

# Caversham and History: past, present and future

History is about the past, but it is also about the present, and is pertinent to the future as well. It is often said “we are living through history” even though we may neither be fully aware of it at the time nor appreciate it. Following our own CB history with our 650th issue last month, this is a good moment to mull a little on the subject of ‘Caversham and her history’. We reported last month on a very significant anniversary and historical event for which our local organization CADRA has already set in motion a series of celebratory events. The 800th anniversary of the death of William Marshal is not only a great cause for celebration but provides a catalyst for some ‘historical thinking’. CADRA provides an update on the progress of its plans for celebration this summer in this issue (Page 3). William Marshal has a good claim to be Caversham’s most famous son: at least, one with a well-documented record. He was born here, inherited the Lordship of the Manor of Caversham (likely located at Deans Farm) and became the first Earl of Pembroke. William Marshal was contemporary with Henry II, the first Plantagenet monarch, and lived much of his life in the century which began with Henry I (the successor to William the Conqueror) coming to the throne and becoming the founder of Reading Abbey, and would have witnessed the ‘Anarchy’ under Stephen and Matilda. Reading without doubt the more important place but ‘silently observed’ by Caversham across the Thames. When William died in 1219 the prospect of the nation looked politically and economically distinct from a hundred years before.

Post the Millennium in 2008 - 2009 the Caversham Court gardens were remodelled and the time line created on the terrace leading to the riverside gazebo. This time line sets the epoch of William Marshall in a wider context, looking back to the previous Millennium, where at the outset Caversham was part of the Roman Empire (dramatic as it sounds). And then the line looks forward to our own millennial celebration of 2000 where ever more people and events can press for attention. Even within the span of Caversham there is much still to be uncovered. But, we can take some heart that historians, both professional and amateur, have been busy unearthing the story using both local and national sources of evidence. So for at least a thousand years, and likely several millennia beforehand, the Caversham and Reading sides of the river have been linked if not in an embrace at least by position. CB is pleased to be a regular publisher of the History of Reading Society. The Caversham Heights Society meetings, which we report cover local and regional topics and likewise propagate an enduring sense of history and love of the past, but with a strong lean to the present and future. The historiography of Reading and Caversham has been enhanced by two recent important publications (*Caversham Court Gardens:*

*a heritage guide.* Reading: Two Rivers Press, 2012; Peter Durrant and John Pater. *Reading Abbey and the Abbey quarter.* Reading: Two Rivers Press, 2018). We are equally indebted to the late Mary Kift who gave a conspectus in (*Mary Kift. Life in old Caversham.* Reading: Mary Kift, 1980)) and she was a contributor to CB. Our ‘Happy Wanderer’ writes on things historical as well as natural, and CADRA maintains an overview of sources and resources on its website [www.cadra.org.uk](http://www.cadra.org.uk) For a moderate sized regional centre, Reading has attracted writers on historical topics, whose works can be seen and bought in the Reading Museum and at WHS and Waterstones bookstores. The central library and Caversham Library have proportionate collections, and the Berkshire Record Office and its sister in Oxfordshire gathers the primary and secondary sources necessary for serious study.

So where do we stand and how do things look in 2019 as the 800th anniversary of the death of William Marshal passes over? We can also look back on the renovation of the Abbey site completed

in 2018 and forward to 2021 to the celebration of the 900th year since its foundation by Henry I. The Borough has pulled together the ‘Abbey Quarter’ project and started to show how it relates to the wider historical development of Reading. In Caversham, we continue to draw together the threads of our history with the work done in 2011 and the very visible library plaque outside Caversham library. CADRA has commissioned a similar display plaque to record the William Marshal anniversary. In 2019 we can take a snapshot. Caversham (and nearby) continues to grow in housing and population. We are still congested and not yet as sustainably transport-aware as we need to be and must become. Caversham Centre still attracts custom and trade but in detail much changes as shops come and go and public services evolve (not always in ways many would prefer). Urban planning and development still challenges: at least in 2019 the Heights Free School building will commence, but brings in its wake controversy over the MPF landscape plan. In Caversham Centre we are all guessing as to the outcome of the latest application for four and five story blocks and a new cinema. In the meantime, the BBC finally vacates Caversham Park. Oh yes, summer 2019 is local election season except in Mapledurham Ward! And nationally who knows where the country will land as 2019 moves to 2020? The present carries the burden of the past as well as the seeds of the future. Will UK 2020 be like AD43 or 1086? Whatever the future holds we citizens have been laid on good historical foundations and as this is the place where we live, we need to appreciate its past, reflect on the good it has brought and allow our futures to be informed by it. Strong stuff, big task and a challenge for the locality and the bodies politic and citizen. CB will report! (SAR)



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**‘The Greatest Knight’  
 William Marshal**  
 died in Caversham  
 on 14 May 1219

**William Marshal page 3**

# Caversham Clergy

## ANGLICAN

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

St Andrew  
Rev'd Nigel Jones, St Andrew's Vicarage,  
Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788  
www.standrewscaversham.org

Caversham Thameside Ministry -  
St Peter, St Margaret, St John  
Rev'd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road, Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505  
rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Marion Pyke Tel: 947 5834  
Rev'd John Dudley Tel: 9470265  
Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331810  
Rev'd 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

Rev'd Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road.  
Tel: 947 2223  
Rev'd D Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

## CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev'd 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)  
www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk Tel 9474529

## ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne  
Mgr Patrick Daly, The Presbytery,  
2 South View Avenue. Tel: 947 1787.

St Michael  
Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michaels,  
Sonning Common Tel: 972 3418

## NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Rev'd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009

# TALKING POINT

by Rev'd David Jenkins



## Seeing with new eyes

I have sometimes been privileged to listen to people who have had a cataract operation and they will frequently tell me that they now see much more clearly and that colours are much more vivid than before, and, sometimes, they say that they no longer need to wear glasses. It must be wonderful to see with new eyes.

Sometimes people who come new to an area or to a workplace can see clearly what others, who have been in place much longer, may no longer notice. Their ability to see with new eyes brings an objectivity to a situation that might have been missing before, and their observations contain a challenge to the rest of us to look afresh and see things from another angle.

Some great scientific breakthroughs have come about by seeing in a different way, making connections that may not have been made before, noticing what is in front of us and seeing it afresh. Alexander Fleming's discovery of penicillin came about when he looked again and noticed with new eyes what had been beside him in the room in which he was sitting.

It is easy for all of us to get into ruts which confirm our prejudices. It is easy to go along with the tram lines which we have set as perimeters of our vision.

Some of the people who have helped us most in life have been those whose challenge and encouragement has helped us to see with new eyes. They may have been family members, teachers, work colleagues, or people whose thinking we've come across in a book or magazine.

This season of Eastertide is radically and dynamically about seeing with new eyes, approaching life with surprise and freshness, constantly learning, continually growing as people, marvelling at the extraordinary in the ordinary, watching horizons expand.

Are we open to seeing with new eyes, pursuing fresh adventures, and discovering different insights?

