

Around Europe in five days: CTC Children's 'Backpackers' Summer Holiday Club 2019

A hundred and forty children enjoyed this year's Churches Together in Caversham summer holiday club held at St. Anne's School. More than 30 adult volunteers and 21 young leaders, from 10 Caversham churches, led the programme for this, the eighth year of this ecumenical holiday club that started in 2012.



Al Packer (Jane Bourgeaud) and Macca Packer (Suea Allum)

We travelled from Paris on Monday to Stockholm on Tuesday and then onto Rome on Wednesday, through Switzerland on Thursday to London on Friday! We followed the Scripture Union 'Backpackers' programme and learnt some useful vocabulary along the way. There was a lively exchange between the two main characters on stage 'Macca Packer' and 'Al Packer' who didn't quite know when to stop saying 'ciao' as the Italian means both 'hello' and 'goodbye'!

The spiritual journey was through Holy

Week, starting with Jesus travelling to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and then the children heard about the woman anointing Jesus with expensive perfume. Then there was the story of the Last Supper, Jesus praying with his disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane and finally the death of Jesus on Good Friday and his coming alive again on Easter Sunday!!!



Leading the Drumming workshop!

The children registered each day in their year groups, and then everyone gathered in the main hall for singing and listening to the Bible story told by a story-teller. Then it was back to our rooms for snack time and a review of the Bible story, some craft activities and then puzzles/colouring in a Scripture Union booklet. This year, one of the activities was to write a postcard home, so many Caversham residents



Switzerland (Stage scenery by Judith Lewis)



Macca Packer with travel agent (Anita) and Jack Packer (Mickey)

will be the lucky recipients of a Backpackers postcard! After lunch, eaten outside in the playground, and playtime, afternoons were spent in two sessions of activities ranging from football, hockey, cricket and netball to community crafts, circus skills, drumming, learning sign language, learning to spin wool, card-making, board games, playing with Lego and cookery! There was also a quiet room for those children who just wanted to chill. Wednesday afternoon is traditionally 'Wet Wednesday' and this year there were the usual opportunities to get very wet in various water-carrying relays and the challenge of negotiating an obstacle course while being bombarded by super soakers!

The week ended with a family fun afternoon; younger siblings and parents joined the children to enjoy bouncy castles, face painting, hotdogs, cakes, including those made by the children during the week, and ice lollies outside in the playground. Then everyone came into the hall for singing and showing the parents some of the wonderful creations made during the week which the children took home as mementoes. On the Saturday, there was a service in the afternoon at Caversham Baptist Church to celebrate the end of a very happy holiday club.

We all went home from the week very tired but encouraged and uplifted by the wonderful spirit of teamwork between the Caversham Churches.



Abi's great artwork

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Buying a copy of Caversham Bridge
 Caversham Library is no longer able to support the sale of copies of *Caversham Bridge*, but we thank them for this service over a number of years. However, single copies of *Caversham Bridge* will continue to be sold in Caversham Centre. The **Caversham Emporium** is our new sales point. The shop is open every day except Tuesday. Caversham Emporium is well worth a visit to purchase decorative wares. It occupies the former premises of Suprema (the dry cleaners).

Caversham Clergy

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

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH
Pastor 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)
Pastor Keith Saynor
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 Patrick H Daly



Europe is still our Home and we continue to be Europeans after Brexit

During the three and a half years working in Brussels for the Catholic Bishops Conferences of the EU (COMECE) it was my privilege to work closely with the CEC, the sister organisation representing the church communities of the Reformation and the Orthodox churches. We shared common goals, the principal one being sustained, constructive and open dialogue with the EU institutions. We always operated from a common platform and understood the big questions in much the same way, always articulating as best we could the voice of Christian concern. There was a shared conviction that the social-market economy was the ideal model which best reflected a Christian understanding of economic growth and social justice. There was a deep belief in the pursuit and maintenance of peace in Europe and beyond as a foundational principal of all EU policy. There was also the view that the EU political classes as well as the civil servants who worked in the institutions were keen to listen to new ideas and to be challenged by alternatives to the tried and tested methods, some of which had failed so miserably to gain credibility among the voting public. We worked hard together to put flesh on the bones of an idea first introduced in the Maastricht Treaty, that of EU citizenship. I am sure that readers of Caversham Bridge would subscribe to most of those ideals.

