

Bishop Andrew leads Palm Sunday walk from Mapledurham to Caversham – with donkeys

On Palm Sunday, 25th March 2018, the Bishop of Reading, Andrew Proud, walked from St Margaret's, Mapledurham, via St Peter, Caversham, to St John the Baptist, Lower Caversham. This was part of the Easter Celebrations focusing on the 'Journey with Jesus', and Bishop Andrew was accompanied by two donkeys: Buffy and Solomon. The walk was to recall and retell Jesus's entry to Jerusalem. There was a service at each church on the way with Communion at St Peter's, and Bishop Andrew preached at each service.

The route, from St Margaret's to St John's, covered about five miles, and each church provided refreshments for the participants. At Mapledurham everyone was given a snack bag containing a bottle of water, a chocolate biscuit, sweets and an apple; they were also given palm crosses to wave. Lunch was served at St Peter's, and tea at St John's. There were about 100 participants, including children and babies – and some dogs. The children performed a drama in Caversham Court. This was all made possible by a dedicated group who worked on the project over three months.

The bells were rung at St Peter's, Caversham, before the service. Only seven local bell ringers were available, but fortunately Steve Smith, who was in the procession, came to the rescue as a most welcome guest ringer. His wife Toni (also a ringer) was one of the organisers.

Solomon and Buffy, the two donkeys, behaved impeccably. They used to be part of a group of 40, giving rides to children



Bishop Andrew and Jo Cox lead Buffy down St Peter's Hill

on Blackpool beach, but there is not much demand for donkey rides nowadays, and so they were sold to Jane and Vernon Lewis in Peppard, who kindly brought them to Mapledurham by trailer, and accompanied them on the Palm Sunday walk. It was a pleasant spring day – a nice change from the arctic blast the week before. At first the procession went through

fields and woods, and later through Christchurch Playing Fields beside the Thames, with only a little walking through streets. Three bell-ringers - Gill and Roger Hopkinson, and Mary Westley – did the full walk.

Many thanks to Roger and Gill Hopkinson, who provided valuable information, and to Jane Havelock. Toni Smith kindly sent in the photo of Bishop Andrew. Diana McClure



This photo shows three of St Peter's bell-ringers - Doug Beaumont, David Sumner and Vicci Alexander – with Solomon, who is helping with maintenance by cropping the grass in St Peter's churchyard. Buffy's hindquarters can just be seen, behind him (over his mane).



FRIENDS OF THE HOLY LAND: spreading the word in Caversham and beyond

At the times of the major Christian festivals especially Lent, Easter, Advent and Christmas, minds are drawn toward the Holy Land. Not only the Holy Land of the past, but also the Holy Land of the present (and by implication its future).

Friends of the Holy Land (FHL) was established in 2009 to support the Christians in the Holy Land. FHL works in close cooperation with the Christian churches in the region and in the UK. Their work is entirely non-political and is carried out with the backing and blessing of Anglican and Catholic Bishops in England and Wales.

FHL has a very active 'head office' and staff in Kenilworth (Warwickshire) and more than one hundred local groups in churches up and down the country. Its major objectives are both targeted and strategic. FHL has managed to reduce central overheads in the UK to minimal levels so that more than 85% of funds raised go to the target community. As a practical Christian charity it is dedicated to the support of Christian communities in the Occupied Territories of Palestine within the state of Israel. FHL supports families in Bethlehem who seek its aid and helps more than 2000 other Christian families in those communities. These people are often spoken of as the 'living stones', the living successors of the first Christian communities in the area.

The focus of FHL is on 'investing' in the communities to sustain family and community life by assisting employment, helping in the care of young and old, and providing means to strengthen the fabric of everyday life. FHL supports a care centre and a clinic, in addition to building a self-sustaining capacity in the communities through housing projects, enterprise, welfare and education. These actions constitute the charitable dimension of FHL's work.

In addition to generating and channelling financial resources to provide a sustainable future, the FHL has three more strategic objectives, which helps it to have a broader focus and to spread

influence and Christian encouragement more widely amongst the UK Christian community. These objectives are to raise awareness of the challenges the communities experience; to encourage prayers to be offered for their intentions: and to encourage visits to the Holy Land to meet with local Christians.

The parish of Our Lady and St Anne established a focus for FHL in June 2012 and works through a group of volunteers and parishioners. Through meetings, social activities, crib collecting boxes, sales of olive wood products and generous giving (including for example monies from sponsoring Damian Colehan for walking a segment of the Camino de Santiago in Autumn 2014) we have raised more than £4000 since our foundation. Other parishes in Caversham and the wider locality might like to consider their own FHL group or to make a link with the group at Our Lady and St Anne. The contributor of this piece is an FHL ambassador so contact stbrts@aol.com for more information.

The problems facing Christian people in the region are intractable, as indeed are the wider relations between the two other major communities. But small things done often send out bigger, stronger and always hopeful messages. So, the things we do actually make a contribution to the wider picture. Maintaining awareness and providing a space to talk about the theme also plays a part. The central organization of the FHL (in Kenilworth, Warwickshire) has built up great contacts in the communities themselves as well as supporting the work of local UK-based groups. Do look at the FHL Newsletter (access easily online or subscribe) and keep an eye on the website at www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk to learn about project successes and the organization. The Friends of the Holy Land is a Registered Charity in England & Wales (1130054).