*Rev'd. 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](http://www.cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk)  
**0118 948 3466**

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

# SUNDAY SERVICES

## ANGLICAN

### St Peter, 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 Holy Communion with Healing Prayers usually 1st Sunday, Evensong (usually Choral on second Sunday)

### St John, 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, 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, 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)

### CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH, South Street

10.30am Morning Worship each Sunday  
6.30pm 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

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

#### Our Lady and St Anne, Southview Avenue

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

### St Michael, 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 2019: Copy price and subscription price

Caversham Bridge is sold at £0.40 per copy. The subscription price which includes delivery to your home address is increased to £5.00 / year (for 12 issues) from January 2019.

## Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the June 2019 issue should be sent to the Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by Monday 29th April. The date for the July issue is Monday 3rd June. Email address is: editors@cavershambridge.org  
Advertising copy for the June 2019 issue should be sent to Mr A. Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by Friday 26th April. The date for the July issue Friday 26th 31st May. Email address is: advertising@cavershambridge.org

## PARISH OFFICES

### PARISH OF CAVERSHAM THAMESIDE AND MAPLEDURHAM

St Peter, St Margaret, St John  
Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX  
Tuesday and Friday 9.30am to 2pm  
Tel: 947 1703 email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

### ST BARNABAS

St Barnabas Centre  
Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am-10.30am  
Tel: 947 6310 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

A community newspaper produced by Caversham Christian News Ltd on behalf of the Churches of Caversham

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Tel: 947 3713

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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# Caversham shops: a changing scene

A turnover of retailers in a shopping centre is a reality that citizens have become more accustomed to in the last five years. Even bigger High Street names can disappear from the national scene and this has become all too familiar. Smaller retail centres like Caversham can also reflect these national movements whether or not they are driven by the same forces. What is undeniable are the changes we observe and witness on our everyday comings and goings. Enough has been happening in Caversham Centre to give pause for thought and to make this a moment for reflection. The departures may denote the end of a 'history' and engender personal regret, sentimentality and upset personal convenience. The arrivals may provide new momentum and inspiration and fulfil a genuine need and prove to be a source of value and a worthy addition to our local commerce. Recently, Caversham Centre has lost a pharmacy ('Day Lewis') and a Sub-Post Office (which we are still striving to get replaced). Two travel agencies have recently closed: 'Goldcrest' was an established specialist business in Prospect Street; in Church Street the business which has specialised in villa holidays has closed. Whether or not these travel services have migrated to the internet is one thing, but their physical presence is a net loss. The 'Indigo



Rye' hair salon is a long standing business that has stood against the current and is celebrating 20 years of trading. In Church Street we have lost a floristry, but one survives around the corner: such shops are vital for floral support for celebrations as well as for funerals. In Prospect Street a bridal shop has closed, which we hope once thrived. In the same street the 'Baron Cadogan' public house survives but now as a free house. Nearby, a travel currency exchange is closed and was short lived. Prospect Street ironically has experienced relatively 'less prospects' over the years. The well-known 'Peking Palace' and its successor has closed, leaving Caversham with no Chinese restaurant. Across Hemdean Road from the Library in Church Street the 'Suprema' dry cleaners

closed in recent months, but its premises will be occupied shortly by 'Caversham Emporium' a décor and gift retailer. At the approach to the Caversham Bridge, the Lloyds Bank premises now hosts a new coffee shop and meeting place.

This piece makes no pretence at a comprehensive account of the retail scene, although a 'census' now and again would be a useful contribution to local knowledge as well as a record of the passing of times and a reflection of wider changes afoot. Caversham people are rightly proud of what their Centre has to offer so being alert and aware is a sensible way of helping to protect and sustain a vibrant local community. There will always be gains and losses and ensuring the optimum mix is art rather than science. Enterprise and risk taking are part of the dynamic as much as the planning system applies structure and regulation, and can help as well as hinder. The local citizen has very little power and influence, but has 'pounds and patronage' to bestow. Market, shopper and customer all function together to provide what we have. We know the traders themselves have come together in a coalition (Caversham Traders Association) and it is in the interest of shoppers and public alike to offer mutual support to those who champion local commerce in Caversham.

## William Marshal, the Greatest Knight

Following the article in the last edition of *Caversham Bridge*, we are delighted to confirm that plans are well underway to create a richly illustrated information panel, telling the story of William Marshal and his death in Caversham 800 years ago on 14th May 1219. We now need your help.

The panel will be printed enamel, similar to the panels in Caversham Court Gardens. The design is being developed by CADRA with Martin Andrews and Anke Ueberberg, the team who created the Caversham Heritage Map. Subject to planning permission, it will be sited on the viewing platform of Caversham Bridge. From there, you look towards Deans Farm, the likely location of the old Manor House and to Reading Abbey where his body was taken for a solemn mass.

We are building towards the total sum of around £4,300 required but would welcome further donations, however small or large. These can be made by cheque or bank transfer via Reading Civic Society at CAF Bank; Sort Code 40-52-40, A/C No. 00019682. Quote 'William Marshal'. Send cheques to Richard Bennett, DL, Chair Reading Civic Society, 69 Baker Street, Reading RG1 7XY Phone: 0118 959 8350

If you would like this donation and future donations to this cause via Reading Civic Society, to be treated as Gift Aid donations, you will need to notify the Society. This enables the Society to reclaim from the Inland Revenue 25p for every £1.00 of your subscription/donation, The donor must confirm that he/she is paying income tax equal to, or more than, the tax to be reclaimed. Payments will be received via Reading Civic Society, a partner in the project, which is able to claim gift aid at 25%.

Tom Asbridge, Queen Mary University of London, whose series on the Crusades has recently been re-broadcast on BBC2, will be the speaker at the CADRA AGM at 7.30pm, Tuesday 11th June at Thameside School. He is also well known as the author of *'The Greatest Knight: The remarkable life of William Marshal, the power behind five English thrones'*. Donations by cash or cheque can also be made that evening.

William Marshal was a towering figure of the period who left a legacy in Normandy, Ireland, Wales and England. We look forward to celebrating Caversham's special claim to his memory. Seriously ill, William chose to spend his final weeks at his home in Caversham, where affairs of state were conducted from his sick bed.

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[www.steepalbathrooms.co.uk](http://www.steepalbathrooms.co.uk)

# Caversham Sub-Post Office: update

Matt Rodda MP, has been active on behalf of Caversham residents concerning the replacement for the Caversham Centre Sub-Post Office. Matt continues to call for proper post office services to be retained in Reading, Caversham and Woodley and for central government to play a significant part in resourcing and maintaining this vital community service.

Matt is very grateful to one of his constituents who has contacted him to share an update he has received from the Post Office. The advice from the Post Office is as follows:

'The Post Office has confirmed that the branch is now temporarily closed on a long term basis. The closure of this branch was due to circumstances outside of Post Office Ltd's control, and we ( The Post Office ) do remain committed to providing a service in this area. As such, the vacancy of the Sub-postmaster position at Caversham is now being advertised on our Corporate website: <https://runapostoffice.co.uk/home/result/show/caversham-post-office-reading-rg4-8au><https://runapostoffice.co.uk/home/result/show/caversham-post-office-reading-rg4-8au>

Ultimately, the reinstatement of a Post Office branch in Caversham is going to be dependent on an interested party being able to submit a viable and successful application to incorporate this service within their existing business'.

