapidly increasing growth of grass, and as a result her milk production would satisfy the appetite of the growing calf, a calf would normally consume about three gallons of milk per day.

Towards autumn when there would be less grass the milk supply would dry up and the calf would graze sufficient for its own needs, and hopefully the cow would be in calf again ready to produce another calf the following spring. However man grew to like cow's milk, and so he took the calf away from the cow, fed the calf a restricted amount of milk but introduced concentrated feeds to provide the calf's nutritional requirements and he could then sell the surplus milk, then he bred cows to produce more than three gallons of milk per day, and he could then sell even more milk. Because milk became scarce in the autumn it commanded a higher price, so he managed the cows so that they calved in the autumn and he could sell milk more profitably. But he did however have some increased costs; he had to feed more concentrates, as there would not be enough fresh grass available so this increased the farmer's costs.

This led to the production of too much milk in the winter, and so the M.M.B., the buyers of the milk adjusted the price to try and even out the production throughout the year. Most of my cows calved from August through to November, and then a few through the winter months, and if they were looked after properly the flush of spring grass in April would stimulate an increase in milk production, following which they would be "dried off", to give the cows a short rest before they calved again. Producing milk in winter is hard work, however you choose to operate, and there are many pitfalls. In winter all the food has to be taken to the cows and all the manure has to be carried away. I have been tempted many times to go for spring calving to reduce the cost of milk production, the cows grazing during the spring and summer months, and at the same time the manure is returned direct to the fields, and when the winter comes you could dry off all the cows and shut down for a few months, but as with all things this would have its snags and anyway I have retired now so it is purely an academic question.

I liked the autumn with the cows calving in good shape after the spring and summer grass, the calves would be strong and healthy, and in a good autumn if it did not become wet the cows would milk well, and would stay outside until the end of October. The cows would be brought in to

their winter quarters as soon as weather and ground conditions necessitated this move. One of the biggest mistakes with autumn calving cows is to put too much value on the grass, there is a value but it is a lower feed value than spring and summer grass, the secret is knowing how much value to put on it.

Autumn and the sheep farmer, this is a critical time of year for the sheep farmer, a lot depends on when the sheep are expected to lamb, whatever the system nature has decided that there will be five months between mating and lambing, the rams are usually put with the ewes from August onwards so that lambing starts in January. This enables the lambs to be sold fat in twelve to sixteen weeks, when they will have had the benefit of the spring flush of grass, stimulating the ewes to produce more milk, and also they would graze this grass themselves, the lambs would be sold before the high risk period of internal parasites and flies giving rise to maggots.

Not so many years ago most ewes lambed outside, but now as lambing on specialist sheep farms is planned earlier in the year most lambing is done in special lambing houses, and with modern aids such as infra red lamps, farmers are getting good at operating this early lambing.

I always lambed my ewes in mid March, with spring just around the corner. With a dairy herd their demands in January were enough without adding to the work the problems of lambing at this time. One of the problems with ewes on good land once the lambs are sold is that the ewes can get too fat, which is bad for breeding, so by penning on a restricted area their feed intake is reduced so that they stay leaner. Autumn on the sheep farm is the time of sorting out, there are always those lambs that have not done so well, perhaps the mother had triplets and did not have enough milk, or may be she had lost a quarter which reduced the milk available, or the mother could have died when the lamb was quite young. These lambs may now have enough meat on them to be sold for slaughter, if their condition is not good enough for killing at this time they could be sold as store lambs for someone else to keep and fatten through the winter or this could be done on the farm where they were bred. Then some of the ewes have to be culled for all manner of reasons, lost a quarter, prone to foot-rot, or just old age which is often indicated by a loss of teeth making it difficult for the ewe to graze properly. It is these old faithful ewes that I am always sorry to see go.

Our thanks to Ernie Jones for sharing with us his feelings for our local countryside through the seasons. Also to Peter Bartlett for providing the copy. These notes are short extracts from one of Ernie's numerous books, copies of the books are available direct from either Ernie or Peter.