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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas
Revd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.
Tel: 947 8239.
www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrews

Revd Nigel Jones, St Andrews Vicarage,
Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788
www.standrewscaversham.org

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Revd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Revd Marion Pyke Tel: 947 5834

Revd John Dudley Tel: 9470265

Revd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331810

Revd Judith Ryder Tel: 9473783

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)

(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC)
Contact: Dr Alison Johnston

Tel: 0118 947 5152. www.cpv.org.uk

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

Revd Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road.
Tel: 947 2223

Revd D Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Revd Colin Baker

Church office tel 0118 954 5353

Email: secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)

www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

GRACE CHURCH

(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

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ROMAN CATHOLIC

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2 South View Avenue.

Tel: 947 1787.

Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michaels, Sonning Common

Tel: 972 3418

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Revd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009

TALKING POINT

by Revd David Jenkins

Centre of World News

Salisbury is a place for which I have considerable affection. It was the place to which I was sent by the Methodist Conference to begin working as a minister. It is the place in which my two children were born. It is also by far the most beautiful place in which I have lived (even more so than Caversham!)

It is a place I love so much that I have composed a series of ten piano pieces called "The Salisbury Suite" picturing a walk I have often taken from where I first lived into the City Centre. (The Salisbury Suite is on CD and can be obtained from me if anyone is interested.)

At the moment of writing, however, Salisbury has become well known across the world, not because of its beauty, but because of an attempt on two people's lives using an advanced chemical weapon. It looks highly likely that it was a direct attack on British soil by another State.

By the time *Caversham Bridge* is published, we may know a lot more about this particular crime and its international repercussions.

The events that have taken place in Salisbury remind us that things of great magnitude, for good or ill, can happen wherever we live, and that all people and places are interconnected.

Many people who have heard the word 'Caversham' may associate it with the monitoring of foreign governments and potential espionage.

Wherever we live we face situations of considerable challenge.

Like so many international news items these events in Salisbury speak of the depths of human callousness, but also of courage and responsibility in the initial response shown.

When this article is published in *Caversham Bridge*, Good Friday and Easter Sunday will have taken place. The followers of Jesus, see in his crucifixion the awfulness of how people can act, and, at the same time, extraordinary depths of courageous commitment and compassion.

And because of Easter they see that murder, duplicity, and all the worst actions human beings are capable of, do not have the last word about our life on this planet.

The resurrection of Jesus is the clearest indication of another power released into the world- the power of unconquerable love and transforming hope.

The challenge for each of us is about taking the side of all that affirms and safeguards our humanity, living out the hope and love so dynamically displayed at Easter.

Revd. David Jenkins is a member of the Methodist Team Ministry and Co-Chair of Churches Together in Caversham



CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Are you a people person?

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.

www.cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk
0118 948 3466

Monday to Friday 9.30am – 11.30am
Church House 59 Church Street Caversham RG4 8AX



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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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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 Sunday BCP

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)

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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

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)

St Michaels, Sonning Common

5.30pm Saturday

9.00 and 10.30am Monday

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 June 2018 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by Monday 30th April. The date for the July 2018 issue is Monday 4th June. Email address is editors@cavershambridge.org
Advertising copy for the June 2018 issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twiggmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by Friday 27th April. The date for the July 2018 issue is Friday 1st June. Email address is: advertising@cavershambridge.org

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Anthony Williams celebrates Duke of Edinburgh award success at St James's Palace

Anthony Williams lives in Caversham Heights and is currently in his final year of a BSc in Astrophysics at Queen Mary University, London. He completed his Duke of Edinburgh Award through the Berkshire Scout Association and was an Explorer at 89th Reading Scouts in Emmer Green.

On Monday 19 March, Anthony, 21 attended a presentation at St. James's Palace, London, where he received his Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award from celebrity presenter, Dwayne Fields (the first black Briton to walk to the North Pole), after sharing his experiences with Trustee for The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE), HRH The Earl of Wessex.

During the Gold Award Presentation, HRH took the opportunity to congratulate the young people present on their successes and heard about their DofE journeys, which took each young person many months of hard work and dedication.

Those who achieve a Gold DofE Award will volunteer, learn a skill, get fit, take part in a week long residential and plan and undertake an expedition in wild country. Widely acknowledged as the world's leading achievement award for young people, DofE programmes enable any young person, aged 14-24, to develop key skills for life and work, such as confidence, commitment and team working. Anthony has already completed the Bronze and Silver Awards; his Gold sections were as follows:

- Service: volunteering with 89th Reading Cubs
- Physical: learning archery
- Skills: developing his musicianship playing the bassoon (having already achieved Grade 8 Dist)
- Expedition: a practice in the Brecon Beacons over the weekend in July 2015 when there was a thunderstorm which killed 2 people, then the qualifier took place in Aberystwyth

- Residential: accompanying a school trip to an outdoor centre and leading a group there

Speaking about his DofE experience, Anthony said, "Completing my Gold Award was a challenging but rewarding experience, requiring perseverance and determination. Now that it is completed, I can look back on the achievement and value the opportunities and experiences entailed. The difficulties faced and overcome make it even more worthwhile and taught me new skills. Teamwork was a crucial element of the expedition, especially when we found ourselves in a dangerous situation, when the development of my self-confidence through this scheme enabled me to take charge. I would thoroughly recommend the scheme to other young people".