The Post Office recommends "that if you, or anybody you know, is interested in maintaining this vital service in Caversham, you take a look at the information on the link above."

Matt and his team are unaware of any actual applications received from the local community to host a new Post Office and it is clear that without this, there will be no replacement.

A number of constituents have asked whether Matt will hold a public meeting on this issue as he has on others, and if the focus of such a meeting could be to help identify interested local businesses to apply to offer a sub-post office Matt will be happy to go ahead.

Matt has asked the Post Office whether they have yet received any applications, but neither they nor anyone else have confirmed that any have been sent. This is surprising, given the high level of concern locally.

The discussion will continue and Matt will send updates to all regarding a public meeting and / or a meeting with Caversham Traders, which has also been offered to the MP previously. For further communication and information please contact: Matt Harrison, Constituency Support Manager, Office of Matt Rodda MP, 0118 206 2967.

## Island Bohemian Bowls Club Open Days

The Island Bohemian Bowls Club Open Days are on Sunday 12th May from 10.30am to 3.30pm and Monday 13th May from 4.30pm to 7.00pm.

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. 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 River Thames, Reading. To arrive at the Cub you need to take a short ferry crossing from the south bank, end of Brigham Rd, RG1 8DP or the north bank, end of Wolsey Rd, RG4 8BY.

Do come to one of our OPEN DAYS and we only ask that you wear flat-soled shoes or trainers. For more information ring, Ann: 0118 941 5270

Or visit our website: [www.islandbohemian.co.uk](http://www.islandbohemian.co.uk)

## Charity Concert by local chamber choir

The Erleigh Cantors Chamber Choir (Director: Ian Westley) will be giving its annual charity concert at St Peter's Church in Caversham on Saturday 18th May at 7.30pm. The programme will consist of sacred music for choir and organ from England and Spain, and includes works by Byrd, Weelkes, Parry and Guerrero and Vivanco. There will be readings from Merry Evans and organ solos from Christopher Sears.

This year the charities being supported are The Alexander Devine Children's Hospice, and St Peter's Church, Caversham which is raising funds for refurbishment.

Tickets available in advance from Ian Westley (0118 947 8382) or on the door, and are priced at £11.00 ( £10.00 Concessions and £5.00 for under 16s).

## Wat Dance?!

Discover Country Dancing in a fun, friendly atmosphere at Dunsden Green, Village Hall RG4 9QG. This group originally met at Watlington House, Reading, but moved to Dunsden Green a number of years ago, and is now meeting on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, at 8.00 pm, in term time. Our programmes are devised to incorporate both beginners and experienced dancers. We have three callers who take it in

turns to bring a wide variety of dances from throughout the ages to our sessions.

Dates: 1st, 15th and 29th May (this 5th week one an extra special), 5th and 19th June, and 3rd and 17th July. It costs £4.00 a session, and the first visit is free.

For more information: Phone - 0118 948 1195; email: [folkscape@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:folkscape@yahoo.co.uk)

## Earth Living Festival

Join us for an enriching day of community and connectivity, growing the town's cultural identity, and raising awareness of this vibrant environment in Reading. The Festival will take place on Saturday 11th May at Caversham Court Gardens.

The Festival will feature a varied range of activities including: Yoga, Storytelling, Bootcamps, Re-wilding, Sustainability, Crafting, Fitness, Bollywood dancing, Essential Oils, Puppetry, Hooping, Talks, Wild Workouts, Spoken Word, Live Music, Mindfulness, Bee Skep Workshop, Qi Gong, Sound Baths, Belly Dancing, Tai Chi, Handstand workshop, Sacred Geometry, Mindful Mouse Walks, Cyclical Wisdom, Red Tents, Soundscape Walks, Relaxations... and much more. There is Vegan & Vegetarian Food available, and a Café & Bar Area

Tickets: Early Bird Full Pass (before 15th April) at £30.00, Half-pass at £15.00; Concessions at £18.00; Under 12s Free entry. For tickets and class bookings: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/earth-living-fest-2019-tickets-56334142938>

## SALE OF PLANTS AND TRADICRAFT FAVOURITES

FRIDAY MAY 17th 10.00am to 6.00pm  
SATURDAY MAY 18th 10.00am to 2.00pm

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## Cat Croxford: local artist

Cat Croxford is a professional artist based in West Berkshire. Self-taught, she has been painting and drawing all her life. She finds her inspiration from woods near and far, including the Berkshire Downs, South Oxfordshire Chilterns and from her travels to European woodlands and gardens. Working in acrylic, Cat paints the changing light of the seasons, and is attracted to strong contrasts, rich colours and natural patterns. Her intent is to create paintings that might be the beginning of a story, a pathway, or window that leads to something hidden in our imaginations or memories.

Cat also helps run 'JoeDaisy Studio' in Mapledurham, Reading, where she teaches a variety of courses, workshops and undertakes one to one tuition. A selection of paintings will be on display in The Caversham Picture Framer from Saturday 30th March to Saturday 4th May 2019.

## Caversham Lock: footway reopens after construction works

During March 2019 the Environment Agency completed works on the Caversham Lock and was able to reopen the public footpath which crosses the adjacent weir from the southern bank of the River Thames to Lower Caversham. This walking route (a marked right of way) is perhaps less well known than it could be beyond its immediate locality. Of course we have three bridges crossing the Thames upstream, but this is the furthest downstream until Sonning Bridge and Lock is reached. Crossing the Lock and weir takes the walker to a rather tranquil area of backstream which is very pleasant once plants and foliage comes bursting through in Spring. If you live closer, then you will have had your access restored. If you live further afield, another possibility awaits for a walk or a ramble. If you have some time to spare, peering down into the waters crossing a weir is always a fascinating and calming experience. Another free show of nature with sound, light and movement playing on the senses. Worth a try, so plot a route and take in this cross Thames pathway. And, if you need something more to think about as you spend time by the weir spare a thought for a darker episode in its history. The November 2018 *Caversham Bridge* reported the History of Reading Society talk on 'Amelia Dyer and the Baby Farm Murders' of 1896. The Lock was the setting for macabre discoveries and deeds. However, we illustrate this feature with two cheerful lock scenes captured by our resident photographer and Distribution Manager. These will inspire you to walk by this coming summer and more! [SAR]



## St Barnabas Annual Household and Handyman Sale

St Barnabas Annual Household and Handyman Sale will take place on Saturday 4th May from 10.00am till noon in the Church Hall and grounds. There will be the usual array of 'One man's rubbish is another man's treasure' items, and Tool sharpening. Also plants for the garden. Grove Road, Emmer Green. Further details from Wendy Howell 0118 946 1365.

