

Another step for Caversham!

Kayaking up the Thames

In May, Father Paul Martin completed his 11 day pilgrimage from Walsingham in North Norfolk to his parish of Our Lady and St Anne in Caversham (as reported in the Caversham Bridge in July 2017. Father Paul's footsteps have so far raised more than £9,000 for the redecoration and refurbishment of the shrine to Our Lady of Caversham. His efforts and the generosity of donors have enabled the redecoration of the shrine to proceed from mid-July to the beginning of September. The artist Marcelo Lavallen is about to complete a series of murals in the shrine chapel. The re-dedication of the shrine took place on Friday 8th September (reports to follow in Caversham Bridge).

Now, two of our parishioners, Damian Colehan and Mike Ryan, have advanced the fundraising cause by following a good part of the journey undertaken by Jerome K. Jerome and his two friends described in the comic novel *Three Men in a Boat*, (published in 1889). These Victorian gentlemen rowed up the Thames from Kingston-upon-Thames to Oxford. Our modern pioneers – Damian and Mike – completed their journey at Deans Farm in Caversham, which was the site of the medieval shrine to Our Lady of Caversham.

They set out from Teddington (start of the non-tidal river) on Thursday August 24th and passed Kingston, Hampton Court and Shepperton to stay overnight in Chertsey with a welcome dinner with Father Paul and Marcelo to assist their recovery and prepare for the

rigours ahead! Friday 25th was the 'big push' on the river for 12 hours passing Runnymede, Windsor, Maidenhead and then Cookham for a well-earned rest. Saturday 26th witnessed our intrepid and hardening kayakers ticking off Marlow and Henley and arriving at Sonning for the final overnight rest. An early start on Sunday 27th August



saw their arrival in Caversham; family greetings, a quick McDonald breakfast and then to Our Lady and St Anne church for the Sunday morning mass. Then some days to reflect on a very satisfactory outcome and at least £3000 raised for the shrine fund. Well done Damian and Mike and their family support teams. Our parish salutes you.

Nearly 40 hours of solid kayaking were achieved as well as the transit of 21 locks, seven parliamentary constituencies, passing under three different motorways and the accompaniment of the Heathrow flight path. No doubt there were many moments of tranquillity, scenic beauty and personal contemplation as well as sore muscles and good honest fatigue. Mercifully there was no rain and no reported health and safety hazards. Our two intrepid parishioners have added to their skill sets and CVs! Both Damian and Mike are stalwart organizers of the annual Caversham Rock and Ale festival which raises money for the Motor Neurone Disease Association. Damian has also walked a portion of the Camino de Santiago in Spain and has raised money for the Friends of the Holy Land (FHL). Solid inspiration for parish fundraisers for the shrine, and

for this we must mention a sponsored cycle ride by Edwin Raj from the parish to St Chad's cathedral in Birmingham in early summer.

Not only has Damian and Mike's journey recalled our humorous Victorian gentlemen. It also serves as a reminder of the medieval journeys undertaken up the Thames by pilgrims to Reading Abbey, to the medieval shrine of Our Lady at Deans Farm and the pilgrimages by Catherine of Aragon prior to the English Reformation. Fr Paul himself visited Queen Catherine's tomb in Peterborough Cathedral during his pilgrimage walk from Walsingham. As we restore the shrine of today we can continually remind ourselves of these historic events in the Christian story of Britain. To find out more and make a donation go to <<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/twomeninabowt>>



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Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788
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St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Revd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
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Revd Marion Pyke Tel: 947 5834
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Church office tel 954 5353
Email Secretary: sue.cantwell@cavershambaptist
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Tel: 947 1787.
Deacon: Hugh Anscombe
Fr Michael Sharkey, Sonning Common
Tel: 972 3418

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD
Revd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009

The newspaper produced by the members of the Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Caversham and Mapledurham for the local community.

EDITORS: Mr Alan Bradbury, Mr Philip DeVillie,
Mrs Janet Offord, Mrs Pat Williams, Rev'd Keith Knee-Robinson,
Dr Alison Johnston

c/o Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham. RG4 8AX
Tel: 947 1703. Email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: Mr A Wright,
Tel: 947 6958.

Email: alanwright55@btinternet.com

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mrs Carol Moloney.
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The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board.