There are currently over 300,000 young people taking part in a DofE programme across the UK through a variety of centres including both state and independent schools, special schools, businesses, prisons, young offender institutions and youth groups. If readers want to find out more about the DofE and how it enables young people to succeed, please visit www.DofE.org



Anthony seen at Friary Court, St James's Palace having received his certificate.

Caversham Buses: route 22 update

Caversham Bridge has kept readers informed about Reading Buses revisions to Caversham bus services and in particular to the much reduced provision for the route 22 serving Caversham Heights. The April issue reported the actual impact of the new service regime for route 22. There is some evidence that Reading Buses are spreading their operational interests to Slough and a commuter service between Bracknell and London. The legitimacy of these activities is being questioned by those who understand that Reading Buses Limited has a core goal to provide Reading Buses services by virtue of their relationship with Reading Council under the current legal provision for local bus services. Money spent on commercial adventures in Slough (see the entries under Thames Valley Buses on the Reading Buses website) and elsewhere outside Reading might already have funded the restoration of the so-called Red 22 back to the acceptable service level of the 'old Pink 22'. Gleaming repainted and rebranded routes elsewhere on the Caversham side are very laudable but not at the expense of another constituency in the same area. The public knows May 2018 is election time in Thames Ward but that Mapledurham (aka Caversham Heights) has to wait until May 2019 as part of the backwash of boundary changes several years ago. Continue to read *Caversham Bridge* as we report the matter and bus users please continue to raise matters through customerservices@reading-buses.co.uk

PHILIP DE VILLE

It is with great sadness that we note the death on 16th April of Philip de Ville who was a long-standing member of the *Caversham Bridge* editorial team. We extend all our sympathy to his wife and family at this time. A memoir and tribute will appear in a future issue of *Caversham Bridge*.

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Bible Friends

God feeds Elijah

Elijah was one of God's friends. God gave him important messages to give to other people. One day, God said, "Elijah, I want you to go and see King Ahab."

King Ahab was a bad person. Elijah was very frightened. He knew the king would get angry when he heard God's message.

"King Ahab," Elijah said, "I have come to tell you that there will be no more rain until I say so. There will not even be any dew on the grass in the mornings."

God told Elijah about a special place where he could hide from the king. "You will be safe there," God said. "You can drink water from the stream, and I will make sure you have enough food."

Every day, friendly, big, black birds swooped down. They carried pieces of bread and meat for Elijah in their strong beaks.

God provided everything Elijah needed.

1 Kings 17:1-7



Garage art sale for a good cause: one venue of many on the Caversham Arts Trail

Caversham resident John Joyes will be turning his garage into a gallery for a special sale of work by his artist sister Jacqueline Currell who died from Motor Neurone disease.

John's tribute will feature a display of her lino cut prints at his home, 20 Woodcote Road, during the popular Caversham Arts Trail weekends in May. All proceeds will help boost the work of the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

Jacqueline died in March 2017 after a long battle with the progressive neurological condition which is fatal and has no known cure. Now John is hoping some of her art work will help the charity fund vital research work.

He said: "I have a lot of Jacqueline's prints which were exhibited in the north of England and am hoping to find good homes for her work."

Jacqueline taught at Plymouth Art School for 14 years and was secretary of the Plymouth Society of Artists from 1974 to 1980. From 1983 she taught at Chesterfield Art College for 18 years. A website dedicated to her work says students far and wide will remember her for her enthusiasm for her subject and her earnest wish to pass this on to others. Latterly she focused on lino cut printing and contemporary sculpture in a variety of materials.

She showed her work at a number of private exhibitions throughout the country with the proceeds mostly donated to one of the many charities she supported. The last, at Chesterfield College in her final months, raised well over £4000 for the Ashgate Hospice and the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

This year's Caversham Arts Trail will include 17 venues across Caversham and Emmer Green with 37 artists taking part.

Artists will be opening their homes, studios and

gardens to the public on the weekends of 12th & 13th and 19th & 20th May, with some venues also opening on Friday 18th. Admission is free and all venues are open from 11am-5pm.

There will be a huge variety of work on display to suit all tastes and pockets: ceramics, painting, collages, stained glass, découpage, woven textiles, printmaking, jewellery and sculpture.

Jacqueline's art can also be bought in aid of the MND Association online: www.jacquelinecurrell.co.uk:

For more details about the arts trail visit: <http://www.cavershamartstrail.co.uk/>



An evening of English Choral Music

Erleigh Cantors, a local Chamber choir comprising about 25 singers, will be performing its next concert at St Peter's Church Caversham on Saturday May 12th at 7.30pm.