## Caversham WI

The March meeting is also our annual meeting where we review the arrangement of the group and look to the future. Warm thanks were given for everyone who has contributed to the group for the past year. Each and every one has been fantastic at helping out where they can. It has been another great year!

We have been fortunate in having an active committee, and that is set to continue – with extra ladies joining and roles changing. In particular, our President and Treasurer have stepped down from their roles – and we thank them both for their dedication over the last 2+ years. At the same time, we elected and welcomed a new President. We look forward to working with her and supporting her leadership of the group.

At the April meeting the topic was digital security. As in all walks of life, keeping ourselves and our information secure is important, but how this can best be achieved online is constantly changing. We welcomed an expert who explained many ways in which we can keep safe.

Ladies are very welcome to visit our friendly group: the first three visits are free. We hold meetings on the third Thursday of the month, at 7.30 in the evenings, which helps avoid childcare issues. There is nearby parking and a lift to the first floor meeting room at Church House, Church Road RG4 8AX. More details can be found online at <https://tinyurl.com/hwjz6zy> or search for 'Caversham WI'.

For enquiries please contact our Secretary, on 0118 947 5176.

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# The Caversham Heights Society: reports of talks on 'Modern Slavery' and 'Plastics in the Food Industry'

During March two highly topical lectures were presented to the Caversham Heights Society. The first on 6th March looked at the topic of 'Modern Day Slavery' and was given by Russell Dann from ClarksLegal.com. Russell gave a very sobering insight into the extent of modern day slavery. Unlike ancient times, such as in the Bible and during the Greek and Roman Empires, and although it was abolished in the British Empire in 1833, slavery is today greater than ever before but in a less obvious way. It is now less of a question of ownership than it is of servitude and exploitation. According to a recent 'Time' magazine article (25th March) 'there are more than three times as many people in forced servitude' globally as there were bought and sold during the 350 years of the transatlantic slave trade. The UN reckons there are at least 25 million in debt bondage and 15 million in forced marriages. Russell then highlighted Qatar as one of the worst examples of using forced labour as the country prepares for the 2022 World Cup.

In the UK, which was the focus of Russell's talk, the three main areas are construction, car washing and nail bars, and the three main groups likely to be in forced labour without the correct papers, health and

safety checks and proper wages are Albanians, Britons and Vietnamese. Other forms of slavery are those involved in the sex trade and domestic abuse.

Sadly, it is difficult to identify much modern day slavery but what alerted the British authorities was the deaths of hundreds of cockle pickers in Morecambe Bay under the control of gang masters. Globally those most likely to be victims of exploitative practices are East Europeans, Africans and Asians.

Despite anti-slavery legislation, and companies signing up to this, it is not easy to police what is going on. Globalisation means that multinational corporations and large British retailers now sub-contract the production of different items to different countries whose quality controls may not be too rigorous. The result is that the links in the production chain might not always be checked. This means that exploitation of workers is inevitable. Sadly, because the speaker was mainly concerned with employment law, he tended to focus on that aspect which meant that things like the sex trade and the drugs trade were only briefly touched upon. Nevertheless we were given much food for thought about how many people in our midst might be caught up in some form of modern day slavery.

On March 20th Professor Niranjana, as a result of 30 years of research in the Department of Food Science and Technology [now and Nutritional Science] at the University of Reading, gave us a most informative talk on the benefits and problems arising from the use of plastics in the food industry. He began his talk with a picture of what was once a beautiful beach in Bali which is now covered by tons and tons of plastic rubbish from around the world washed up by ocean currents. While acknowledging the environmental impact of plastic on the waterways and oceans around the world and in landfill sites, he urged us not to believe everything in the media, which followed on from David Attenborough's 'Blue Planet' series, but to examine the facts surrounding the value and usage of plastic in the food industry. He showed how plastics had developed and showed that they were effective in cutting food wastage; that they were inexpensive compared to other forms of packaging; and that they have been able to extend the shelf life of so many products. However he did admit the many problems that have emerged around plastics' longevity, the difficulties of disposal, the lack of recyclability and the unproven health issues from ingesting micro-plastics in our water supplies. He also showed examples of new forms of packaging made from rice, wheat and straw. However he stressed that it is the large food retailers that control the types and styles of packaging most suitable to themselves. We were all made aware of the costs of finding alternatives to plastic and of solutions to the resulting pollution and left with much to think about.

Meetings of the Caversham Heights Society are held every alternate Wednesday evenings at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, beginning at 8pm preceded with coffee and chat. New members are always welcome and further information can be found [www.cavershamheights.org](http://www.cavershamheights.org) or by email to: [contact@cavershamheights.org](mailto:contact@cavershamheights.org)

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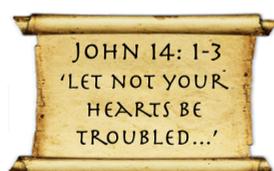
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## WHAT'S ON IN AND AROUND CAVERSHAM: MAY 2019

DATE	EVENT
1 <sup>st</sup>	Farewell Service for Bishop Andrew at Reading Minster - 7.30pm
2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup>	Open Garden Garsington Manor OX4 9DH Open 1.00pm - 5.00pm Teas
4 <sup>th</sup> -	Sale - Ways and Means Trust 10.00am - 3.00pm Sonning Cmn. Vill. Hall
4 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup>	Henley Arts Trail 33 venues - See Pink Arts Trail signs
5 <sup>th</sup> -	Farmer's Market 10.00am - 3.00pm Caversham Precinct Car Park
6 <sup>th</sup> -	Open Garden - Meadow Cottage OX49 5HR Open 12.00 - 5.00pm Teas
11 <sup>th</sup> -	William Marshal Exhibition 10.00am - 3.00pm Abbey Gateway
11 <sup>th</sup> -	Spring Plant Sale 10.00am - 11.30am Oakley Road All otments
11 <sup>th</sup>	Earth Living Festival Caversham Court 8.00am - 10.00.00pm
11 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> / 18-19 <sup>th</sup>	Caversham Arts Trail 11.00am - 5.00pm
12 <sup>th</sup>	Island Bohemian Bowls Club Open Day 10.30am - 3.30pm by Ferry
13 <sup>th</sup>	Island Bohemian Bowls Club Open Day 4.30 - 7.00pm by Ferry
15 <sup>th</sup>	Talk 'Moths' Les Finch Caversham Primary School 7.45pm
16/17/18 <sup>th</sup>	The Trial of Sherlock Holmes Caversham Park Players at the Milestone Centre C.P.Village 8.00pm 0118 9481377
17 <sup>th</sup> /18 <sup>th</sup>	Plant Sale for WaterAid 97 Southview Avenue 10.00am-6.00pm/10.00am-2.00pm
18 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Concert Erleigh Cantors St Peters church 7.30pm
25 <sup>th</sup>	Family Friendly walk- follow an ancient track for a 4.5 mile walk around Henley 2.00pm <a href="http://www.visitchilterns.co.uk/walking/fest">www.visitchilterns.co.uk/walking/fest</a>
29 <sup>th</sup>	Open Garden The Grange OX5 2SY Open 2.00pm-5.00pm Homemade teas

# Representing Berkshire Scouts at the World Jamboree in July 2019



Harvie and Tatum on their tandem

Caversham Bridge is pleased to publish this report on how two Berkshire Scouts from Emmer Green have raised funds to enable them to attend this annual international Scouting event. In their own words here is their story so far.