The Editors also would like to bring to readers' notice that the inclusion of advertisements in this paper does not mean an endorsement of the products or of the services offered.

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TALKING POINT

by John Ogden

When did you last plough a field?

By the time you read this, many of the churches in our area will be planning, or else already have celebrated, Harvest Festival. Familiar hymns will have been sung, or else included in service plans for the near future. I've already referred to one such hymn ('We plough the fields and scatter...'); here's another: 'All is safely gathered in; e'er the winter storms begin'.

On a completely different tack, it has long been a staple theme of believers (and perhaps mainly Christian believers) that when we are touring the streets in our cars looking for a place to park, we offer a prayer for God's help in securing that all-important parking spot. When that sweet and safe place is found the request becomes a heartfelt 'Thank you'. When we do so it does seem as though we are looking at God as a Mister Fixit, swerving and finessing the course of events for our especial benefit.

I'm not at all sure I buy that view of God as 'our agent in heaven and on earth'. It seems a bit like the child playing with his model railway who, at any time, can lift a train off the track and out of the way, just to fit in with another plan that has suddenly taken shape in his mind.

But behind the harvest and the parking problem – and of course there are countless other situations too – there lurks a similar difficulty. A relative is very ill: in our own way we pray (or, we plead with 'whoever is in charge up there!') that their recovery might be swift and complete. Recovery: our prayers are answered and we are thankful; now let's celebrate. A further turn for the worse: sorry, we got it wrong that time; now let's get together and listen, help in whatever way we can, offer a hug, make a phone call; above all, listen respectfully.

Don't be afraid to say thank you when things turn out well, even when you aren't really sure who you are thanking. Let that spirit of thankfulness colour everything else in your life too. Adopt thankfulness as your signature tune. When things turn out less happily (suppose the medical situation gets worse), think for more than just a moment on the needs of those closest to the situation: shopping, cleaning, paperwork, getting away from it all.

Putting all the responsibility on God, for good or ill, can sometimes blind us to our own responsibility for dealing with stuff.

Revd Dr John Ogden is a retired Methodist Presbyterian.

He has been active in Caversham since 2001



CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS

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Caversham Good Neighbours is a group formed to offer essential transport to the elderly and disabled in our neighbourhood. If you would like to give to the community by joining us as a volunteer driver or helping in our office, then please do get in touch with us.

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Church House 59 Church Street Caversham RG4 8AX

SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's, St Peter's Hill

8.00am Holy Communion – BCP (first, second and fourth Sundays)
Matins – BCP (Third Sunday)
9.30am Holy Communion (second, third and fourth Sundays)
Service of the Word (First Sunday)
6.30pm Evensong (usually Choral on second Sunday)
Fifth Sunday – Parish wide service (check website for details)

St John's, Gosbrook Road

9.30am Holy Communion (first, third and fourth Sundays)
9.30am All Age Worship (second Sunday)
Fifth Sunday – Parish wide service (check website for details)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.15am Holy Communion (first, second and fourth Sundays)
Morning Worship (third Sunday)
Fifth Sunday – Parish wide service (check website for details)

St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

8.00am The Eucharist
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)
First Sunday, Family Eucharist
11.30am The Eucharist first and third Sundays only, first Sunday BCP
6.30pm Evening Prayer (as announced)

St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

8.00am Said Communion (BCP)
9.30am Parish Communion
9.30am COGS for all ages (1st Sunday of Month)

RIVERSIDE CHURCH(READING)

Meeting at Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham
10.00am Morning Worship & Teaching

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP Meeting at Caversham Park School

11.00am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)
Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH South Street

10.30am Morning Worship each Sunday
8.00pm House of Prayer (praise and prayer) – 2nd Sunday each month
3.45pm Messy Church – for all the family
Fourth Sunday of the month

GRACE CHURCH Old Peppard Road

10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road

9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am
6.30pm (second and fourth Sundays)

Gosbrook Road

10.30am
Woodcote Parish Church
9.45am (second Sunday)

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne's, Southview Avenue

Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm
Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)

Church Street, Reading

10.30am
(House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Church Street, Caversham

9.30am Sunday School
11.00am Divine Worship
6.00pm Evening Service

Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the November 2017 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by **Monday 2nd October**. The date for the December 2017 issue is **Monday 6th November**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Advertising copy for the November 2017 issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by **Friday 29th September**. The date for the December 2017 issue is **Friday 3rd November**.