The choir, which was formed in 1990, draws its membership from all over southern England and in 2017 sang to much acclaim at the cathedrals of St David's in Pembrokeshire and Wells, Somerset.

The concert is entitled An Evening of Choral Music for good reason, as it will focus on a range of English choral music from all periods including pieces by:

- Bob Chilcott
- Orlando Gibbons
- Howard Goodall
- Gustav Holst
- Henry Purcell
- Ralph Vaughan-Williams

The choir will be accompanied by organist Philip Aspden who will also play some solos on the church organ.

The concert is being held in aid of St Peter's Church Caversham and The Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.

Tickets are available from Richard Larkin (07557 049092), Ian Westley (0118 947 8382) or on the door priced at £12 (£10 concessions and £5 students) including refreshments.

This promises to be a very popular concert, so you are encouraged to buy your tickets in advance.



A Day on Holiday



This year Caversham Heights Methodist church has a new look for their Holiday at Home for older people.

It will be on Wednesday May 30th from 10.00 to 3.30 and includes lunch, afternoon tea, crafts and a wide range of activities.

You can just turn up on the day (by 10.30) but bring an emergency contact number with you. Cost £6.

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ENVIRONMENT

Eagles fly over Mapledurham



Have you been to Mapledurham recently? My first visit, in 1970, was not entirely happy. I'd walked there from Caversham along The Warren, and when I got to the gate by the mill it was open. I had read about the mill and ventured in only to be chased off by a man telling me that I was trespassing, and that the mill was derelict and dangerous. He was probably right.

The incident came to mind the other day, when someone kindly sent me some photographs, taken in the hot summer of 1976, when the location shots for the film 'The Eagle Has Landed' were in progress. The village had suddenly acquired two shops in the church car park, illustrated here, and a pub, the *Spyglass and Kettle*, but when you looked closer, you could see that only the fronts of the new buildings existed.

The pub was supposedly selling Bullard's Ales, because Mapledurham was standing in for Studley Constable in Norfolk. Bullard's brewery certainly existed in Norwich, but Studley Constable never had – it was an invention of Jack Higgins, who had written the novel on which the film was based.

The story revolves around a German plot to kidnap Sir Winston Churchill in the Second World War. They have found out that the great man is to visit this remote village, so paratroopers are dropped into the area. To allay suspicion, they use a captured Allied plane, and the men are in disguise, wearing Polish uniforms over their German ones. Their deception is revealed when a girl falls into the mill-race. One of the Germans dives in to rescue her, but in doing so he is dragged into the waterwheel, and the uniform is ripped from his back. The German uniform is spotted.

I have read that the filming was allowed on the estate, on condition that the film company paid for the restoration of the watermill afterwards. The waterwheel used in the film was just another 'fake.' The happy result is that the mill is now working again and can be visited legitimately.

This year, it is the turn of the house to receive some attention. It has been open to the public for fifty years now, and it is to undergo an extensive programme of repairs, according to the website. So let us be grateful for that. Although we won't be able to go round the house this year, pre-booked tours of the church and mill will be on offer, together with cream teas.

Although the house is only about an hour's walk from where I live, as you approach it, you seem to enter a different world. When going round the house, it always seems a surprise to see the centre of Reading from the upstairs windows.

When I went to see the film, I have to admit that I don't remember seeing the shops or the *Spyglass and Kettle*. I do remember seeing the firing of weapons all around the church, and feeling disturbed by it. When I went back to Mapledurham, I half expected to see broken windows and damage to the fabric, and was relieved to find St. Margaret's looking much as it had always done.

Happy Wanderer

Friends of Mapledurham Playing Fields: mid-March report

A mini 'Beast from the East' returned mid-March, so as the Mapledurham volunteers planted replacement trees in the 'orchard' snowflakes and tiny white petals flurried around in the wind. Two trees needed replacing, a greengage and a Victoria plum. Now the full set of 80 odd fruit trees are once again in place. Then volunteers moved on to clearing brambles, a never ending task, and a coffee break where chat included the proposed loss of the poplars and other trees in the centre of the field to make room for the football pitches (and the school) . A brimstone, those brilliant yellow butterflies, had been seen the previous Sunday in a brief moment of sunshine, probably regretting coming out so soon hope he was tucked away safely in the ivy somewhere. Anyone is welcome to join The Friends of Mapledurham Playing Fields who meet on the third Saturday of the month around 9.30 a.m. Details: econetreading.org.uk

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History of Reading Society

The subject of the March talk was Coley and Coley Park: an Historical Introduction. The speakers were Katie Amos and Mike Cooper who are co-authors of a recent book about Coley's history.

The origin of Coley's name is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'charcoal clearing'. The earliest mention of Coley (written as Colleia) is in the records of Reading Abbey for the year 1130; however, traces of human settlement have been found which date back even earlier to the Roman occupation of Britain: Roman coins and Anglo-Saxon pottery were discovered along the Holy Brook.

