

Shirenewton



Parish Magazine

December 2017

January 2018



Photograph by Terry walters

Price: £1

We can lose so much with language.

I can remember attending a lecture many years ago where we were addressed by the then bishop. He explained that love is not just a feeling, it is also an action. We cannot say we love someone, or something, without showing some form of act or action.

During my studying, I have found that our language has sold 'love' short. We say we love this and that, we love our children and spouse etc. but we have to explain what type of love we are sharing. Why can't we be like the Greeks, who had a variety of words for 'love'? I will share the four main words that express love in the Greek language. I am not sure whether they still use these words today; I am studying theology, not current trends.

The first word the Greeks used for love is *Eros*. For those who don't know what this love is, it's the passionate love, the emotional and sexual love. This is the type of love most of us showed when we were adolescents. In modern language we may phrase this as a loose love, no strings attached

We then move to *storge*, which is expressed as a love for family and close friends, this love can also be the next step up the ladder from *Eros*. This is the romantic love we show to family and friends.

Phileo, refers to an affectionate, warm and tender platonic type of love, again this is a love that can be shared as a deep friendship. This is the type of love where you know that with the friendship you have with another you will do anything for each other and be there if the need arises.

The last love is *Agape*, this is an unconditional love shown to others, where we overlook the flaws and bad habits. This is often said to be the type of love that God has for us all, the total forgiving love expecting nothing in return. This is absolute love.

When Jesus asked Peter three times whether he loved him (*John 21:15-17*), which love do you think Jesus was expressing, and what love was Peter stating in his three responses? What love do you feel you share with your family, friends and colleagues?

What love do you think that God showed by sending His own Son into the world? What sort of love do we give God in return?

As we come near to Christmas and we witness those less fortunate than ourselves, which can and should include those who live rough on our streets with nowhere to 'rest their head', what sort of love do we express to them? Do we in fact share any love at all with these people?

Christmas is a time for giving, a time for sharing and a time for love. We should all try and give Agape love to all, family friends and those living rough. We should all try and aim to give the unconditional love to others that we receive from God our Father, Jesus His Son and the Holy Spirit. The three in One express a total unconditional love to each and every one of us, a love that can take our sin on board, and totally wipe it away. A love that doesn't say 'I'll forgive, but the next time - watch out.'

This Christmas I would like each and every one of us to take time out and reflect on a gift we received, something that was special and dear to our hearts. Then reflect on the gift God gave us. How does the gift from God compare with the special gift we treasure? I am always very grateful for every gift I receive; more than this I enjoy giving gifts to others, especially my loving wife and family. This year I am going to try to ensure that the gifts that I give will be given in Agape, a gift given in total love, no strings attached, no catches, no expectations. Don't get me wrong I always buy gifts with love, but I am not sure whether they were purchased in storge or phileo, rather than agape. What about you? Let's always remember the best gift of all, given to all people without any distinction, a gift that doesn't care about our gender, race, creed, a gift that is always ready to teach us through the Word, and through meeting with our Lord Jesus Christ as we journey in our faith.

Happy Christmas to one and all, and a prosperous New Year.

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Rick Hayes

St Thomas á Becket Church From the Registers

Marriage

Rebecca Broughton and Daniel Halliday, 7th October 2017

All members of the community are most welcome to attend the Group Parish service in Church on Sunday 28th January 2018 when the Bishop will consecrate Claire Lewis' new red altar frontal, fall and veil which are replacing the ones that went missing from the Church earlier this year. The service will celebrate the Eucharist and will start at 10 a.m. as usual. The service will be followed by tea and cake and fellowship in the Saysell Centre

St Peters, Newchurch

Sunday 17th December 14.30

Christingle and Carol Service followed by seasonal refreshments

Monday 25th December 10.00

Family Eucharist Service

Services are held on the first and third Sunday of each month at 14.30. All are welcome.

From the Registers

Thursday 16th November Funeral

Thankyou

Molly & family would like to thank every one for their kind wishes, cards and flowers on their recent loss.

It was much appreciated.

Kind regards Molly Choux

SHIRENEWTON OPERA & DRAMA
SOCIETY PROUDLY
PRESENT



Camelot

The
Panto

written by Ben Crocker

THU 25TH, FRI 26TH &
SAT 27TH JANUARY 2018
AT EARLSWOOD HALL

BAR OPENS AT 7PM CURTAIN UP AT 7.30PM.

TICKETS: ADULTS £7 CHILDREN £5

DON'T MISS OUT

TICKETS ON SALE FROM 1ST DEC

TO BOOK YOUR SEAT CALL JANE EICKHOFF

01291 641716 OR EMAIL

eickhoffjane@gmail.com

Shirenewton Babies and Toddler Group
Thursdays 1.30 – 3p.m. (term time only)
Shirenewton Recreation Hall



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



Come Along to the
Shirenewton Church Sunday
Club Advent Fair



Sunday 3rd December
In the Church Room
11:00 – 12:30

Jams, Jellies, Mincemeat, Marmalade,
Cakes, Cookies and Biscuits
Christmas Crafts and Cards
Coffee and of course mince pies!