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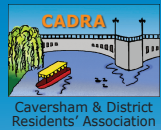
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Thameside Primary School, Harley Road

**Trees in Caversham**

Speaker: Dr John Evans

followed by

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Caversham and District Residents Association celebrates 50 years

2017 marks 50 years since CADRA was first established. Looking back over 50 years, Caversham might have been a very different place were it not for the work of many dedicated volunteers who cared passionately about the place they live. CADRA feels proud to have played its part in protecting and enhancing the life of Caversham.

To celebrate this significant milestone an Anniversary Celebration, to be attended by the Mayor of Reading, Councillor Rose Williams, is being held on Tuesday 17th October at 7.30 at Thameside School in Harley Road. It is hoped that many CADRA members and local residents will come along to raise a toast to the past and future work of CADRA and enjoy a slice of the celebration cake.

Earlier in the day, at 12 noon, a tree will be planted near the Caversham War Memorial as a physical memento of the past 50 years. Everyone is welcome. CADRA is very grateful to Farmer and Dyer for a contribution toward the cost of the tree.

Continuing the tree theme, the guest speaker at the Open Meeting will be Dr John Evans, a Caversham resident and former plant pathologist. Using historical maps and images Dr Evans will celebrate the legacy of our Victorian and Edwardian forbears, who planted so many fine trees in Caversham, helping to make it such an appealing place to live and work. He will highlight some of his favourite trees in Caversham. As so many local trees are now over 100 years old he will also address the issues of tree maturity and old age, as well as describing some threats from pests and diseases, many of which originate outside the UK as a result of overseas trading.

To celebrate the Golden Anniversary a special Anniversary Newsletter has been prepared for CADRA members, which includes a review of the work done by CADRA over the past 50 years, all aimed at making Caversham 'a special place to live'. New members are always very welcome – see our website www.cadra.org.uk for details of how to join.

CORRESPONDENCE

Reading Alma Thrower's recollection in the July edition of Caversham Bridge, of her narrow escape from the machine gunning by a German aeroplane in Vastern Road during WW2, I wondered if it was the same plane that strafed Hemdean Road School one late afternoon during the war. I was a pupil at the time. Luckily we had all gone home and it wasn't until the following morning that we discovered the bullet holes and broken glass at the school. The only pupil left behind was the caretaker's son and he regaled us with stories how he had had to dive for cover. I have not been along Hemdean Road for many years. Is the school still there and if it is are any of the bullet holes still visible?

Dick Sawdon Smith

The editors of the Caversham Bridge welcome correspondence from readers of the newspaper, provided the subject is relevant to Caversham or the surrounding area, or is in response to an

article published in the paper. Please send all correspondence to the parish secretary, Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham, RG4 8AX, or email to secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Bible Friends

A man with a damaged hand

The man with a damaged hand could not wriggle his fingers or wave "hello" to his friends. He found it hard to eat food, to get dressed or to carry things. Jesus felt sorry for the man. He knew the man needed help, but it was the Sabbath, a very special day of the week. Nobody was supposed to work on that day. The crowd watched. What would Jesus do?

Jesus asked the man to stand up where everybody could see him. "Should we do good things or bad things on the Sabbath?" Jesus asked the crowd.

Nobody answered him.

"Stretch out your hand," Jesus told the man. As he slowly stretched his fingers the man's hand was healed. He could wriggle his fingers and wave "hello" just like everyone else.

Jesus knew what the man needed and he helped him.

Mark 3:1-6

From The Big Bible Storybook © 2006 Scripture Union Illustration © 2006 Mark & Anna Carpenter

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS
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NETWORK FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

Thursday 5th October

Speaker: Ann Smith

'Shopping history throughout the ages : 100 years of Reading shops'

Thursday 19th October

Speaker: John Brierley

'The Founding Hospital'

Thursday 2nd November

Members Afternoon

Thursday 16th November

Games with Val Keating

Thursday 30th November

Thames Valley Air Ambulance

Speaker: Selina

Thursday 14th December

Music and Readings

Speaker/Musician: Rev'd David Jenkins

Peppard Road homes plan rejected

Plans proposed by the Gladman Group for 245 homes on land off Peppard Road were rejected by South Oxfordshire District Council's planning committee at its meeting on Wednesday, September 6.