The early history of Coley is closely bound up with the Vachells; they were the pre-eminent family for over 400 years. John Vachell purchased land there in 1309 and

erected a house, Coley Park, on the banks of the Holy Brook. Today, all that remains of the house is the stable block and dovecote, later to become Coley Park Farm, and now converted to housing. Another remnant of their era is the almshouses in Castle Street.



Coley Park House 15.11.1970'

In 1643, during the siege of Reading in the English Civil Wars, substantial defences were erected along the banks of the Holy Brook and at Bath Road; fragments are thought to remain in some of the back gardens around Field Road. A conflagration at the time resulted in the destruction of Coley Park; the house was not rebuilt until the early 1800s by John Berkeley Monck at a site on higher ground.

In the nineteenth century chalk mines, brick works, a jam factory and a railway goods yard were among the new industries that would end the dominance of agriculture over the local economy. By the 1880s the population had grown to 4,000, and many were crammed into the slum housing known as 'courts'; these tottering structures would blight Coley well into the next century.

In the twentieth century urban growth would eclipse that of the previous century and eventually new housing would encircle



'Bath Road approach to Coley Park House c. 1900'

Coley Park House. In 1955 Reading Borough Council bought most of the parkland around the house for £11,514 and by the late 1960s it was mostly built-up. A prominent landmark would be the three blocks of 14 storey flats erected at Wensley Road in 1961; at the time the weekly rent for a three bedroom flat was two pounds, two shillings and two pence.

The subject of the next talk (on 18th April) will be the Simonds Family of Reading. The speaker will be Raymond Simonds.



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A second trip to Cambodia 2018

In January this year, I was fortunate to be able to go once again to Cambodia as part of a medical team with Mission Direct, www.missiondirect.org. We were one group from Yorkshire and three nurses from Lincolnshire, Canada and Caversham (the writer).

Cambodia's recent history has been unbelievably horrific, and the country is still struggling to recover. In 1975 Pol Pot, the leader of the Cambodian Communist party, declared that Cambodian society was to be "purified" in favour of an extreme form of peasant communism. Newspapers and television stations were shut down, embassies closed, radios confiscated, money forbidden, businesses stopped, religion banned, education halted, health care eliminated, parental authority revoked and cities forcibly evacuated at gunpoint. Tuol Sleng prison in Phnom Penh, a former secondary school, was the secret centre of a network of nearly 200 prisons where the educated and the wealthy were imprisoned and tortured by the Khmer Rouge before being taken to the 'killing fields' nearby, then executed and buried in mass graves. There are over 300 killing fields in Cambodia where it is estimated 3 million people are buried.

In our first week we held clinics in and around Phnom Penh and used money raised before the trip to pay for medication, translators and tuk tuks (light taxis to get us around). Chronic backache and painful knees from hard physical work, and acid stomach pain from lack of food, were the most common problems, as well as tooth decay. Blood tests and scans are not done as there is almost no treatment available to follow up. We were able to give pain relief, antibiotics, antacids, skin creams, worm tablets and health advice, which included back and knee exercises, and we also paid for some referrals to hospital. We distributed toothbrushes and paste to many. We also held a clinic at 'The Dump'

just outside Phnom Penh where the city's waste is taken each day. The people living there survive by sifting through the rubbish at night using torches and selling the plastics, collected in bags they have sewn together themselves, for about 4 dollars. Many were exhausted. The 'village' shares two toilets and a recently installed water pump. Following the atrocities in Cambodia, there is still a great lack of trained people and we were asked to give talks to nursing and medical students to help supplement their training for which they were very grateful.

In the second week we travelled to more remote locations with a much larger multi-national mission team called World Hope from Australia. Twenty five villages had been advised by local pastors that the team was coming and many people were waiting to meet us. Following triage, patients could see nurses, doctors and dentists, receive relevant health education, be fitted with reading or prescription glasses, collect medications and finally hear the Gospel and be offered prayer. Eighty-six sewing kits, put together with donations from people in Caversham, were given out and they were very gratefully received, and balloon models were made for the children.

In all, 383 patients received treatment, many drugs were prescribed, much advice was given, 4 operations were performed, 283 pairs of glasses were given out and 65 people had a total of 200 teeth removed between them. First time commitments to Jesus were made by 201 people and they will be supported by local pastors and new churches may be planted.

It was an amazing two weeks, Cambodians are friendly gentle people, very welcoming and so grateful for the help they receive. This summer government elections will be held - let us hope and pray these will be fairly conducted and bring further peace and prosperity to the people of Cambodia.

Carol Moloney



'Scenes from daily life in Cambodia'

Friends of Clayfield Copse: 1st April 2018 news report

Brimstone butterflies look for the purging buckthorn bush, and will travel miles to find one. A few are here in Clayfield Copse!

Our main volunteer task was to clear the wild flower area in the sports field. As we walked across the football pitches, parts of the field were like a marsh! This flower area was planted up with the help of local school children some years ago, many of the original plants have died; but some remain.

Friends of Clayfield Copse:

Dawn Chorus Day Sunday 6th May

The first Sunday of May is 'International Dawn Chorus Day'. Friends will meet at 4.30 a.m. in the car park off Caversham Park Rd. It is magic to hear the owls signing off in the darkness then the sun rises and we hear the day time birds signing in, as we walk slowly through the woodland. Peter Scudamore knows the songs of all of them, and we tick the birds off our list. There were 39 from Blackbird to Wren last year.