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



Carols Around The Village Christmas Tree!

with The Chepstow Town Band!
Friday 15th December at 6:30
In the Tredegar Arms carpark
(or in the candle-lit church if it's raining)

Collection to:
'Medicines sans Frontiers'



All are Welcome to Our
'Christmas Praise' Service
in Shirenewton Church

on
Sunday 17th December at 10 o'clock
With readings, poems and carols.
Followed by coffee and cake in
The Church Room
Shirenewton Church

Our Nativity and Christingle Service



What a lovely way to start Christmas.
If you have ever wanted to be an Angel or a
Shepherd or whether you just want to be part of
the crowd waiting to welcome the Baby Jesus, come
along to our Nativity and Christingle Service on
Christmas Eve at 4:00
with Mulled Wine and Mince Pies afterwards in the
Church Room

Other Christmas Activities

Sunday 17th December 10:00 Carol Service by
Netherwent Choir in the Church

Saturday 23rd December
Childrens Party in the Saysell Centre

Sunday 24th December 23:30
Midnight Mass in the Church

Monday 25th December 10:00
Christmas Day Service in the Church

BIBLE STUDY

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 follow published courses focussing on different aspects of Christian life. We will be starting a new course in January, so it's the perfect time to come along and join us, if you would like. Although we all benefit from attending regularly, there is no obligation to do so and many members come when they can. Meetings in 2018 are scheduled for the following dates:

Meetings in 2018 are scheduled for the following dates:

Thursday	4th January	Thursday	28th June
Wednesday	31st January	Thursday	2nd August
Thursday	22nd February	Thursday	30th August
Thursday	22nd March	Thursday	27th September
Thursday	26th April	Thursday	25th October
Thursday	31st May	Wednesday	28th November

If you would like to join the group or 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.

SHIRENEWTON VILLAGE MARKET

EVERY THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH FROM
10-12

AT THE REC HALL.

*YOUR MONTHLY ONE STOP SHOP FOR LOCALLY
GROWN, PRODUCED AND HANDCRAFTED
ITEMS.*

ENJOY COFFEE AND CAKE IN THE CAFÉ.

JOIN US TO SHOP AND SOCIALISE!

16TH DECEMBER 2017

CHRISTMAS MARKET

FAIRTRADE NEWS NOV 2017

Oxfam Chepstow has recently started selling FT products – handicrafts, chocolate, kitchen basics such as washing-up liquid, shampoo and shower gel, Palestinian olive oil and various Christmas goodies. But for the widest range of FT products in Chepstow go to the café in the Methodist Hall where a colleague of mine from the Chepstow Fairtrade Forum offers most of the products available from Traidcraft, the same range that I sell.

It's been 75 years since a small group of passionate people got together in Oxford to discuss how to stop families in Greece going hungry due to a WW11 blockade. That evening in 1942 Oxfam was founded. 1948 saw the first charity shop. Today 23,000 volunteers run 650 shops nationwide. In 1964 Oxfam shops started selling handicrafts from developing countries. Today, 1,65 million workers worldwide are part of a certified FT scheme, with all the benefits this brings. In 1974 Oxfam opened its recycling plant in Huddersfield. 12,000 tonnes of donated clothes that Oxfam cannot sell in shops go to Huddersfield – nothing goes to landfill!

When I first shopped for clothes in Oxfam, in the late 60s, my Mum was rather offended – were she alive today I am sure she would not have any reservations about buying second hand stuff! Of course, the shops have improved as well! However many people in Chepstow are unaware that FT goods are available at Oxfam. Do go and see what's available!

This the perfect time of year to support FT. As I have often said, FT is not the whole answer but it is an easy way to make a significant contribution to improving poor people's lives. 'Eat chocolate and save the world' as I used to tell my pupils! (In a parallel universe - on my recent trip to see wild tigers in the forests of India the guides called the wild boar 'tiger chocolate' ! From now on that's how I shall be forced to consider wild boar! – In case you're wondering, I saw tigers, very close, very clearly and the hair stands up on the back of my neck just thinking about it now!)

Marion McAdam 641316 msm316@gmail.com

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Extracts from the minutes of the November 2017 meeting

URGENT

Vacancies on the Community Council

There are still three vacancies on the Council – one for co-option in the Shirenewton ward, one in the Mynyddbach ward and one in Earlswood.

It is important that these vacancies are filled by local residents who are interested in the surrounding community and wish to join the Council – if that means you - please contact the Clerk (details below).

Planning applications considered:

1. DC/2017/01113 3 Usk Road, Shirenewton

Erection of a two storey extension at rear of property, to improve the accommodation.

Council noted that the extension is to enlarge the existing kitchen and the two bedrooms above. The additional area of each floor is 12sqm ie 24sqm in total. No figure is given for the existing floor area nor the % volume increase. At a guess the increase will be approx 25-30%. The recommendation was for approval of the application subject to dimensions complying with Mon CC policies.

2. DC/2017/01066 Argoed Farm, Upper Argoed Road, Earlswood

Proposed conversion of redundant cow shed and store to residential use. The recommendation was for approval subject to the overall design and appearance being retained to Mon CC policies regarding barn conversions.

3. DC/2017/01130 2 Hillside Cottage, Lower Lane, Mynyddbach

Proposed ground and first floor side extension.

The recommendation was for approval of the application subject to dimensions complying with Mon CC policies.

4. DC/2017/01075 Mount Cottage, Old School Hill, Mynyddbach

Single storey front extension to provide extended lounge, dining room and porch. Second storey rear extension to provide additional bedroom.

Council noted that the existing accommodation has a ground floor bathroom and a very small 3rd bedroom. The extension will enlarge the kitchen and provide for an upstairs bathroom and better sized 3rd bedroom. Construction is to be of rendered blockwork, upvc windows and doors and slate roof. It is likely the rear extension will overlook the properties to the rear but the bathroom window should be opaque and the 3rd bedroom window will be comparatively small so the impact is not likely to be great.

The recommendation was for approval of the application subject to dimensions complying with Mon CC policies.

Council further noted that the concerns regarding excavations at this property unrelated to this application had been acknowledged by Mon CC.