More than 300 people, seven parish councils and Reading Borough Council all objected to the plan, complaining that it raised a range of problems. Campaign Against Gladman in Eye & Dunsden (CAGE) bussed in 120 protesters to the meeting in Didcot.

Reading Borough Council raised a number of concerns over the plans including the impact on infrastructure such as roads, education, leisure facilities and the provision of affordable housing. The council's objection also included concerns over the use of 'substandard' road junctions.

It also raised a lack of sustainability, on the grounds that the proposed development was unlikely to function or operate in a sustainable manner, taking account of the site's relatively remote location, which is poorly served by public transport links and pedestrian/cycle routes.

Sonning Common council's objections were that the plans would affect the character of the area and cause problems for both councils in terms of funding and the management of resources. The development would be 'in Reading in practical terms, but would fall into the Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and Eye and Dunsden Parish Council areas of administration.'

Emmer Green Residents' Association also raised fears over public services and serious congestion over the River Thames.

South Oxfordshire council had received over 300 letters of objection to the plans, for reasons including the impact on the local area, loss of countryside, traffic, the plan being too big, the impact on wildlife and the impact on local GP services. The council had received only three letters in support.

Planning officers had recommended the application be approved because of the need for extra housing, but councillors agreed with the objectors. South Oxfordshire District Council's planning committee said the 13 hectare (33 acre) site would add unsustainable pressure on schools, transport and medical services. If permitted, the plans would have tripled the population of the Eye and Dunsden area.

A Gladman spokeswoman said: "Unfortunately nobody is available to comment."

Gladman are expected to appeal against this decision.

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Summerfield Care Home

The care home in Kidmore Road has now closed. Notice was given to staff and residents in May. Staff are currently working out their notice and all residents have been found new homes. Many Caversham residents have fond memories of the care given to their relatives during time spent in Summerfield.

The property was purchased in June 1988 by Colin Robbins, his wife Selina, Ann Hall and her husband David. It had previously been a private home occupied by a widow for 20 years and was in need of remedial building work. Colin was a master builder and carried out all that work and the alterations required. Bathrooms and lavatories were installed, re-wiring was done, a bell call system for the rooms put in place and a lift to the upper floors was installed.

Summerfield opened its doors in February 1989 after expenditure in excess of £200,000 converting the property. The first resident was Ivy Hinton who had for many years been the receptionist at the old Priory Avenue surgery. She was made MBE for services to the community.

There were originally 15 rooms but this was later reduced to 13. Ann Hall was matron, Selina was the cook and Colin dealt with maintenance. Sadly, Selina passed away 15 months after the home was opened. There were 20 staff on duty providing 24 hour care and all meals were prepared and cooked in the kitchen on site. The home had always received a good rating from the CQC (care quality commission) and this was due in part to the dedicated staff team, many of whom worked at Summerfield from the opening.

Ann and David retired in 2005 and Colin carried on with Tracy Clark working as manager. Tracy left in 2014 and Angela Buck became manager.

A large outside decking area with access ramps was installed and was very popular with residents in the warmer weather.

Each summer a garden party for residents, their relatives and friends was held and at Christmas carol singers came to entertain the residents and a Christmas party was held. Some of the more mobile ones attended carol services at local schools.

More recently an application to build a dementia unit in the grounds was made. This would have consisted of 12 en-suite bedrooms with patios. A lounge and dining area were also proposed. However the planning application, which had the support of the local surgeries, neighbours and the CQC was refused.

The decision to close the home was made for various reasons. There was not a suitable operator prepared to carry on the business and the property needed investment to bring it up to current standards with



larger en-suite rooms. Colin Robbins' family would like him to sell up and be able to enjoy retirement which would give him more time to enjoy watching Reading football club, to attend various cricket matches around the country as well as other interests.

It could be that this large property will be bought by a developer and turned into flats with the possibility of building in the large garden at the rear, or a care home provider will see the potential for Summerfield.

Whatever happens this well known Caversham landmark will not remain unchanged.

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Concerts in Caversham

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The next concert in the Concerts in Caversham series, to be entitled 'Jazz at St Andrew's', will be held at St Andrew's church, Albert Road, Caversham, RG4 7PL, on Saturday 14th October beginning at 7.30pm.