We stop a while for hot drinks and chat, then walk on round the fields to hear the more 'open ground' birds, warblers and finches. Last year a song thrush on the ash tree was performing beautifully in the sunshine as we returned to the show field.

No charge but donations welcome.

This is an 'Econet' event. Details: www.econetreading.org.uk

Caversham Horticultural Society

May is a busy month for members of the society. Following an outing to the National Trust landscape gardens at Stourhead the annual spring plant sale follows on Saturday May 12th at the Oakley Road allotments Caversham between 10 a.m. and 11.30 a.m. Stock is dependent upon what plants have been donated but usually include tomato and other vegetable seedlings in addition to ornamental plants for the garden.

The following Wednesday May 16th stages the latest in the series of illustrated talks given to the society this year. Stephen Pollard's subject for this talk is growing pelargoniums. The talk starts at 7.45 p.m. and will be held at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road. All are welcomed but there is an entrance charge of £3.00 for non-members. Why not become a member at the meeting and enjoy free membership entrance to all talks this year?

The purging buckthorn bushes have survived. They are spiny bushes similar to blackthorn, but have yellow green flowers in spring. Importantly the leaves on the bushes are the principal food for the caterpillars of the brimstone butterfly. They can travel miles to find this bush to lay their eggs. Other insects, particularly hover flies, like the flowers, and the berries in autumn are good for the birds, but as the name, 'purging' buckthorn, suggests they would have serious effects if eaten by humans.

We cleared much of the dead matter covering the new growth, then moved to cut a few hazel bean poles from the edge of the pathway for Bean Pole Day (21st April).

We are not allowed deep in the woods after 1st March as we might disturb the nesting birds. Maybe visiting dogs could take note! Look out for the brimstones! And finally, purging buckthorns look good in your garden too.

Next month 6th May: Dawn Chorus 4.30 a.m. and task 1000 a.m. Meet in car park

Details www.econetreading.org.uk

What affect will the April increase in fines for littering have here in Caversham?

Caversham GLOBE (Go Local On a Better Environment) group has been clearing litter from many locations in past years, collecting between 50 and 90 sacks of litter each year. In March, during a six hour litter and fly-tipping clearance of parts of Christchurch Meadows and central Caversham, 11 GLOBE activists amassed 29 sacks of litter, as well as scrap metal, 115 glass bottles and various plastic/wooden items. Will the need for this type of clean-up now stop? UNLIKELY! Readers will acknowledge that certain people will continue littering because the likelihood of being "caught in the act" is so small. Society has long had penalties for offences we still see every day, such as speeding while driving, cycling on the pavement, not clearing dog mess, jumping a red light, throwing down litter near a bin. Why is enforcement lacking? Is there so little respect for others? Maybe it's just plain defiance and selfishness? Perhaps if and when the government's recently proposed deposit scheme on plastic and glass bottles and drinks cans is introduced we might see a reduction in this type of littering, but it could be a long way off being introduced.

The GLOBE group will be continuing to organise and carry out local projects to keep Caversham cleaner and more pleasant for residents. Further air quality testing (see April issue) for nitrogen oxide in four locations on our busy streets was done in March, with results from the laboratory analysis being discussed with CADRA for further action. Three people planted another 90 saplings in the hedge that will eventually hide that hideous industrial fence on the boundary of Christchurch Meadows northern field. We've planned a major litter pick on Richfield Avenue and parts of the Thames parks in April. The planter boxes on Church Street and Church Road will get some care and attention with spring bedding and another coat of preservative as needed. Making a success of these projects is dependent on more residents becoming activists to make practical and visual improvements for the benefit of everyone. The continued existence of the GLOBE group is dependent on financial support too. If readers know of a project that the group could help organise, or to find out more about GLOBE, go to www.cavershamglobe.org.uk or see the group's Facebook Page. We meet monthly on the fourth Tuesday at 7 pm in Church House Caversham and all residents are welcome.

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Two choirs in Caversham concert



'The RMVC in concert mode'

Two choirs for the price of one is what's on offer at a concert at St Andrew's Church, Caversham, on Saturday, May 12th starting at 7.00 p.m. The concert is given by the Reading Male Voice Choir (RMVC) which returns to the church after a gap of two years.

RMVC will be joined by a school choir from Hawkedon primary school, Lower Earley, under their musical director, Kathryn Clarke. The school is the venue for the adult choir's weekly rehearsals and the two choirs have performed together several times before.

RMVC will perform a selection of songs from their extensive repertoire which includes folk songs, opera choruses, gospel songs, hymns and songs from the shows. During the evening the two choirs will get together in one or more joint items, allowing the audience to enjoy the special sound of children and adults singing together. Tickets cost £12 (£10 for over 60s and £5 for under 16s) and include a glass of wine or fruit juice at the interval. They are obtainable from Regula Adams on 01189 947 4166 or from Waltons the Jewellers in Prospect Street, Caversham (cash only, closed on Mondays). They can also be purchased online from Ticketsource which can be contacted by using the link on the choir's website, www.rmvc.net

Proceeds from the concert will be shared equally between church funds and the church's charity of the year, the Reading Refugee Support Group.