5. DC/2017/01123 New Mill, Earlswood

Orangery style conservatory to front of property.

Council noted that no dimensions are given but it appears to be about 7x5m giving 35sqm and as such should be within MCC enlargement policy. There is no street lighting and the lantern roof would release light into the sky at night which may be noticeable to neighbours in the locality, though it is appreciated this is not a designated dark skies area. There is no visual or other impact on neighbouring properties. This council has concerns over the reducing bat population in the locality and recommend that further attention be given to light pollution.

The recommendation was for approval.

6. DC/2017/01122 Azalia Cottage, Old School Hill, Mynyddbach

Erection of three detached dwellings.

Council noted that this is an outline proposal for 3 detached houses on a ½ acre plot. No design or construction details of the houses were provided as these would be addressed in the subsequent Reserved Matters application. Objections had been made by neighbours who have concerns over access arrangements. It is proposed that each of the 3 plots has its own direct access from the road. At this point the road is very narrow and effectively a single track so any further access onto it from the plots would impede the traffic flow. Each plot entrance would have to have sightlines but that would require the removal of the existing hedgerow. Whilst each plot could accommodate up to 3 parked cars they would not have enough space to turn around and exit forward facing. It would be preferable to have a service road within the applicant site with a single access onto the road at the left hand end with a turning bay at the right hand end inaccessible from the road.

Council considered the density of the proposed housing to be inconsistent with the surrounding properties which are of very different design; 3 houses of identical or very similar character and appearance would also be inconsistent.

The statement in support of the application purports that there are no known traffic issues in the locality. This is not so as Old School Hill is the main route to the Primary School and as such should be a protected Safe Route to School.

This Council has not been invited to any pre planning consultation with the applicant or agents on their behalf.

Council's recommendation was for refusal on the following grounds:

- * Too little and inaccurate information provided,
- * The proposed access from the plots is unsafe and would require the removal of the bank and hedgerow fronting the road,
- * The proposed car parking arrangements are inadequate
- * The building density and appearance are inconsistent with the immediate neighbourhood.
- * The local infrastructure does not support additional residents/traffic that the proposed development would bring.

7. DC/2017/01255 Chapel House, Earlswood

Single storey double garage with bike store and garden store and workshop. The recommendation was for approval subject to a condition that the proposed garage is only for vehicular use, not domestic occupation and the dimensions comply with MCC policies.

Continued on page 12

Continued from page 11

Consultation from Mon CC on cutting back/removal of leylandii trees at Hill View Cottage, Shirenewton. Response made on 8.11.17 – recommend approval for leylandii only, retain yew tree on church boundary.

Other items of interest

Monthly police report - There were two reports of males cutting up wood with chainsaws in Wentwood and Grondra Great Wood. There was a theft of a chainsaw, copper piping and tractor batteries from an insecure outbuilding/stable at Penyaemawr. Finally, there was a report of flooding on the Shirenewton road running onto the Crick road - Highways were requested to attend.

Additional dog waste bin – an additional bin has been installed on Ditch Hill Lane, at the railings of the Cox's Well footpath from Newton Manor to the school. Would all dog walkers please pick up after their dogs and use the community waste bins provided.

Feedback on the Coffee Morning held on 21.10.17.

Five issues were raised by residents – speed of traffic through Mynyddbach; two visibility issues, one at the Rec Hall car park and one at the Cox's Well railings; confusion regarding the 20mph and 30mph signage in Shirenewton; road flooding at Lower Bushes, Earlswood.

Clerk to report the road flooding at Earlswood and request P Keeble, Head of Planning attend a site visit in Shirenewton to consider the continued traffic and visibility issues.

Council website – all issues have been resolved and the website is available to all.

Dates of future meetings – Monday 4th December and Monday 8 January 2018 at 7.30pm at Shirenewton Recreation Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend and may speak with the Council for the first 15 minutes of each meeting.

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

**Contact the Clerk to the Community Council -
Mrs Hilary Counsell
Tel: 01291 421307
E-mail: Shirenewtoncc@gmail.com**



PUTTING THE CLIENT FIRST

▶ Pensions and Retirement Planning

▶ Savings and Investments

▶ Inheritance Tax Planning and Probate

▶ Mortgages

▶ Equity Release

▶ Protection

▶ Long-Term Care

Dr Josh Lewis | 07979 157259

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E: joshlewis@thinkpositive.co.uk | www.iamfinancial.co.uk

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WHAT A DRAMA QUEEN!

By Rick Hayes

I recently led a Sunday service at St. Pierre and found myself in rather a strange situation.

During the service I noticed a young lady, who was sitting on a pew about half way down the church, just staring at me throughout the service. She occasionally smiled and nodded when I spoke, but looked intently at everything I did during the worship.

At the end of the service I asked some of the congregation whether this person was okay - was I supposed to have had some banns of marriage to read out etc? The answer I received was no banns, they thought she was staying at the hotel. I went up to her, welcomed her and enquired whether she was visiting or had moved into the area. She replied, 'I'm the Revd Green; you know all about me.' I said I was sorry but I *didn't* know about her and asked what parish she was attached to. She responded, 'I'm here to study you; you know about me.' I again said I was sorry and didn't know about her visit to the church. She then said, 'I'm your trainee, I'm an imposter.' At this I invited her to sit down so we could talk more comfortably and wondered how I could help this poor deranged person. I hoped some of the congregation would stay behind. I mean, she could have been a would-be priest stalker, or worse could have felt she had suffered in some way because of something that had happened in the past. I can assure you I didn't think she spent the entire service staring at me because of my dashing good looks. (Yes, I have looked in the mirror lately).