Come and enjoy our very first evening of jazz at St Andrew's. The superb musicians, all top London professionals, will introduce their programme and you can enjoy delicious light-bites – included with your ticket – after the concert. The first event in our series of concerts featuring all instruments from the reed and woodwind family, this promises to be a heart-warming treat for the beginning of autumn.

The Simon Lasky Quartet, featuring vocalist Jessica Radcliffe, saxophonist Simon Bates and bassist Robert Rickenberg, will present an evening of relaxing and enjoyable jazz standards as well as some beautiful new works by brilliant pianist, Simon Lasky.

Tickets are on sale at Waltons the Jewellers in Caversham (cash only, closed Mondays) or phone 0118 9484112/0118 9463202 and cost £17 (£15 concessions) in advance, or £19, £17 on the door, under 16s free.

Visit the website www.concertsincaversham.co.uk for more information.

Organ Recital at St Peter's church

St Peter's Church, Caversham presents the fourth in a series of Organ Recitals at 4pm on Saturday 14th October, featuring David Old. David has many years of experience as an organist and accompanist in the Reading area. He began playing organs at the age of 10 in Warminster, Wiltshire, and developed his talents at St John's Clifton, and Henleaze United Reformed Church, and was accompanist to the Cotham Singers while living in Bristol.

David moved to Reading in 1984 and has played at many churches in the area, teaming up in the late 90s with Philip Aspden at Christchurch and then St Mary's Church, Henley. He took up the position of Organist and Choirmaster at St Michael and St Mary Magdalene, Easthampstead in 2005, subsequently moving to St Nicholas, Rotherfield Greys in 2014. David is the regular accompanist for the annual Henley Choirs Festival and monthly Choral Evensongs at St Peter's.

The recital programme will include Bach's Toccata and Fugue in F Major and works by Cocker, Ireland, Stanley, Widor and Messiaen.

Tickets costing £5 can be obtained from 07999 023825 or Parish Office 0118 947 1703.

Refreshments will be served in the interval. See www.stpetercaversham.org.uk for more details.



David Old

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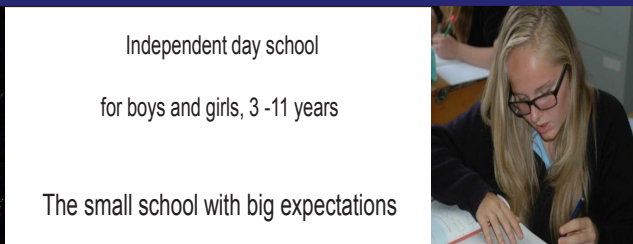
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CHURCHES

Retirement of choir mistress

Patty Naxton first formed a choir at English Martyrs church in Reading in 1977 and remained there as choir mistress until 1985 when she moved house to Caversham. Here she was asked by Fr Meagher, parish priest of Our Lady and St Anne, to form a choir for the church. She did this early in 1986 and the choir was ready to sing at the Sacred Triduum during Holy Week that year and has continued to enhance the liturgy at St Anne's ever since. The choir was a great success and was asked to sing at other parishes around Reading, both Catholic and Anglican.

For her work with the choir Patty was awarded the Papal Bene Merenti medal in 1999.

Perhaps the highlight of her service was to be asked to train the South Oxfordshire Deanery Regional Choir, part of the 2000-strong choir which sang at the Mass at Cofton Park in Birmingham for the Beatification of Cardinal John Henry Newman by Pope Benedict on September 19th 2010.

Patty encouraged the members of the choir to get to know each other by arranging

a meal for them and partners, in winter at a local pub or restaurant and in summer at a share-a-plate garden party in her own garden. The parish priest was always invited to these informal meals. It is a measure of the pleasure that members took in being in the choir that there are several founder members still singing.

This year, after 40 years running these two choirs, Patty decided to retire, and felt that she could safely leave St Anne's choir in the hands of Clare Gough.

At Easter, a presentation was made by members of the choir at Our Lady and St Anne's church. Among other things, Patty was given a Book of Memories - photos to remind her of her years at Our Lady and St Anne's, a voucher for Covent Garden and a book of the Morning and Evening Prayers of the Church. A parish presentation took place a little later.

Patty still sings in the choir but now she can enjoy singing without all the hard work involved in running the choir, a great deal more time-consuming than most people realise.