'My name is Harvie and I have been selected to represent Berkshire with 60 other Scouts at the 24th World Jamboree in West Virginia USA in July. With my fellow Scout Tatum from Emmer Green the 89th troop have been working hard over the last 15 months to raise £4000 each to cover the cost of our trip, and a percentage of the money raised will be used to help less fortunate Scouts from around the world attend as well.

In September we did a sponsored Tandem bike ride to Thame and back. At 84 kilometres this is quite an achievement in 7 hours as we had never ridden together before. We have done bag packing

at Savacentre, parking duties at the VW show, selling cakes, burgers, and making bucket collections at events, at garden centres, and even at Silverstone RMA Track day events. This was all good fun.

We are very fortunate to have a great adult team guiding us and we have had training camps in London, at Gillwell, and at local Scout huts around Berkshire with a few more still to come in preparation for our departure to the USA on 20th July 2019.

We shall be flying to New York to spend a short time there, before a long coach drive to West Virginia. Here we will spend 10 days being self-sufficient, with 4,000 other Scouts and Guides from the UK, joining lots of activities with 33,000 more from all over the World. I think it will be a wonderful experience to meet up with all these young people like ourselves. We will also have a chance to visit to Washington DC and have been planning our itinerary together, before moving on to Canada for the last few days.

I have a Saturday job, now I am 16, and I am banking my earnings towards the trip. I have my GCSE coming up too, so if you feel you could help me reach my target by donating on [Wonderful.org/fundraiser/sponsoredtandemride](http://Wonderful.org/fundraiser/sponsoredtandemride) this would be very much appreciated.

## Singing for the Brain

At Emmer Green we are very fortunate to have an excellent group of people who run Singing for the Brain, a structured support group based around the principles of music therapy for people with dementia and their carers, run by the Alzheimers Society. Led by Ria, they meet every Friday in term time in St Barnabas Church Hall at 10.30 and following some refreshments, everyone sits in a circle and following a welcome song, sing well known songs together with actions and usually with a theme according to the time of year. There is a great sense of togetherness despite different problems and everyone has a really good time and enjoys themselves.

Music and emotion are linked in a powerful way, people respond to music from a very early age before words and language develop and this continues even towards the end of our lives, when verbal abilities may be lost. Music accesses different parts of the brain than language so it can be used to communicate with someone who has been diagnosed with dementia even if they no longer speak or respond to words. Playing and singing music that has meant something to them such as a favourite song, a tune they used to sing, can tap into powerful memories and emotions. It can help people with dementia express feelings and ideas and connect with others around them. It encourages social interaction and thus reduces feelings of isolation and can facilitate physical exercise and dance or movement.

People with dementia often say they don't feel part of the world, they feel defeated - 'what good am I?' - I can't remember, can't concentrate, and also say that they feel powerless, lonely and frightened and it gets harder and harder.

Singing for the brain groups are held around the country and they give a great sense of togetherness, all feel equal, there is bonding and empathy. For carers, attending the group can be a huge relief - they feel less isolated, gain strength and learn from others in a similar situation. The effect of singing together is often said to have an almost magical effect bringing relaxation and change of mood.

People attending must make their own way there although several people are brought by

voluntary drivers from Caversham Good Neighbours - see advert on page 2. There is a suggested voluntary contribution of £1.50. If you have any queries please get in touch. 0118 9596482 / [berkshire@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:berkshire@alzheimers.org.uk).



The team at Singing for Brain, leader, Ria is 2nd from left.

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# Caversham Arts Trail 2019

Caversham Arts Trail is back for its ninth year! Artists will be welcoming members of the public to view their work on the weekend of 11th, 12th, 18th and 19th May. Admission is free and all venues are open from 11.00am–5.00pm.

This year the Trail will include 14 venues across Caversham and Emmer Green with 27 artists taking part. Many of the artists are familiar faces, but there are many new participants, including a new ceramic artist, local vintage clothes seller and four new painters.

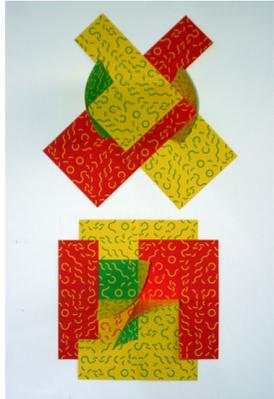
The Trail gives visitors the opportunity to meet the artists in their own homes and studios, learn about their techniques through demonstrations and buy work directly from them. Unlike many other arts trails, the Caversham Trail is special in that almost all of the venues are in the artists' homes and gardens (and many of the gardens are worth seeing!). There will be a huge variety of work on display including ceramics, painting, collage, stained glass, book binding, handmade chairs, woven textiles, printmaking, designer jewellery, sculpture, plant structures and plants –

with something to suit all tastes and pockets! In addition visitors will be able to enjoy a slice of homemade cake and a cup of tea at most venues. Details of all artists can be found on the website [www.cavershamartstrail.co.uk](http://www.cavershamartstrail.co.uk) where there will be a map of the Trail to download. In the interests of your carbon footprint please note that much of the Trail is walkable and on local cycle routes.

You can also follow the Trail on Facebook [www.facebook.com/cavershamartstrail](http://www.facebook.com/cavershamartstrail), Twitter [www.twitter.com/CavArtsTrail](http://www.twitter.com/CavArtsTrail) and Instagram [www.instagram.com/cavershamartstrail](http://www.instagram.com/cavershamartstrail). Look out for our glossy printed brochure in local cafés and businesses and through your letterbox.

Caversham Arts Trail is pleased to be supporting two local charities – Sue Ryder and The Royal Berkshire Hospital Charity.

We are also grateful to our sponsors True Food Co-op, Vintage Roots, The Flowering Teapot, Jelly, Parfitt Cresswell Solicitors, Philip Baker Property and Stillwatertherapy.



## Highdown School news report on activities

### Safer Internet Day

Safer Internet Day 2019 was celebrated globally on Tuesday 5 February with the slogan: 'Together for a better Internet'. The day offered the opportunity to highlight positive uses of technology and to explore the role we all play in helping to create a better and safer online community. It called upon young people, parents, carers, teachers, social workers, law enforcement agencies, companies, policymakers, and wider, to join together and help to create a better internet.

At Highdown, we highlight the issue through our PSHCE programme and have discussions in our computing/ICT lessons.

For more information visit [www.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk) and the websites of the partners: Childnet, the Internet Watch Foundation and SWGfL.