During our conversation it transpired that she was from a London Theatre Group, who had made contact with the church, (namely Julian), asking whether she could attend a service and take notes on what to do and how to act during a service etc. The Theatre Group was employed by the hotel to be part of an interactive murder mystery for a conference weekend, which was the brain child of a large American company.

I asked her why she didn't receive Communion, and to this she answered she was a Catholic and didn't think she was allowed. I explained to her that in most Anglican churches she would be welcome to take Communion. We went on to talk about Transubstantiation.

I was then told that she was the killer and I had to promise not to tell anyone. And she introduced me to Col. Mustard. You guessed it - this was a Cluedo 'who-dun-it'.

Well, that sorted out, a load of Americans descended on the church, looked at me and my green striped clerical shirt and said, 'Hi! Hey, you must be the Revd Green.' I replied, 'No, she's just over there.'

Communication is a wonderful thing, so why do we sometimes find it hard to talk? Why do we all assume people know something when they don't?

We should all try harder to communicate with one another, for example, asking how people are, showing that we really want to know, we don't want them just to say, 'Fine, thanks.' Because that is what is always said. My Dutch colleagues at work will ask how someone is and they expect the person to reply sincerely. Once I was slightly off colour and a Dutch colleague ask me how I was, and I replied okay thank you, and they looked at me and said, 'No, really, how are you? You look like you need to talk.'



Chepstow Choral Society
Musical Director – Graham Bull

A Christmas Music Celebration....

SUNDAY DECEMBER 10th, 3.00pm
Please save the date!!!!

This year's Christmas music by the choir and guests will take place on **SUNDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 11th, 3.00pm, at St Mary's Priory Church, Chepstow** and will include a mix of well-loved carols and readings. CCS is delighted to be joined by pupils from **ST JOHN'S-ON-THE-HILL SCHOOL and also organist PETER COOK**. Tickets £8.00 (u/18s/students FREE) will be available from choir members (01291 623310, 620414, 650472 and Chepstow Bookshop).

SUNDAY DECEMBER 10th, 3.00pm

St MARY'S PRIORY CHURCH CHEPSTOW

Peter Cook (organ), Richard Kubiak (Piano)
St John's-on-the-Hill School Chamber Choir
(Director – David Mitchell)
Musical Director CCS –Graham Bull

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

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

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

SHIRENEWTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 1090167



Our sixteenth Annual General Meeting took place at the Huntsman Hotel on the 31st October. Formalities were soon over, in record time, officers and committee were duly voted back en bloc.

Chairman reported a successful year, interesting and varied talks, with a visit from the descendants of Edward Joseph Lowe, (who lived at Shirenewton Hall) to one of our monthly meetings. We are still adding to our Archive, with local interest books to our book collection, members are donating interesting maps, documents and we are still having request for family history information from all over the world. Many thanks to members and anyone who has donated during the past year, we welcome anything you think might be of interest including photographs.

After coffee we had an excellent talk entitled 'Chepstow Bridge' given by John Burrows. The bridge celebrated its 200th anniversary last year and as John explained it's one of the first of its kind to be built in that style in that era and is a very special and unique design. There are plans to try to have it designated a World Heritage Site, but I understand this takes time and effort to get this approved. Many thanks John for the detailed research and I'm sure we would wish you well with the ongoing plans for W.H.S status.

We will be visiting Chepstow Museum to see the exhibition 'Hidden in the Lining' on Tuesday, 28th November .

Dated for your Diary:

- Monday, 11th December Archive Meeting at the Recreational Hall,
2.00 pm – 4.00 pm
At these meetings everyone is welcome whether a member or not.
- Tuesday, 12th December Meeting at Llanfyangel-tor-y-Mynydd Church at
7.00 pm talk & tour Given by Prof Ray Howell with
supper after at the Tredegar Arms.
- Wednesday, 27th December Solstice Walk up to Grey Hill to see the sun rise,
meeting at 7.30 am at the Woodland Tavern,
sunrise 8.10 am approx.
Afterwards breakfast at the Woodland Tavern.
- Monday, 8th January Archive Meeting at the recreation Hall
2.00 pm – 4.00 pm
- Tuesday, 30th January We will be meeting at Earlswood & Newchurch
West Memorial Hall. This is a change of venue, as
we have a Planetarium to view the night and we
needed a large room to accommodate the
planetarium
Meeting at the hall at 7.00 pm everyone welcome

Everyone welcome

www.shirenewtonlocalhistorysociety.co.uk

Huntsman Hotel

Thursday 21st December 2017 TBA
Contact Phil Moles for details
pmoles@aol.com

*An evening with Paul Fredericks
professional entertainer*

Strictly limited numbers

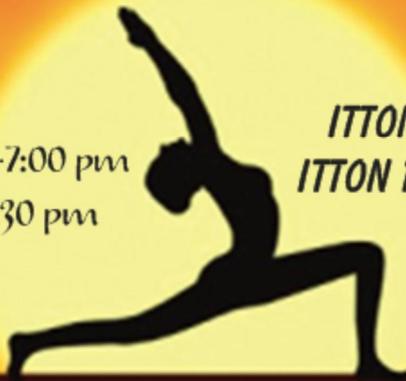


Yoga With Melisa

Find your lost balance and do
something awesome for yourself

Tuesdays 6:00-7:00 pm

Fridays 12:30-1:30 pm



**ITTON VILLAGE HALL
ITTON RD, CHEPSTOW
NP16 6BH**

Call/Text Melissa 07799206703

GILWERN TRIP



Year 6 enjoyed a week's stay at Gilwern where they went geocaching on the Blorenge, canoeing on the canal, caving, climbing and crate stacking in teams and also learned some new Forest School skills. Whilst participating in these adventurous activities they learned how to cooperate as part of a team, take charge as leaders and listen effectively to follow instructions whilst keeping each other safe!