Patty (second from right, front row) with the members of Our Lady and St Anne's choir who sang for the Pope

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CHURCHES

In response to a previous entry 'A focus on local talent', we have received the following article from Irene Lindsay, a member of St Barnabas church.

Philippa Fawcett, Miss Jarvis and the Royal Albert Hall



For many years the National Federation of Women's Institutes held their Annual General Meeting in London's Royal Albert Hall. Now they hold it in arenas around the country, returning to London intermittently.

Miss Jarvis, the formidable Principal of the Philippa Fawcett Training College in Streatham, sent all the young ladies in my year out into the world with two nuggets of advice!

1. Always polish your handbag when going to an important appointment.
2. Always ensure that, at the end of the year, your chequebook stubs show that you have subscribed to a worthwhile organisation.

Four years after leaving college, I was established in my teaching post, I had married and was expecting my first child when I spotted a poster announcing the foundation meeting of an evening WI in the rapidly expanding village in which I now lived. Their afternoon WI was flourishing and it was felt that an evening WI would cater for young working women. So my long association with this 'worthwhile organisation' began.

A few years later I had joined the committee and volunteered to go, as the delegate, to the NFWI Annual General Meeting which, at that time, was always held in the Albert Hall. Also at that time if the NFWI felt the subscription should be raised, a resolution had to be passed at that meeting. My President said casually 'The NFWI are looking for someone to second the Subscription resolution, shall I put your name forward?' I even more casually replied 'Oh OK, I'm sure they will have lots of people eager to do that for them'

The reply thanked our delegate for agreeing to second the resolution. She would sit on the platform for the morning session. When it came to her turn to speak she would go to the podium and when the light on the microphone turned green she could begin. After precisely two minutes the light would turn red, indicating the microphone had been switched off and she was to return to her seat.

In the days which followed I wrote, pruned, rewrote, polished and practised my speech until it was 1 minute and 58 seconds long I selected my black and white dress and jacket (the height of fashion at that time) and my large white hat; everyone wore a hat to the Albert Hall in those days. Of course I polished my handbag!

I did not hear a word, which was spoken, on that platform that morning. I was just frozen to my chair with fear. However somehow I gathered it was my turn to speak and I headed to the spot. The green light came on and I told the delegates about Miss Jarvis and her good advice. I told them that I had certainly found my worthwhile organisation but at that time the subscription was so small it didn't warrant a cheque so 'I wish to second the resolution'

To this day if the family are around when the Albert Hall comes on the television screen they shout 'Wait for it' and I must reply in my best 'Albert Hall accent'

'I've spoken there!'

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CHURCHES

Renovation of the shrine of Our Lady of Caversham

A Mass of Thanksgiving for the Renovation of the Shrine of Our Lady of Caversham was held on Friday 8th September. A large congregation gathered at the Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady and St Anne in Caversham to mark the renovation of the Shrine, and to celebrate a very significant moment in the life of the parish. After the mass a reception was held in the Cenacle. The 8th September is the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Roman Catholic liturgical calendar. The mass of thanksgiving acknowledged not just the completion of the renovation of the Shrine, but also marks the end of Father Paul Martin's four years as parish priest. He now goes on to take up the post of the director of the St Barnabas Society based in Oxford. His replacement as parish priest is Monsignor Patrick Daly. Some readers will be familiar with the Shrine renovation as it has featured in a number of reports in *Caversham Bridge* which have alluded to the history of the medieval shrine until the Reformation, the creation of the modern shrine in the 1950s, and current support of the parish in raising funds to complete the renovation.

Father Paul has made the renovation of the Shrine a major feature of his parochial work. Planning began after his arrival in the parish and has made significant progress in the last two years. Approval was sought from the Archdiocese of Birmingham, architectural and project plans were made and Marcelo Lavallen invited to undertake the artistic work. A unique decorative artistic scheme was designed by Marcelo for the Shrine and has been completed since the beginning of August this year. The centrepiece is a graphic representation of Caversham Bridge and the Thames itself, with historical figures associated with the Shrine incorporated. This forms the backdrop to the statue of the

Our Lady with Christ. Side panels in the chapel denote biblical events and the arch above the Shrine displays a magnificent representation of the Tree of Jesse denoting the lineage of Christ and his blessed Mother. Discover more by looking at the website: www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk

A booklet was prepared for this special Mass of Thanksgiving. Fr. Paul wrote a preface recording our gratitude to the artist for his skill and dedication. Fr. Paul thanked the many donors who have enabled the renovation through acts of generosity and fundraising. In Fr. Paul's words: 'The Shrine belongs not only to the parish but also to the Archdiocese and to the wider church. Let us pray that pilgrims from wide and far will be drawn here to pray at the feet of Our Blessed Lady and to receive her favours. The work is not over. It has only just begun!' Prayers, readings from the Bible and Marian hymns and prayers appropriate to the occasion were selected.