### MEP Intensive Learning Day

At Highdown students have the opportunity to study Mandarin Chinese and some of them are taking part in the prestigious Mandarin Excellence Programme which is run in conjunction with the Department for Education, UCL Institute of Education and the British Council. This is an intensive language programme which aims to get at least 5,000 pupils on track to fluency in Mandarin Chinese by 2020.

During the Chinese festive period, the new cohort of Highdown MEP members in Year 7 participated in their first MEP Intensive Learning Day on Thursday 14 February 2019. This Intensive Learning Day included a series of activities allowing learners to deepen their knowledge about Chinese language and widen their knowledge about Chinese culture. We were especially excited about the performance delivered by the English rock band - Transition - who performed their songs in Mandarin. They also shared their learning experience of Mandarin and life experience in Taiwan. The other two schools - Reading School and Woking High School - in the MEP regional network and their students also participated in this event for celebrating Chinese New Year together.

### Burnet News Club

The BNC is an Economist Educational Foundation supported digital news club which focuses on KS2 and KS3 engagement with wider world issues. Each month students are given six weeks' worth of material on a new exciting topic. Students will then create articles and reports on the topic, which will be uploaded onto the BNC website. Other schools can then comment and encourage discussion. We are also encouraged to do the same to other schools' presented work. At the end of the term, a summary task is given and we have the opportunity to produce a 'school' newspaper, reporting on the topic and the work completed.

Our first session on this term's BNC issue of Brexit saw students discussing the role of democracy in our society. We debated whether or not democracy is really fair and students created short silent films showing what democracy means.

### Sevenoaks Art Competition

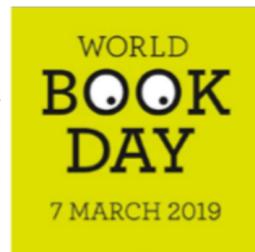
Sevenoaks Sound & Vision ran an art competition for students with some exciting prizes. The brief was to create an A4 colour design in any media in response to the theme of sound and vision, or one of them. The winners were chosen this week by Richard Pasker of Sevenoaks Sound & Vision Store. The entries were so good he decided to choose two: Yee Tong Hong in Year 12 and Anniika Zaheer Sheikh in Year 7.



The winners will now enlarge and paint their design to A1 and they will be exhibited in store and admired by the public. They will also receive £100 each to spend in store. All of the entries were amazing - well done!

### Highdown Celebrates World Book Day

The theme for World Book Day this year was 'favourite book'. Teaching staff were encouraged to share their favourite book with each of their classes during the day and students spoke about their favourite books in lessons and mentor time. There were book themed quizzes for mentor time and a tricky quiz distributed for staff to take part in. A cake sale at break time, run by the Highdown Book Hounds book group, raised £55, which will contribute to the cost of the Highdown Literary Festival in July. A superb 'book' cake was baked and decorated by Bianca Zinzani and Rose Harris for the sale.



The main success of the day was the many conversations about books that were being held around the school and the sharing of book titles.

### TourAid

Since 2016 Highdown has been linked with Orkeeswa School in Tanzania through TourAid. It is a community based secondary school which provides free education to the children in an under-served Maasai village. In a country where less than 25% of the population has access to education beyond primary school, this is the only opportunity for many students to continue their schooling to a higher level and go on to achieve great things in life.

In 2016, we raised £17,208 to enable a group of boys to come and stay with Highdown students.

They had the chance to come to school and learn with us as well as going on some once in a lifetime trips to Legoland and Twickenham. Before they returned home, they all participated in a Rugby Tournament at the Abbey Rugby Club. The whole day was a marvellous experience with an incredible atmosphere that really showed how something as simple as the love of sport can bring people together in such a beautiful way.

We are now aiming to raise £15,000 by March 2020 in order to continue funding and supporting Oreekswa School, as well as bringing some more students over to the UK. We would be extremely grateful for any support in this, be it through suggestions or donations. We hope to see you all at our future fundraising events!

Instagram: @highdown\_touraid Twitter: @HighdownTourAid

### Primark on the Rack

It's not often Highdown students have the opportunity to have a talk from a FTSE 100 company. However, they did last Thursday when Primark came to talk to Year 9 to set the record straight about child labour and poor working conditions in garment factories and how Primark manages to keep its prices low in a fast fashion market.

The students learned about Primark's sustainable cotton programme, social programmes designed to improve women's health in Low Income Countries where Primark has its garments made and how Primark audits the factories it uses to manufacture its clothes.

Some probing questions were asked including whether Primark manufactures its clothes abroad in order to help those countries develop or is the decision purely down to profit. Highdown pupils can now make a fully informed opinion as to whether they believe Primark is an ethical place to buy their clothes.

### Café 6

Our new café for Sixth Formers and Staff is also open for visitors on Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 4.00pm-8.00pm and on Saturdays from 8.30am – 2.00pm. As well as drinks they sell cookies & bacon sandwiches on Saturdays and offer a loyalty card for hot drinks. The café is located near the main entrance.



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# Defending Reading: a talk to the History of Reading Society

The subject of the March talk was 'Defending Reading'. The speaker was Mike Cooper who is an author and public speaker on the subjects of local and military history.

In Anglo-Saxon England, Reading was a strategically important border town between the kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex because of its situation at the heart of the Thames Valley at the confluence of the Kennet and Thames rivers and was on an important trade route between the south coast and the Midlands.

In 870, this led the rampaging Danish army, commanded by Kings Bagsecg and Halfdan Ragnarsson, to occupy the town and use it as the vanguard for their invasion of Wessex: it was the last Anglo-Saxon kingdom not under Danish rule and its defenders, the West Saxons, were ruled by King Aethelred I.

In January 871, according to Bishop Asser in his 'Life of King Alfred', the Danes successfully repulsed the attack on Reading by Aethelred's army. The defending Danes had erected ramparts along the town's exposed western flank and the rivers served as a natural barrier against attacks from the south and east; there is conjectural evidence that a castle was erected.

During the English Civil Wars of the 1640s, fought between the Crown and Parliament, Reading was occupied by a royalist garrison commanded by Sir Arthur Aston. The town would be an important outpost for the defence of the Royal Court of King Charles I, now relocated to Oxford, against any attack by Parliamentary forces from London.

Sir Arthur had at his disposal a force comprised of 3,500 infantry, 400 cavalry and dragoons, and 50 artillerymen with 12 cannon. He employed the latest defensive tactics introduced from the Netherlands: a line of ramparts encircled the town and cannon were positioned on high ground to fire over them. In 1643, in the Siege of Reading, Aston's defenders were defeated by a Parliamentary army of 16,000 foot soldiers commanded by the Earl of Essex; the mound in the Forbury Gardens is a visible reminder of the siege.

In the Second World War, after the surrender of France to German forces in May 1940, Britain was now vulnerable to invasion and preparations were made for the defence of the country. In June 1940 work began on a number of defensive lines designed to counter a German invasion; the most important of them was the GHQ Line (General Headquarters Line): this section traversed southern England between the Bristol Channel and the Thames Estuary. To the south of Reading a network of small defensive fortifications known as 'pill-boxes' was built. These concrete structures were equipped with light armour such as anti-tank guns; the largest concentration was at Sulham.