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Caversham Heights Society

The Caversham Heights Society hosted three very different events during March.

On March 7th Dr Georgina Dodd talked about her doctoral research when she gave a talk entitled 'How components of diet affect cognitive decline.' She pointed out that from our early years of childhood until our 20s there is strong cognitive growth; thereafter there is a slow but steady decline until the ageing process often leads to dementia /Alzheimers disease and sometimes Parkinson's disease. These are all diseases associated with memory loss, a gradual decline in the use of motor skills and, for many but not all, a decline in higher order cognitive functions. Given the age range of most of the Society's members this meeting was extremely well attended as we all were curious to know in what ways our diets might help

or hinder our cognitive decline!

It was fascinating for some, but frustrating for others, because, apart from talking about the benefits of fruit and vegetables, especially citrus fruits, and other red fruits that have anti-inflammatory and anti-carcinogenic properties, the speaker also stressed the advantages of drinking tea and cocoa. More than anything, though, most of the talk was devoted to extolling the benefits of eating, or drinking the juice of blueberries. Through numerous experiments conducted with children, middle aged adults and the elderly it has been shown that the greatest impact of eating blueberries, in whatever form, is on the elderly. Not only is cognitive decline slowed but in most cases there was a noticeable improvement in physical well-being and motor skills. Whether or not there was a rush on blueberries from supermarkets on the days following is unknown but we all gained some useful knowledge from this most interesting talk.

Our next event was on Tuesday 13th when a coach full of members ventured up to London for a day of contrasts. In the morning we had a tour around the Royal Albert Hall seeing the Royal Box and the Queen's withdrawing suite, the special Royal entrance away from prying eyes and other parts which have been refurbished at the cost of several millions of pounds over recent years. We learned of the many events that have been staged at the Hall. We also had a glorious view of the refurbished Albert Memorial. We learned about Albert's great dream of developing an area for the Arts and Sciences around the Royal Albert Hall which saw the development of Imperial College, the Royal College of Music and other institutions. Sadly we were not able to visit the basements because several schools were preparing for an evening performance. Nonetheless this was a worthwhile visit.

In the afternoon we experienced a real contrast as we ventured into the East End of London to visit the Dr Barnardo's Ragged School Museum, so called because when Dr Barnardo, who was training to become a doctor at the Royal London Hospital prior to going as a missionary to China with the China Inland Mission (for which he was turned down) saw the appalling conditions of squalor in which the children of that part of London lived, in rags and without shoes or much food. Seeing this he felt such compassion that in 1877 he bought an old warehouse to turn into a school for the poor. Between 1877 and 1905, the year Dr Barnardo died, the Ragged School had provided schooling for over 55,000 boys and girls. This education consisted of mathematics, reading, writing and religious studies. It was sufficient for many to get into different kinds of employment. We were able to experience something of what the schooling might have been like as we sat at the original desks in the girls' school room that would have originally seated over 100 children! The contrast between the appalling poverty of those living in the East End and the opulence of those living in the West End of London, both in the late 19th century and even now, was not lost on any of us. It was only three years before Barnardo's death in 1905 that the 1902 Education Act was being implemented as local authorities began to provide the rudiments of an education for elementary children

The third event was on the 21st March when Michael Willoughby talked about the human costs of World War 1. Because Michael had come across one of his family who died in the battle of the Somme and because he knew little about him he became interested in the backgrounds of soldiers whose names appear on War Memorials in the villages in and around Reading and Henley. Unlike many talks on World War 1 which sanitise the horrors of the war this talk was both personal and emotional. We were shown pieces of military ordinance found in the fields of Flanders, as well as the book that the speaker had produced, after considerable research, about the lives of 2,500 men from Henley and the surrounding area who were killed in the war. Named 'Lest we Forget: Remember each one was somebody's son' the title summed up the tenor of the talk brilliantly and gave us all much food for thought.

The CHS meets fortnightly on a Wednesday evening in the hall attached to Caversham Heights Methodist Church.

Bowls Club Open Days

'The Island Bohemian Bowls Club' open days are on Sunday 13th May from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. and Monday 14th May from 6 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. We welcome existing bowlers or those trying the game for the first time. If you cannot make the above dates, we do free coaching on Monday evenings from May onwards.

Bowling is for all ages and can be family fun, a social activity or a competitive sport; it's what you make it. The game of bowls is an excellent way of keeping active, a low impact outdoor sport, with time to socialise and make new friends. The club has a licensed bar and organises social events throughout the year.

'The Island Bohemian Bowls Club' is situated on an island in the Thames providing a tranquil get away, just minutes from the bustle of Reading town centre. To arrive at the club you need to take a short ferry crossing.