The mass was a dignified and joyful celebration of not just a parochial event but one of wider significance for the Archdiocese, Marian pilgrimage and spiritual rejuvenation in the life of the Christian church at large. The redecoration of the Shrine is a first step in the revival of a pilgrimage tradition to Caversham and wider spiritual renewal. It unites Caversham with national shrines in Walsingham and to other Marian shrines worldwide. Our parish welcomes all to visit, admire, pray and reflect at the Shrine. The Shrine prayer reflects the spirit and purpose of the shrine. 'All Holy Mother of God, who in the ages of faith didst receive in this holy place the veneration of our fathers, pray for us that we may grow in your grace and may be led to the knowledge of your Divine Son, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, world without end. Amen'



Shrine with Fr. Paul on right with parishioners



Marcelo and parishioners admiring the shrine



Detail of the apse and statue of Our Lady



Detail of figures with Fr. Paul on left side

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ENVIRONMENT

Poisonous Toadstools

These articles have to be written a good six weeks before the publication dates, so I was thinking about what to write for the October edition in the middle of August. My mind turned to fungi – I was musing over a lunch of chicken done with mushrooms in a marsala sauce in a restaurant in Reading town centre.

I was wondering why some fungi are a good source of nourishment, and taste so good to humans, and others are poisonous. I turned to my books at home without finding a definitive answer, and an Internet search didn't enlighten me much more.

The main purpose of the part of the fungus that we see above ground is to shed its spores. These are minute and look collectively like dust. With most species they are designed to float off in the breeze and germinate in a new place. This would be thwarted if the fungus were to be eaten, so it's generally thought that some fungi produce poisons to deter animals from eating them. No-one seems to say quite which these animals might be. It is accepted that deer and rabbits seem to be able to eat fungi that are poisonous to humans with impunity. And likewise, slugs and the larvae of flies and beetles.

The picture I've chosen for this month shows the deadliest of the British fungi, the Death-Cap, *Amanita phalloides*. It can be found in the woods around Caversham at this time of year, and the picture was taken in a wood at Harpsden in 2014.

The main poison in this one is called amanitine. Just eating a small portion of the cap can cause death if medical help isn't sought quickly. Unfortunately, the symptoms aren't felt until 10 to 12 hours later, and they are 'characteristic and terrible'. After 10 to 12 hours of these, they abate for two hours, and then return, even worse. The nervous system is gradually paralysed and the liver



degenerates, and delirium, coma and death follow after three to 10 days.

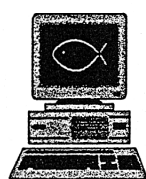
Fortunately, you are not very likely to mistake it for a field mushroom, because it grows in woods rather than fields, and the cap is usually an olive green colour. But people have collected Death-Caps, thinking they were edible, with fatal consequences.

There are no easy rules that distinguish what you can eat and what you can't, and the distinction between mushrooms and toadstools is completely unscientific. If you really want to know, there's no better way than buying a good identification guide, and joining a natural history society and going out on a fungus foray with an expert.

In the past, there have been many old wives' tales claiming to distinguish the edible from the poisonous, all of them fallacious. My favourite one is that the poisoners will turn a silver spoon black if you use it for stirring your fungi while cooking them. I suspect that, like me, most people now use stainless steel in the kitchen.

Perhaps, rather than fearing fungi, we should rejoice that they look so different, and have such a variety of chemicals in them. After all, it's fungi that made our bread rise, turned sugar into alcohol, and saved millions of lives when antibiotics were discovered. And the mushrooms in marsala sauce weren't bad, either!