From the late-1940s as relations between the West and the Soviet Union plunged toward the 'Cold War' a new Civil Defence Corps was formed. Its local headquarters at Whiteknights Park, Earley was known as the Region 6 War Room: it was built on two levels the lower one designed to survive a nuclear attack; in the aftermath

of an attack on the UK the region around Reading would be administered from there.

Today, the possibility of a terrorist attack from within the UK is the main peril facing the authorities: in August 2018 a suspect device was discovered in the Oracle Shopping Centre Reading; although it was later revealed to be a hoax, it caused the partial shut-down of the town centre for several hours.

The subject of the next talk is different from that previously advertised - it will be on the subject of 'Industrial Reading: Pictures of Sixty Old Reading Firms in Sixty Minutes' preceded by our annual book sale. The speaker will be our Chairman, David Cliffe. A report is expected in the June issue of *Caversham Bridge*.

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# Caversham People: introducing a new theme for Caversham Bridge

It would not be surprising if your reaction to the headline of this piece was met with some puzzlement! *Caversham Bridge* – it is pretty obvious that it carries a lot of news and comment about people, and it would be a dull monthly if it did not do so. So, how is 'Caversham People' to be a new theme? First of all, let it be written, that we do intend to carry on with lots of news and comment about people as we have done for the last 650 issues, and for as many years on and for as many future anniversaries as possible! Now, let us introduce this new theme. As we have made this issue a 'history issue' judging by

the front page, we can follow the old adage: that is, if it is history then it (was!) about 'chaps' so it is now (very correctly) about 'chappesses' too. The old adage is a Victorian archaism and is distinctly gender hostile. *Caversham Bridge* is of the modern and the future age and is gender neutral and giving respect to all the characteristics of each gender. But back to the history theme, which in another parlance is about people and events (at the very least) but also about so much else collaterally. It is thus about place (Caversham and its locale and neighbours), it is about ideas, it is about cultures, it is about art and literature, it is about belief and religion, it is about industry and enterprise. We will show shortly that Caversham life can illustrate and embody all these aspects in its span and how this provides the depth which we are seeking in our 'new theme' in *Caversham Bridge*. Furthermore, we think this theme and its span can help more of our readers to become writers for the *Caversham Bridge*. Think of the BBC oral history projects of which a sample are broadcast. Oral accounts are the raw material of histories (as much as documents) so we can aim to be inclusive at least in accessing the recent memory and the contemporary.

We can break down the idea of 'Caversham People' to help sketch out an agenda of themes and help potential contributors to see how they can make their offering.

- First, there are people who have already been identified chronologically and have some or much more written about them. But, many other merit further exploration. The time line in *Caversham Court Gardens: a heritage guide*. Reading: Two Rivers Press, 2012). From Swein (the Saxon Earl) in 1043, some 22 other names are mentioned up to the time the Court building was demolished in 1933. Across, the river and noted in the recent guide to the Abbey Quarter (Peter Durrant and John Pater. *Reading Abbey and the Abbey quarter*. Reading: Two Rivers Press, 2018) are the names of many more persons who have shaped Reading's history, but which inevitably came into some link and contact with Caversham either by residence or passage across the Caversham bridge. William Marshall was a Caversham man who lived his life on the Reading stage and far, far beyond. Mary Kift in her book on Caversham (*Mary Kift. Life in old Caversham*. Reading: Mary Kift, 1980) contributes many more local names from which writers inspiration can be drawn.
- Second, the known names of our first group could well be joined by others who lived alongside them or who followed them. At the moment, many of these people lie dormant in the records and archives. For Caversham, these sources need to be tapped or revisited. Local histories and local history departments provide a possible key. Who were they, how many are they, where did they live, what did they do, who knew them and what influence did they have: potentially, so many questions and answers to be discovered by our Caversham historians!
- Third, are the undocumented or hardly documented or those who life and deeds may be uncovered by unexpected discovery in little known sources of evidence. In 2018 (June, July and August issues of *Caversham Bridge*) we shared the story of a well-known figure in the local Salvation Army Citadel through the efforts of his son, Graham Smith. This could be a model for a good number of local writers and erstwhile historians. So, we look forward to explorations of these fertile territories. In this third group we look back to one, two or possibly three generations past. Who knows ... there must be tens of such narratives if not hundreds waiting to be contributed from our readers. This is real local and family history!
- And fourth, we can identify Caversham contemporaries, who will be in the present generation or who will be the sons and daughters of living Caversham families. With this grouping we approach life and living on its way to its next stages which may be part of making future history. In some ways these 'unwritten presents' may be the most interesting as they are closest to us in time and space. A

son may be working or serving abroad; similarly a daughter whose marriage or work will have taken them overseas. Or simply, you report on someone who is living their life and deeds in and about Caversham and beyond. Human stories are great history, still, as well as great for (local) journalism.

In coming issues we will publish under the 'Caversham People' headline, but this initiative is as much about you and the future. *Caversham Bridge* will be your publisher and will provide an immediate readership. Please feel free to contact the editors with your questions, suggestions and proposals at: [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org). The submission guidelines are reproduced in this issue. Editorial assistance will be given if sought. We look forward to hearing from you. Get remembering, thinking, researching and writing! [SAR]

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# Reading St. Andrew's Scottish Dancing Society

On Saturday 30th March Reading St. Andrew's Scottish Dancing Society staged its annual Spring Ceilidh at Chiltern Edge School in Sonning Common. Approximately 80 dancers (and non-dancers) came together for an informal evening of dancing and entertainment. The music for dancing was provided by the Strathallan Duo playing accordion and fiddle.

The MC for the evening tailored the dance programme to suit the abilities of those who turned up, with all the



dances being walked through first. Interspersed between the dances were several musical items providing further entertainment.

The first item was provided by a 9-year-old piper who played a medley of Scottish tunes on his bagpipes to enthusiastic applause. Later, during the first half two young girls put on a thrilling display of the soft-shoe and hard-shoe styles in Irish dancing that left the audience amazed.

During the interval a splendid 'bring-and-share' meal was enjoyed by everyone. The final entertainment was provided by 12 members of the Society's own Demonstration Team, who danced a medley of Scottish country dances.

Later this year Reading St. Andrew's Scottish Dancing Society will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its founding. If you are interested in taking up Scottish country dancing, the Society holds classes for beginners from 8 to 10 pm on Tuesday evenings between the beginning of September and the end of June at St. Andrew's United Reformed Church in London Road (next to the Royal Berkshire Hospital) and also classes for intermediate and more advanced dancers on Wednesday evenings until the end of May.

For more information see our website <http://scottishdancingreading.org>, email [sascdo1@gmail.com](mailto:sascdo1@gmail.com) or telephone Sara on 0118 947 3207.