Brexit, promised for 31 October as our newspaper goes to press, represents a major re-appraisal of our commitment to the founding values of the EU and to the European project's noble aspirations. I deliberately mentioned the many ways in which COMECE and CEC were singing from the same hymn sheet. There were important differences too. I flag up just one. The primary focus of the ecclesial communities which belong to the Reformation family – for a variety of reasons, varying from the theological to the ecclesiological – is the local church. This has meant there has right from the outset been an ambivalence in the Anglican Church as well as the Protestant Churches of Germany concerning the EU. Local interests, local concerns were being ignored. The Catholic Church, from the beginning benevolently supportive of the European project, identified with the internationalist ambitions of European integration and, as Cardinal Vincent Nichols pointed out at the time of the 2016 referendum, Catholics tend to favour the creation of the wider community. Hence the distress Brexit has caused among many Catholics.

The important thing to remember is that there is life after Brexit. The local or national concerns of the Reformation family are perfectly legitimate and translate themselves into practical community-building initiatives, and this is particularly the case in Caversham. This remains true whatever the ultimate outcome of Brexit. Catholic parish communities become more international in their make-up year by year: this welcome and challenging trend will continue, even if the profile of the international community within the parish community changes, after Brexit. What the Brexit debate and the challenging reality it will face us all with has done is invite us to treasure the social vision we share across the Christian family, appreciate and re-assess the separate strengths we as local church communities have, and understand more clearly how the relationship we have to our continent and its spiritual and political heritage helps us get a better understanding of ourselves. Whether or not Brexit finally goes through, we are all still Europeans, the off-shore islands and the continental land mass will still be as close and as far apart as ever. It is important to remember that our Christian faith is an irreplaceable part of our European heritage.

Patrick H. Daly, Parish Priest Our Lady & St. Anne, Caversham

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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

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Caversham Bridge

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Email address is: editors@cavershambridge.org
Advertising copy for the October 2019 issue should be sent Friday 30th August. The date for the November issue Friday 4th October.
Email address is: advertising@cavershambridge.org

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

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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 reserve the right to edit contributions submitted for matters of style, grammar, vocabulary and factual correctness, and to conform to the standards of our established editorial practice. In cases of difference the editors will endeavour to refer back to the submitter of content for resolution.

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Dunsden news

August 2019

Parish Plans:

The majority of parishes in South Oxfordshire have now completed their Neighbourhood Development Plans, helped with grants from the District Council. They aim to provide local communities with a chance to identify where any new development will go, and so avoid inappropriate development that might threaten to spoil their area. The process is not simple, but expert help is available, and once agreed, the plan provides the District with evidence it must apply when deciding planning applications. To progress work on the plan and to seek local support a public meeting is to be held on Tuesday 1st October at 7.30pm in Eye and Dunsden Village Hall.

Pressure mounts for a destructive new Thames bridge in Eye and Dunsden parish: the 'third bridge' proposal is re-emerging it seems. We will update more fully on this in a later issue as it is of wider concern to all Caversham areas.

Church parish giving scheme:

Except perhaps for 'hatchings, matchings and dispatchings' most of us rarely visit our parish churches, which are located in Sonning (for Sonning Eye) and in Dunsden for those in Playhatch and Dunsden. All Saints, Dunsden is a fine building, built in the middle of the nineteenth century as an offshoot of St Andrew's in Sonning, painted by John Piper, and increasingly renowned for its connection with Wilfred Owen, whose family lie in the graveyard. At Easter and Christmas the church is filled with an appreciative congregation, many of whom travel some distance because of their fondness for the special qualities of meetings in this historic building.