COUNTRY DANCING



Year 1 and Year 2 enjoyed doing some traditional Welsh country dancing with a Curriculum Cymraeg dancing group this term ... all the skipping, promenading and do-si-do-ing wasn't as easy as it looked but was jolly good fun!

To find out more about what we get up to on a day to day basis, check out the class Blogs on our website at ...

www.shirenewton.monmouthshire.sch.uk

CHALET

We have a brand new 'Chalet' in our grounds which gives us a much needed additional teaching space - it includes a nurture and kitchen area, a learning zone and music area.



HEDD WYN DRAMA



Junior classes enjoyed a visit from a theatre company who helped them re-enact the story of Hedd Wyn, a Welsh-language poet who was killed on the first day of the Battle of Passchendaele during WW1. He was posthumously awarded the Bard's Chair at the 1917 national Eisteddfod.

SCIENCE OPEN MORNING



Classes welcomed their parents into their Science lessons during a recent open morning; the children enjoyed sharing their Science learning and experiments. Afterwards, our STEM Club set up some activities in the hall for the parents to partake in over a cup of coffee. A good time was had by all!



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SHIRENEWTON CHURCH WEBSITE

www.shirenewtonchurch.com

www.shirenewtonshop.com



The final entry of the year and I'll be topping and tailing this entry by asking you to do your Christmas purchasing via

www.shirenewtonshop.com. There are over 100

stores on the shopping portal with a healthy 'gift ideas' section which can help you for those 'hard to buy for' people. So, as Christmas is a Christian festival, surely it's fitting that your local village Church benefits in some small way from the orgy of spending which accompanies the festival?

There are a couple of new and resurgent scams which I'm going to warn you about this month.

Firstly the WhatsApp expiry scam. If you use WhatsApp (the Cornwell family are extensive users of this marvellous mobile phone app) then simply ignore any notice (text or email) which tells you that your WhatsApp subscription has expired and asks you to pay 99p for another year. It is true that WhatsApp *used* to charge 99p a year and that's why the scam is so clever. However, WhatsApp has been free since 2016. Needless to say, if you have clicked on a link in the text message and 'paid' all you have done is given the scammers your bank account details. If you have done this contact your bank/card provider immediately.

Furthermore, there are some reports that by clicking on the link on your phone you allow the installation of malware on your phone. If you are not running one of the mobile phone security packages, you should. Lots of companies offer such security apps (the equivalent of anti-virus on your PC) and you can just Google them. Many are free. Personally I use Lookout which costs £19.99 per year. This also allows me to remotely delete all data on the phone in the event it's stolen. Another thing to watch out for is browser 'crypto-mining'! There is a browser extension (a little app which works as part of your browser) called the 'Coin Hive miner'. This is a javascript programme which runs in the background mining a digital currency called Monero. The detail is immaterial, what it does is use your power and computing resources without your consent. It's worth noting crypto-mining apps are typically very resource hungry. They also use bandwidth which can be a considerable issue for mobile phone users. It's not only browsers which are at risk. There are some games in the Android Playstore which, if you install, also install a crypto-mining app that can crunch through your data. The most dangerous thing about these installations is that they do not seek your permission and can be installed by simply visiting the website (a so-called 'drive-by' installation).

This is why it's always important to keep your anti-virus and malware up-to-date. You should install Malwarebytes (there is a free version) which actively blocks Coin Hive. Also, don't automatically assume that anything on the playstore or the Mac appstore is safe. Research the app before you install it by running a quick google search. That may save you a lot of stress.

Remember, the hackers and scammers have no season of goodwill and they are out to get you!

On that happy note, don't forget my earlier plea to do your Christmas purchasing via www.shirenewtonshop.com

Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all my readers!
Safe browsing drc Webmaster

CHRISTMAS EVE NATIVITY

Come and share in our Nativity Story
6.30 pm on 24th December
at Gaerllwyd Chapel.

Followed by hot mulled drink and mince pie
(THIS WILL BE A SHORT SERVICE SO EVERYONE CAN GET
HOME AND CHILDREN CAN BE IN BED EARLY.)

This will be a short adaptation of the story, so we are looking
for people to join in and act out the story.
All ages needed. - call 07970 045380 if you would like to join
us in acting out this incredible story.
(Only 1 or 2 rehearsals needed beforehand)

If you enjoy singing

Christmas Carols

which will be followed by

Home made Soup

Come along on

Monday December 4th

7.30 pm

at

GAERLLWYD BAPTIST CHURCH

**Come and start the Christmas Festivities by joining
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GARDENING CORNER

I've said previously in this article that I love getting up early in the day and getting on with things outside, especially during the summer months. Not just because it means you can get on with things (I hate sitting around reading the newspaper), but also because some of the best opportunities for viewing nature are when dawn is breaking. We once had a photographer ring out of the blue. It was when we opened the garden under the National Garden Scheme and things were better managed than they are now. He had heard some nice things about our garden and wanted to call one day to take pictures.

I'm not sure who was the most surprised when we agreed a date, and he then said if it was OK that he'd like to arrive around 5.00 am. I was surprised at the early hour, as was he when I said that this would be fine as I'd be up and about in



the garden anyway! Apparently the light is particularly crisp and you don't have to worry about the sun affecting the quality of the picture at this time of day. This time of year I don't rise quite as early, but even so you still get to view some spectacular things, like the attached photograph of the sun rising over Earlswood one morning this week. Ten minutes later and the spectacle had all but ended.