### Palmusic Ensemble Concert at St Andrew's Caversham

We are really fortunate to have booked these excellent Palestinian musicians for a concert on June 30th at St Andrew's Church in Caversham. Some readers might remember hearing the Galilee Quartet when they came to Earley in 2016. The quartet is a group of four siblings the oldest of whom, Omar, had been a political prisoner for refusing to serve in the Israeli army. Omar (viola) and his sister Tibah (cello) are studying at the Royal Scottish Conservatoire in Glasgow. For this tour they are joined by talented pianist, Iyad Sughayer and violinist, Lourдина Baboun.

They will play a mixed programme of Classical and Palestinian music. Tickets are £12.00 and £8.00 (concessions) and can be booked at: [www.thelittleboxoffice.com/palmusic](http://www.thelittleboxoffice.com/palmusic)

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In 1999 Thames Rivercruise of Caversham bought the Devon Belle and steamed her around to the estuary of the River Thames in 5 days. She was then converted to be used on the Upper Thames by lowering the wheelhouse and upper deck awning. Since then she has taken part in several Dunkirk Commemorative Cruises and also participated in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant in June 2012. The Devon Belle has recently had extensive



hull refurbishment carried out and will be back operating again on the Thames in the very near future.

Thames Rivercruise is celebrating 45 years on the Thames at Caversham and has an exciting programme for this summer including

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## Townswomens Guild

The highlight of Caversham Heights Townswomens Guild's April activities was the trip to St Martin in the Fields in London for a Thanksgiving Service to celebrate 90 years of Townswomens Guilds. This was a wonderful and memorable occasion attended by Guild members from all over southern England.

More locally, a coffee morning was held at the home of Mrs Margaret Miles. Our other meetings included 'The Rhyme of our Lives' with Jean Hill, and an introduction by Tony Weston to 'A Woman of Wax'.

We have ambling, scrabble and cinema groups, and a very popular Luncheon club (we enjoy eating).

At our next meeting there will be a talk about 'Holidays and Travel' by Alex Harding at 2.45pm on 15th May at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, 74, Highmoor Road, Caversham. Any ladies wishing to join or visit us will be most welcome.

## Caversham

### Horticultural Society

Caversham Horticultural Society has two events in May to which gardeners are invited. On Saturday 11th May is the Spring Plant Sale will be held at the Oakley Road allotments between 10.00am and 11.30am. Come and stock up for your garden from plants donated by members. The following Wednesday, 15th May, Les Finch of the Berkshire Moth Group will give a talk about moths found in Berkshire. We meet at Caversham Primary School. Admission is £3.00. Light refreshments are available after the talk.

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## ENVIRONMENT

## Bill Turner's Garage

This month, a reminder of a bygone age in Queen's Road, Caversham. King's Road and Queen's Road run parallel with each other, from George Street. They were built in the 1880s and 1890s. A shop on the end of King's Road actually has the date of construction, 1885, in blue bricks on its red-brick gable.

This whole area has some nice examples of Reading brickwork, which for me is part of its attraction. I can never understand why some people have covered it up with cement rendering. The rendering has to be kept painted to keep it looking decent: the original bricks, of different colours, do not need painting, and still look clean and crisp after 130 years of smoking chimneys and weather. It is also interesting to see what people have done with their tiny front gardens, which mercifully are far too small to accommodate parked cars.

Then there are the small shops, and the businesses tucked away between and behind the houses. This former garage is just such a business. When I passed the other day, it appeared empty. It stands between Nos. 76 and 78, and is officially No. 76a Queen's Road. Why there was a gap there between the terraced houses in the first place is not clear. It was originally a cycle agent's shop, started by William Bartlett around 1925. From 1939, the bike shop was run by Mrs. Elsie K. Bartlett. Whether she was a widow, or whether her husband had joined the forces is not clear from looking at street directories. Mrs. Bartlett



kept the shop until around 1955, when it was taken over by A. and J. Kirkpatrick, and still a bike shop.

Bill Turner, motor engineer, took over around 1968. People at my local pub tell me that Bill was a collector of vintage motorcycles. At the garage he serviced and repaired motorbikes – and motor scooters as well, in the 'Mods and Rockers' era of the 1960s. In the 1980s, he and his son took on MOT testing for cars as well as motorbikes.

There is a photograph taken as recently as 2014, on the 'Pictures of England' website, showing two rather rusty petrol pumps outside, and several motorbikes. Sadly, the pumps are no longer there.

Despite this, the premises still have a certain period charm – especially the sign on the gable. It reads: 'When filling no smoking stop engine extinguish all lights oil or gas.' I am not sure what 'oil or gas' refers to. The paint on the sign is flaking badly, so it may not be readable for much longer.

Another reminder of how things used to be is the two tall posts with the swivelling arms that remain, which once carried the hoses from the pumps to the cars waiting by the kerb. This arrangement, where the fuel was delivered over a bracket over the pavement with people passing by, would not now be allowed for reasons of safety, but was common when I was young. And there was always a pump attendant, sometimes in uniform, standing by. Self-service, security cameras and credit cards were a few decades away in the future.

Happy Wanderer

# Confirmation at Our Lady and St Anne

Once again The Right Reverend William Kenney CP came to Caversham to confer the sacrament of Confirmation on a group of children mostly from St Anne's School. Father Patrick had prepared those not attending St Anne's school while, St Anne's pupils were prepared by members of the school staff.

At a Mass concelebrated by the Bishop and Parish Priest Mgr. Patrick H Daly, the

candidates for confirmation renewed their baptismal vows and the whole congregation, their sponsors, parents, grandparents and other relatives and friends, as well as those parishioners who also attended the Mass, joined in the final Amen. After a prayer asking God to send down his spirit on those about to be confirmed, the candidates, with their sponsors, stood before the Bishop as he marked their foreheads with the sign of

the cross using Holy Oil of Chrism.

During his homily, Bishop Kenney spoke to the youngsters about the responsibilities they had taken on and also spoke to their parents and others who would need to support the children and give good examples to help them live up to the faith they had just professed.

After a group photo, the bishop posed with each child in turn because, as he said, there were not very many of them. He then disrobed and went into the Cenacle to cut the confirmation cake and to mingle informally with all who were there.

*Photos by Jane Shaw*



*The newly-confirmed with the Bishop*



*Bishop William Kenney addressing the congregation during his homily*



*Bishop William cuts the confirmation cake*

## Amersham Road Cookery Club



Eighty-seven people arrived at the Weller Centre where the Amersham Road Cookery Club (ARCC) held their monthly session. On this occasion many children centred activities were set out for the children to try. The session closed with a talk on Holy Week and the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. Drinks and hot cross buns prepared by the children were available.

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## News from St Anne's School

At the end of term the 3rd Year Lent Assembly at St Anne's School was a very special one. The children performed and sang the story of Jesus's Passion before an audience of parents and the whole school.

It was a very moving and reflective performance which gave all who watched a lot to think about in the following weeks leading up to Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Photos are by Anne Orife



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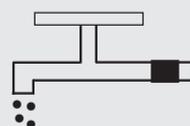
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