Our churches receive no public money, and in the case of Dunsden, costs are entirely borne by a small and increasingly elderly congregation. In spite of the work of dedicated volunteers, the building faces an uncertain future. Complete re-decoration is now needed which together with other essential works is expected to cost around £28,000. The Church of England has launched a parish giving scheme to encourage local people to consider a small regular donation towards the work and upkeep of their parish church. To find out more, take a look at www.parishgivingscheme.org.uk/for-donors/. Under Gift Aid, the scheme is very tax efficient. Even a small amount will be very much appreciated. To find out more about supporting Dunsden church, please email: robert.thewsey@btinternet.com

Dates for the diary:

Professional stand-up comedians at the Village Hall on Saturday 5th October; Annual Fireworks event on 1st November; first ever Christmas fair on 30th November.

Popular Brownie unit teetering on the edge

The future of a very popular and local Friday evening Brownie unit is in doubt, as one of the current leaders is leaving Reading for a new job in Yorkshire. Although this leaves one leader, she will not be able to run this large unit on her own. Girlguiding introduces girls to a world of new opportunities, challenges and fun. Girls get together with their friends at regular meetings where they learn new skills, get creative, explore other cultures and have outdoor adventures. Could you find some time to help keep this lovely unit open? Full training and support will be given and expenses can be claimed for mileage and other costs. If you cannot commit to weekly meetings, could you help with admin or with accounts? Could you help with sourcing and buying material for activities? We would love to hear from you. Please contact us at cavershamguides@hotmail.co.uk

WHAT'S ON IN AND AROUND CAVERSHAM: SEPTEMBER 2019

DATE	EVENT
1st	Farmers Market with Artisan crafts. 10.00am – 3.00pm Caversham Precinct Carpark
7th	Open Garden - Christ Church Masters' and Cathedral gardens. St Aldates Oxford OX1 1DP, 10.00am-4.00pm with 'Jabberwocky Tree' + other links to Alice in Wonderland and Harry Potter.
8th	Open Garden - Ashbrook House, Blewbury, OX11 9QA, 200pm – 5.30pm. Teas. Kenneth Grahame reads 'Wind in the Willows' to local children. 3.5 acres. Borders of unusual plants.
12th	North Reading Safer Neighbourhood Forum. Meet the police and RBC. 7.00pm – 8.30pm Weller Centre, Amersham Road.
13th to 22nd	Reading Heritage Open Days - celebrates 25 years! 40 events around Reading
14th	Disabled Christian Fellowship 11.00am – 2.00pm Argyle Chapel, Argyle Road Reading RG1 7YL
14th	Caversham Horticultural Society Annual Show 2.00pm - 4.30pm. Emmer Green School, RG4 8LN
15th	Farmers Market with Artisan crafts. 10.00am – 3.00pm. Caversham Precinct Carpark
15th	Reading Repair Café at rLab-Reading's Hackspace, Weldale St. Reading 12.00pm – 4.30pm.
15th	Open Garden - Waterperry Gardens. Wheatley, OX33 1JZ. 10.00am – 5.30pm. Tel: 01844 39226. Teashop
21st	Learn to Meditate 9, Bath Road. 10.00am – 1.00pm
28th	Reading Town Meal – Free meal, talks and stands celebrating food in Forbury Gardens, Reading. 12.00pm – 6.00pm.
28th	Henley Literary Festival. Various venues, 28th September – 6th October. www.henleyliteraryfestival.co.uk

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Reading Transport Strategy 2036

Reading Borough Council is developing a new strategy to shape the town's transport network to 2036 and beyond, and has launched a public consultation. The Council is actively soliciting the views of residents and wants to hear what they have to say. A recent door-to-door mailing has advertised a number of public drop-in sessions. The sessions for South Reading (Tuesday 6th August), Caversham (Thursday 15th August at Church House, 57, Church Street, Caversham, 3.00pm to 7.00pm) and West Reading (Wednesday 28th August) will have happened before the next *Caversham Bridge* publication date. The remaining sessions are on Wednesday 4th September, 3.00-7.00pm at Reading Town Hall and Tuesday 10th September, 07.00am to 10.00am at Reading Station Forecourt. Many residents will have missed the household notification and may have been away on holiday at the time. The consultation ends on Friday 20th September so there is still time to make your comments on line. Please submit your reply to: www.pclconsult.co.uk/transport2036