I must admit that I'm getting a little bit demoralised at the moment, as the weather is being very 'messy', neither one thing nor the other. It is damp, without necessarily being wet, but it is preventing me from getting on the ground and getting on with the big clear-up that I have planned for some time. At a pinch I could clear the raised vegetable beds as I don't need to get on the soil to reach, but this is still a messy job with the weeds not coming out clean of soil, and I prefer not to bother. Similarly in the flower borders I want to get on and clean out everything and virtually start again, keeping the plants I want, and dividing them up to rejuvenate them, whilst getting rid of the poor performers and all of the weeds, especially things like couch grass. This requires getting on the beds themselves which, as it is at present isn't a good plan. Not only does this help to destroy the soil structure, but it also means that you end up struggling all around. Slipping about and carrying a couple of pounds of soil off on the bottom of your boots is not my idea of fun! It is far better to find something else to do with your time, especially if you have some indoor jobs to square off (Assistant Head Gardener please note, by this comment I don't mean decorating!).

With this in mind I have been busy scrolling through the various seed catalogues and getting the orders in for next year. Most have now arrived, and some such as the garlic and shallots have already been planted, with me taking advantage of the odd drier day, when you could just about get things in the ground without making too much mess. The replacement raspberries also arrived this month and were actually planted the day after they arrived. Although I would have preferred to have finished sooner, I have also managed to get the last of the daffodil bulbs in the ground. I have a few ornamental alliums to go, but hopefully these will be

fine – provided I can get them planted in the next week or so. Where I have managed to start on a couple of the flower borders I have divided up a number of the plants that, over the years had grown quite congested and were no longer performing as well as they could. Some were replanted back after the bed had received due attention, but those that remained were then potted up in the greenhouse and will hopefully be used to fill gaps elsewhere in the garden – when I get around to working these areas. The messy weather has given me the opportunity to make a start on the second cut of the hedges which will see them all neat and tidy over the winter months. This is always a bit like the Forth road bridge in that you start one end (in that case with painting) and by the time you get to the end, it is time to go back and start all over again. I keep thinking that I should pace out all the hedges that we have here, just to see how much they total. It must be getting close to a mile if you consider most have to be cut both sides! Some months ago I was moving wood chips from the entrance of our property to down the garden for creating all our paths in the vegetable beds and tunnels. Being a bit of a repetitive job, I paced out the distance from heap to tipping out point and then counted the numbers of journeys back and forth. Sad but true! I was pretty shocked to work out that I walked a little over 8 miles that day just pushing a wheelbarrow back and forth. No wonder they say that gardening is good for the body as well as the soul!

One of the next jobs I need to sort out is in the greenhouses and tunnels. These need a good tidying up and sterilising with a suitable disinfectant in an effort to keep bugs and beasties to an acceptable level. I learnt a long time ago that you will never get rid of them all together. There is a lot of maintenance to do as well. In the small greenhouse the one bench has come to the end of its useful life, with not just the upright supports, but the timber lathe decking also rotting. I'll whip the old one out and then replace with a new purpose built bench. I have a bit that we used to use for potting up on but now serves as a cat bed when it suits them. Talking of which I entered this the other day to find one of our black and white cuts had climbed onto some old horticultural fleece, which had sunk under his weight into an old Wilko 50 fat ball plastic bucket, which I had been using for fertiliser spreading. His bum had sunk into the bottom of the bucket, leaving his head resting on the top edge. The sun was shining, and all was right with the world talk about a cat's life! Note for future reference, when I come back to this earth next time I want to be a cat! I was planning on getting rid of the potting up bit and use it for extending the plant bench instead, but maybe the cat won't be friends with me if I did so perhaps I'll leave well alone. I am currently deliberating what to do with the large tunnel. The current cover has been on far too long and is showing its age. In addition the wooden frame has rotted in several places and really needs replacing, so I think it is time to bite the bullet and cut the old cover off. I can then tighten all of the metal hops up, replace the wooden frame and then get 'anti-hotspot' tape attached to the hoops. As you can imagine the metal hoops get very hot under the cover when the sun shines, so this tape, as the name suggests, is designed to reduce the heat from affecting the tunnel cover itself. At around £250 a time it needs to go as long as possible, but more so from the fact that it is a bit of a job to select the right day to not only get the cover out and over the frame again, but also to keep it there without blowing away whilst it warms up and can then be stretched taught over the frame before fixing. This is the most critical point as you need a nice warm spring morning with no breeze – how often do we get one of them when we have the time to do the necessary! The tunnel is 25 metres long by 11.1 metres over the hoops and the cover itself probably weighs over 150 pounds, so not the easiest thing to handle – especially if you are on your own! Another note – attempt to get one of the son in laws to come and stay when the weather forecast is looking promising!

Continued on page 26

The last time I changed the cover, we had the best nectarine and apricot harvest ever. This was because the plants got plenty of rain over the winter months, many of the pests got zapped by the direct cold weather and the bees were able to get to the flowers unhindered in the spring, so here's hoping!