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Caversham WI

As has been the practice for the last five decades, Caversham WI held its Annual Meeting in March. We elected a new committee to take us through the next year, reviewed the highlights of the past year and discussed some of our options for developing the group for the year ahead. We were fortunate to be able to assist with the Kiosk cafe in Caversham Court Garden in 2017, which was very enjoyable, in addition to pursuing our monthly schedule of speakers. We hope to be able to continue and grow, and this year we will actively support the National WI campaigns such as finding ways to relieve local loneliness. We have started several key conversations and hope to be able to announce some exciting news soon.

The new programme has been finalised – and includes a mixture of local interest and as 'far out' as space travel. So far we have welcomed five new members in 2018, and hope to see the group continue to expand throughout 2018/19.

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CHAZEY WI

On a cold March evening members gathered for our Annual Meeting. We were very pleased to have the company of Hilary, our outgoing President who spoke to the meeting. Hilary has been a great President, full of enthusiasm and ideas. After the election of our new President, Valerie Holden, we gathered together for refreshments and the committee met over tea/coffee to decide the officers. We welcomed a new WI member to the committee, making our number up to six plus the President. The result of the competition was Ann Jones (1st); Mary Wall (2nd), and Theresa Manning (3rd). The raffle was won by Carol and our bi-annual bursary winner was Rowena Sumner.

Chazey WI will meet on the first Wednesday in the month at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall beginning at 2.30 p.m. We welcome new members and for further information email chazeywi@gmail.com

News from St Anne's School

Before the end of term, Father Patrick celebrated Mass in the hall of St Anne's school for the whole school and for a handful of parishioners who were able to attend.

The children joined in the hymns and clapped enthusiastically for the last verse of a couple of them and they also sang the *Sanctus* and the *Agnus Dei*. They were accompanied on the piano and by the recorder group.

Father Patrick addressed his homily to the children, asking what they thought Easter was all about. He was pleased to get, among the answers about Easter Eggs, a mention of the promise of eternal life. The scripture readings and the bidding prayers were confidently and reverently read by pupils from different year groups.

On the last afternoon of term, an Easter service of hymns and readings was held to help everyone prepare for the sorrows of Good Friday and the final triumph of Easter Sunday.

ROSEHILL WI

President Margaret Pyle welcomed all members and visitors present to our March meeting which is our AGM. The record of the February 2018 meeting is available for all to see. The sales table and raffle continue to make good amounts each month. Margaret Seal handed out the birthday buttonholes.

We were reminded that subscriptions for 2018 are now due. Also the balance of the Mill Theatre trip on 14th June is due. Diaries for 2019 can now be ordered at a price of £4.70, and we have only got through Easter!! The Annual Meeting of the Caversham group of WIs will be held on 23rd May at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road, tickets costing £5.00 are available from Treasurer, Judith Sharp.

The Annual General Meeting was held and Mary Robinson, Secretary gave the Committee's Annual Report, reminding us of the very interesting and varied speakers we had heard during the year, plus our birthday party, summer cream tea and harvest lunch. Members had attended the Berkshire Federation Spring Council Meeting and the Caversham Group of WI's Meeting. An outing to a lunch and matinee performance at the Mill at Sonning in June proved a great success.

Members also continue to support the Royal Berkshire Hospital, making 12 twiddle muffs for patients with dementia, 14 blankets and 2 dignity shawls for the elderly care wards, plus 31 hats, 27 cardigans and 15 blankets for Buscot Ward. In addition we have also donated 341 emergency toiletry packs for A&E and 6 jumpers for Christian Community Action.

Our President's Address commenced with proposing and adopting of the annual report. Margaret then went on to say that she was retiring as president after seven years in office, and thanked all the committee and helpers for their hard work during that time. Yvonne Wright is also retiring from the committee and she was presented with a bouquet. Three new members were welcomed: Gill Sawyer, Carol Adams and Brenda Thames.

Finally Arlene Riley was elected as our new President.

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at St Barnabas Village Hall, Emmer Green at 2.00 p.m.

Ship Ahoy!

Pirate Day to launch a new play area at St. Martin's Catholic Primary School, Emmer Green was held on Thursday March 22nd. The children and their teachers in the reception class dressed as buccaneers to celebrate the launch of the brand new pirate-themed play area at the school.

The Reception playground at St Martin's is now shipshape with the addition of an impressive pirate ship and train which have been funded by the efforts of the PSA. Parents were invited to the official ribbon cutting by Deputy Head teacher at St. Martin's and St. Anne's, Mrs Sarah Bernto, while the children enjoyed a whole day of pirate activities.

According to Margot Buller, Executive Head (St. Martin's and St. Anne's) *"Playing outside is fundamental to the social and physical wellbeing of our students and our new play area will help them to thrive and learn in a fun environment. We are lucky to have such supportive parents and PSA to make all of this possible, it's what makes our school a special place for children, staff and the parent community."*

Representing the PSA, Zoe de la Pascua said *"I'm so grateful to everybody who dedicates their time so generously to our events, it's wonderful to see our fundraising efforts come together and I'm thrilled that the transformation of the Reception playground will benefit our children for years to come."*

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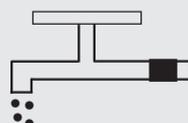
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