We urge *Caversham Bridge* readers to make the most of this consultation

opportunity and to express their views on the quality and capacity of our local road network (on both sides of the River), the role for and supply of public transport (specially our bus network, which encountered many consumer- negative changes in 2016 / 2017), provision for private and commercial vehicles, parking provision and restrictions, traffic management and congestion matters, and all issues relating to a clean, safe and sustainable environment. Please express your views on matters of immediate operating concern as well as on matters of infrastructure (bus lanes, park and ride, cycle and pedestrian provision and safety, a 'third bridge', and a 'relief road') and regional matters (Crossrail will have connected Reading more closely to the London metropolitan region; a new Heathrow runway will impact flight paths; and, regional economic growth will require attention to private and commercial traffic flows taking advantage of Reading's location on the transport networks). Do not just complain: be part of the consultation as an active citizen.

New Secondary School offers choices for Caversham

A 900-place 'free' school in Reading has been given the go-ahead by the Education Secretary following an official announcement on 14th June, 2019. It is one of 22 new free school academies approved across England. Education Secretary, Damian Hinds confirmed that the Maiden Erlegh Trust's application for the secondary school on land at Richfield Avenue, Reading had been successful. The school will be built on a former golf driving range close to the town centre that was previously earmarked for a new outdoor activity centre. Reading Borough Council has welcomed the decision. Ashley Pearce, council lead for education, said: "We are delighted at the decision to approve the new school and that Maiden Erlegh Trust will be the academy chain chosen to run the school."

Maiden Erlegh River Academy will be a high quality, inclusive school for students of all abilities and aspirations, and from all backgrounds. The school's rich and broad curriculum, will provide opportunities to study a range of GCSE and vocational courses. The school will not only equip students with skills and qualifications that will enable them to access high quality post-16 study or apprenticeships, but will also prepare them for a range of career opportunities both locally and further afield. Finally, it will also increase parental choice in north Reading and address the current shortfall in secondary places within the borough.

Our photograph shows the school site as it is today. The aspiration is to have the School open for the September

2021 intake. So, there is work to be done to bring the project to complete fruition as a building project. The Maiden Erlegh Trust does bring an established ethos and body of educational practice to the River Academy as the new school is to be known, so it is to be hoped that all elements can be brought together in good time to complete the project. The new school will add to the choices available to Caversham families and contribute overall to the secondary education resource in both Caversham and the Reading area. The availability of a new school will have to be traded-off against the perennial issues of accessibility, peak hour traffic and congestion. At least the Cow Lane bottle neck will be a thing of the past! And there is enough time for Reading Buses to consider public transport provision in a hitherto largely barren area. Reading Transport Consultation 2036 please note.



The new school site in July 2019: 'from brown field to school field'

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A visit to St James's RC church in Reading

Following their talk to the Society in May on the subject of the 'Return of Catholicism in Reading', the speakers, John and Lindsay Mullaney, invited the members on a guided group visit to St James's Church, Reading in June.

The tour began at the church's west porch: between there and the presbytery lurk the gaunt fragments of the north transept of the former abbey upon whose footprint the church stands. The fragments came to rest there in the siege of Reading during the English Civil Wars of the 1640s: the occupying Royalist army had employed gunpowder to reduce the height of the abbey ruins in order to provide a clear line of sight for their cannon that were mounted on Forbury Hill.

In 1829, parliament passed into law the Catholic Emancipation Act: for the first time since the Reformation, Roman Catholics were

permitted to worship openly and to participate fully in the civic life of the nation. However, there was a problem for the newly revived English Roman Catholics: the Church of England had occupied their old places of worship and stripped them of their shrines and images. This new generation of Catholics had to build new churches.

In Reading the building of the Catholic Church of St James was made possible by the generous benefaction of the devout catholic James Wheble of Woodley Lodge, Berkshire. In 1834,



St James's RC Church



The nave at St James's Church

he purchased the abbey site from Nicholas Vansittart, Lord Bexley, for the purpose of excavating it for historical research. Later, Wheble provided funds for the erection of a church there and engaged the eminent ecclesiastical architect Augustus Welby Northmoor Pugin to design it. Pugin, unusually for him, produced a design in the then unfashionable Romanesque style; perhaps in polite submission to the late-Norman architecture of the former Reading Abbey.