We had one good day a week or so ago and so I took advantage of it to close the bees down properly for winter. This involved removing the queen excluder from inside the hive. This is a wired screen that has gaps between the wires that allow the worker bees to get to the honey storage area (the super's) but not the queen. This restricts her egg laying activity to the brood chamber only – otherwise she would lay all over the place. This needs removing so that the bees can move freely within the hive to reach the food supplies when the bees have clustered together during the winter cold. The excluder would stop this happening, resulting in the bees probably dying as they wouldn't leave the queen behind whilst they search for food stores. The queen moves with the cluster at all times in order to keep her safe – she is after all the future of the colony. At the same time I completed the task of placing mouse guards over the entrances of all of the hives as these pesky little critters will get into a nice warm hive and hunker down for the winter, eating much of the stores and messing up the hygiene within the hive. Finally I checked the level of food stores. Some hives were fine, but others were still a little short so I put some fondant icing on these ones as a way of boosting the stores whilst we can.



The weather continues changeable so I'm starting to sort out the various bits of bee equipment whilst I can, and before I need it next spring. The replacement micro-switch for the electric honey extractor has arrived, so I need to sort this out before I forget, or worse still I put it down somewhere and then lose it! All of the queen excluders need cleaning up and then sterilising with a blow torch to ensure that no diseases are transferred. The weak hives were combined with others and all of the hive parts are now in the dry. These will need rubbing down and then repainting when conditions allow. The various empty supers which include frames with drawn wax are stored in the garage roof and have been made mouse proof. These will be ready for next year when the flow of honey starts all over again. The brood frames from the failed hives will be cleaned of all wax, which will then be melted down for exchanging at the bee supplies for wired wax sheets. The wooden frames will be scraped clean and then washed in a boiling solution of washing soda (when the old tea urn comes in handy). This not only sterilises the frames but cleans them of all wax and propolis (the glue substance that bees use to stick everything down and fill holes with) so are ready for new wax sheets when needed next year. Always something that needs doing!

Happy gardening until next month, Steve and Felicity Hunt.

Keith Rowlands OBE
Home Studio
Artist painting in oils on canvas
“From valley to shore”

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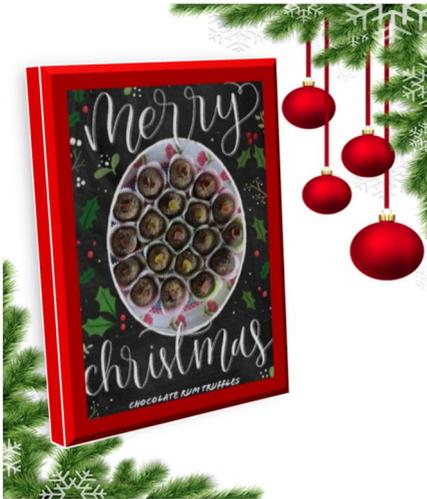


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Nerys's Natty Nosh



Chocolate Rum Truffles

Ingredients

- 1 swiss roll or small cake
- 100g chocolate
- 1 tablespoon Rum or orange juice

Decorate

- Crushed biscuits (amaretto)
- Sweets to decorate

Method

1 Melt the chocolate in the microwave for about 60 seconds. Watch the chocolate doesn't burn. The bowl will be hot so leave the chocolate to melt in the bowl.

2 Once the chocolate has melted add the cake and mix well. Add the Rum/orange juice and form into a dough consistency.

3 Using a melon ball scoop form the truffle mixture into balls. Place on greaseproof paper. Continue until all the mixture has been used.

4 Roll gently in the crushed biscuits until all the truffles are coated. Place in individual Petits Fours cases. Decorate and chill.



*Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year.*



Chocolate, Date, Coconut And Almond Truffles

Ingredients

100g pitted dates
100g almonds
100g organic chocolate
100g desiccated coconut

Decorate

Desiccated coconut and choice of sweets

1Place the dates in a bowl and immerse in boiling water. Leave for an hour, then drain.

2 Melt the chocolate.

3 Put the almonds, melted chocolate, dates and coconut in a blender. Blend until smooth.

4Remove the mixture from the blender and roll into little balls. If liked, roll the balls in desiccated coconut. Decorate and place in petit fours cases.

5 Chill.

Enjoy!

Nadolig Llawn a Bswyddyn Newydd Dda.



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SHIRENEWTON WI DECEMBER/JANUARY

With Christmas just around the corner, the ladies of the Shirenewton branch applied their not inconsiderable talents to the task of designing and making their own Christmas cards. Under the watchful eye of Diana Such, who kindly provided the resources and judged the winning 'showstoppers' they channelled their inner Valerie Singleton and glued and glittered their way to Hallmark standards.



This December we welcome Barbara Walters to repeat her Christmas table decoration tutorial, so enjoyed by everyone last year. Some of the less able and talented among us and by that I mean yours truly, even managed to produce something that was recognisable, such is Barbara's expertise.

In January we will hold our Christmas event in the form of a high tea at St Pierre and look forward to this slightly adventurous departure to our normal festive knees- up.

2018 will see a heady mix of information and entertainment rolled out during the monthly meetings, so feel free to join us.

Jane Lane (secretary) 641704

Diane Ashton-Smith (President) 628838

STARGAZING IN DECEMBER 2017

In the evening to the southeast, the constellation Orion is a glorious sight – three bright stars make up his belt; two stars are his shoulders, and two more make his legs. Orion was the great hunter of Greek Mythology who boasted that he could kill any creature on earth – but he met his match in the scorpion, which stung him in the heel and killed him. The bright blue-white star in Orion's right leg is Rigel, an extremely powerful star but at great distance, it is at least 60,000 times more luminous than the Sun. The bright star at Orion's left shoulder is Betelgeuse (pronounce it "beetle-juice" and you'll be close enough). Betelgeuse has a reddish colour – it is a vast red super-giant star, large enough to contain the entire path of the Earth round the Sun. Hanging from Orion's belt is his sword. One of the stars in the sword appears fuzzy compared with other stars and is well worth looking at through binoculars. This is the Orion Nebula and is a huge cloud of gas and dust. It is one of the most intense regions of star formation visible in our galaxy.