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CLUBS

Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club

The club will be holding their monthly meeting on Wednesday 11th October at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Highmoor Road, starting at 7:30 pm. Jennifer Thompson will be demonstrating her 'Greek Delights'. Raffle tickets will be on sale at 50p each, giving you the chance to win one of her designs. Refreshments will be available for 50p. There will also be a competition, all entries welcome. The theme is 'Bountiful Harvests'.

Check out our Facebook page, visit the area website bbandoflowers.org.uk, or call Lorna on 0118 9475683 for further information.

Several members of the club are taking part in a flower festival at the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel. The festival, to be held on October 14th and 15th, will celebrate the centenary of Pangbourne College, where the chapel is situated, and also commemorate 35 years since the Falklands War.

Caversham Horticultural Society

There are two events in October to which gardeners are invited. On Saturday 7th the autumn plant sale will be held at the Oakley Road allotments, next to the veterinary surgery. The sale starts at 10am and ends at 11.30am. Stock up with plants to give them an autumn head start for next year's growth.

The following Wednesday, 11th, we are delighted to invite gardener Jim Buttress to speak about *65 years in horticulture*. More recently known as a judge in the BBC series 'The Great Allotment Challenge', filmed at Mapledurham, Jim worked for a number of years for the Central London Royal Parks and Buckingham Palace gardens. The talk starts at 7.45pm and will be held at the usual venue, Caversham Primary School in Hemdean Road. Refreshments will be available after the talk. There is an entrance fee of £3 for non-members.

Chazey WI

In August our summer outing was a trip down the river from Caversham to Henley and back. Seven members were able to go on the trip, enjoying a gentle cruise, we had a short shower early on, but the weather improved and we were able to see impressive houses, some boats that had seen better days, a couple of locks

and some coffee, tea and biscuits! Four ladies made the return trip having enjoyed lunch in Henley, the other three also enjoyed lunch in Henley, but arrived home in Caversham by car.

We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church hall, Highmoor Road at 7.30pm. We welcome ladies to come and visit and enjoy our hospitality and see what our WI is all about. Contact for more information is chazeywi@gmail.com

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

A local fishmonger, Kevin Little, entertained guild members with an intriguing talk entitled '*donkeys, dolphins and fish*' in September.

Alan Copeland took our social studies group on a pictorial journey to places as far apart as Theale church and Portmerion.

Our luncheon club, scrabble group, amblers and cinema group continue to be enjoyed.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday October 19th at Caversham Heights Methodist church hall, Highmoor Road and will be a talk by David Glover about the '*Red kites in the Chilterns*'. Any ladies wishing to join or visit our group will be most welcome.

Just a reminder of our change of day and time. From February 2018 we will meet on Wednesday afternoon at the same place.

Probus

At the August meeting of the Reading and District Probus club, the speaker was George Eycott who gave a talk about the *Claverton Pumping Station*.

The pumping station in Bath is a rare surviving example of the technology of the late Georgian/Regency period.

The pump started operating in 1813. It uses the power of the River Avon to lift water up 48 feet into the Kennet and Avon Canal above. It burns no fuel and makes no waste, so it is the ultimate in environmentally friendly technology.

The pumping station is owned and mainly funded by The Canal and River Trust but is maintained and operated by The Claverton Group who are all volunteers.

At the pumping station, visitors can see the pumping machinery itself, and there are also displays explaining its history and how it works. Visitors can have a guided tour led by one of the volunteers.

Over four years ending in 2016, much restoration work was undertaken, including the complete replacement of all the water wheel timbers, production of and replacement of the pit wheels wooden gear teeth, re-levelling and alignment of the water wheel and crank shafts, repairs to the curved sluice and many more smaller tasks. The pump was run for the first time following the restoration in November 2016.

The pump is run and open to the the public on a small number of days in the year. Entry is free for children under 16 and £6 for adults. For more information and opening times visit the website www.claverton.org

Probus is a club for retired men, who enjoy a meal once a month in the congenial company of other retired men. Lunch is followed by a talk, which may be on a variety of interesting topics. The talk at the October meeting will be on the '*BBC Monitoring Station in Caversham*', and in November the subject will be '*Thames Crossings*'. The club meets at the Caversham Heath Golf Club, on the second Monday of each month. For further information visit the club's website www.probusclub-reading.org.uk If you are interested in joining, please contact the secretary David Laird on 0118 9470709.

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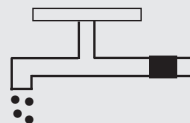
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