No planets are visible in the evening. The very bright planet Jupiter lies to the south-east in the early morning sky with the fainter and slightly orange planet Mars above and to the right of Jupiter. On the 14th December, the two planets and the crescent moon form a triangle. There is a "conjunction" of the two planets on 7th January (they are close together). They are joined by the Moon once more on 11th January.

You may see some shooting stars on 13th and 14th December. These are the Geminid meteor shower. They should appear in the eastern sky later in the evening.

We reach the Winter Solstice on December 21st. The Sun reaches its lowest point in the heavens as observed in the northern hemisphere. This gives the shortest day and the longest night

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DIARY DATES

Dec	Event	Location
2nd 7:00pm	Winterfest	Huntsman Hotel
3rd 11:00am	Advent Fair	Saysell Rooms
4th 7:00pm	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
4th 7:30pm	Christmas Carols	Gaerllwyd Baptist Church
11th 2:00pm	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation Hall
12th 7:00pm	Shirenewton Local History Society	Llanfyangel Tor-Y-Mynydd Church
14th 7:15pm	Shirenewton Women's Institute	Recreation Hall
15th 6:30pm	Carols around the Christmass tree	TA Car Park
16th 10:00am	Village Market	Recreation Hall
17th 10:00 2:30pm	Christmas Praise Service Christingle & Carol Service	Shirenewton Church
17th 10:00am	Carol Service	Netherwent Church
17th 2:30pm	Christingle Carol Service	St Peters Church Newchurch
21st	An Evening with Paul Fredericks	Huntsman Hotel
23rd	Children's Party	Saysell Rooms
24th 4:00pm 11:30pm	Nativity and Christingle Service Midnight Mass	Shirenewton Church
24th 6:30pm	Christmas Ever Nativity	Gaerllwyd Chapel
25th 10:00am	Family Service	Shirenewton Church
25th 10:00am	Family Eucharist Service	St Peters Church Newchurch
27th 7:30am	Shirenewton Local History Society	Woodland Tavern
Jan	Event	Location
8th 2:00	Shirenewton Local History Society	Recreation Hall
8th 7:30pm	Community Council Meeting	Recreation Hall
25,26,27 7:00pm	"Camelot" SODS Pantomime	Earlwood Hall
28th 10:00am	Red Alter Frontal Consecration	Shirenewton Church
30th 7:00pm	Shirenewton Local History Society	Earlwood Hall

Readers and Sides Persons

December 2017 January 2018

Date	Sunday Service	Readers	Sides Persons
3rd December	First Sunday of Advent	Mark Broughton Ruth Savagar	Mark Broughton Claire Lewis
10th December	Second Sunday of Advent	Bob Grattan Glynis MacDonald	Bob Grattan Glynis MacDonald
17th December	Third Sunday of Advent	James Lenev Paul Morecombe	Claire Lewis Paul Morcombe
24th December	Fourth Sunday of Advent	Andrew Baker Sally Saysell	Graham Lambert Claire Lewis
25th December	Christmas Day - Midnight Mass Family Service 10 a.m.	Andrew Baker Sally Saysell	Graham Lambert Claire Lewis
Date	Sunday Service	Readers	Sides Persons
7th January	Epiphany 1	James Lenev Margaret Lock	Claire Lewis Margaret Lock
14th January	Epiphany 2	Jane Smith-Haddon Paul Morcombe	Jane Smith-Haddon Paul Morcombe
21st January	Epiphany 3	Mark Broughton Diane Marlow	Mark Broughton Diane Marlow
28th January	Epiphany 4 Group Service with Bishop Ricard	Adrew Baker Sally Saysell	Claire Lewis Graham Lambert

DEFIBRILLATOR LOCATIONS

(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 Arms (Shirenewton village)



(House half way between Blethyn Close and the School in Mynyddbach)

Earlswood Hall (Earlswood)

Shirenewton School

LOCAL CONTACTS

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

Church of St. Thomas à Becket Shirenewton

Rector	Revd Julian White Jel.white@btinternet.com	01291 622317
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Lay Eucharistic Minister	Gilly Lambert	01291 641 175
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Church Wardens	Sally Saysell Andrew Baker	01291 641 369 01291 641 925
PCC Secretary	Bill Clark	01291 641 783
PCC Treasurer	Graham Lambert	01291 641 175
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Gift Aid Secretary	Lynn Morcombe	01291 641 671
Organists	Mike Penney	01291 650 653
Sunday Club	Glynis MacDonald	01291 641 818
Tower Captain	Lynn Morcombe	01291 641 671
Saysell Centre Booking	Maureen Moody	01291 641 524
Safeguarding Officer	Terry Walters	01291 641 338
Church Flowers	Graham Lambert	01291 641 175
Parish Magazine Editor		
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Church of St Tewdrics's Mathern

Secretary and Church Warden Monnica Williams monnica.williams@virgin.net

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	Ben Allen	01291 641150	ben@rapier.org.uk
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Earlswood Ward	Ken Morton	01291 650268	ken.morton@hotmail.com
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Member of Parliament	David Davies	020 7219 8360	daviesd@parliament.uk

Police Neighbourhood Watch Contacts

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louise.thorpe@gwent.pnn.police.uk
Shirenewton & Mynyddbach Beverley Moore 01291 641532

Earlswood Sue Leat 01291 641207

Other Local Organisations

Beavers Julie Hitchcock 01291 650548
Brownies Bev. Leaf 01291 641680
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Church Fete

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