The building work commenced in 1837, the year Wheble became High Sheriff of Berkshire, and the church opened on 5th August 1840 with a service of consecration led by Bishop Thomas Griffiths. Sadly, James Wheble had died of a heart attack two weeks earlier. The first permanent priest was John Ringrose.

In 1840, the church comprised a nave and an apsidal sanctuary and it could seat nearly 300 worshippers. Wheble chose to dedicate his new church to St James-the-Great, his choice recalling the ancient abbey's dedication to that saint. Buried in the sanctuary are the remains of Francois Longuet founder of the

Chapel of the Resurrection the progenitor of St James's.

Among the church's furnishings the most interesting piece is the receptacle of the baptismal font. It was discovered in 1835 during Wheble's excavation of the abbey site where it was buried in the area where the chancel stood. Among the theories put forward as to its original function the most plausible one, due to its ornate decoration of interlacing foliage scrolls, was that it was a pillar capital that supported an arcade. In 1840, it was given a new base and lid and converted for use as the font.

In the twentieth century, due to the growth of the congregation, schools were built in 1912 and the church itself was extended in 1926: an aisle to the south of the nave, larger west porch and an ambulatory behind the sanctuary were added. The architect employed was Wilfrid Mangan who at this time designed the English Martyrs' Catholic Church opposite Prospect Park. Today, the church attracts a congregation of over 400 worshippers for Sunday Mass and 40 languages are represented amongst them.

For more information about membership and future talks visit: www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk

(Report contributed by the History of Reading Society)



The Font at St James's

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Caversham Heights Society visit to Poole

On a gloriously sunny 27th June, 52 members and friends of the Caversham Heights Society went by coach to Poole to visit the headquarters of the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) followed by a boat trip around Poole harbour, the second largest natural harbour in the world after Sydney harbour in Australia.

We were greeted in what was a large and rather plush welcome area before being divided into manageable groups to be conducted round the complex site where all would-be lifeboat crews and lifeguards for Britain's coastal resorts are trained. It is also the training complex for many crews from around the world. We were told about the history of the RNLI, the training involved, the fact that all the crews and teams are volunteers, and that the RNLI receives no government funding.

We were shown a massive five metre deep water tank, rather like a very large, and deep, swimming

pool where all would-be crew members have to jump in fully clothed in their safety outfits, learn to right an up-turned vessel, learn to open an inflatable seaworthy boat and to right a disabled lifeboat, all in very cold temperatures. We were then shown various films explaining what happens at the centre before getting into a mock lifeboat cockpit for a simulated trip out to sea to rescue a drowning sailor and to help a ship in trouble. This was fun as long as the wind speed was reasonable but when we experienced a simulated Force 10 storm we all recognised the terrifying conditions with which crews have to cope. I think we felt humbled as well as full of admiration for what lifeboat crews sometimes have to endure. This was brought home by seeing a memorial to the 185 crew members who have lost their lives in rescuing those in peril on the sea.

After an excellent and memorable buffet lunch

in the Harbour View restaurant we were driven to Poole Quay before embarking on one of the harbour ferries for an interesting and informative trip around the harbour. Apart from the wind we could not have had a more pleasurable afternoon. I think that most of us felt that this was one of the most pleasurable visits we have had.

The 2019-2020 season begins on the Wednesday 4th September in the hall attached to Caversham Heights Methodist Church on Highmoor Road. It will begin with the Annual General Meeting at 7.00pm, followed by tea and coffee. The first talk begins at 8pm on the topic of Berkshire Blood Bikes: about the out of hours rapid response service for delivering vital blood supplies to NHS hospitals in the county. Further details can be found at www.cavershamheights.org or by email to: contact@cavershamheights.org. Visitors are always welcome.

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Betty Evans: a tribute

Betty Evans was born on 18th March 1921 in Maidstone. She was an only child and lived with her beloved parents until she went off to Westminster hospital to do her nursing training after she left Maidstone Grammar School. She had a happy childhood with lots of friends, and lots of music and singing. She joined her father on the stage for all sorts of charity events. She was steered into teaching but soon found out it was not for her; luckily she had a 'lightning' moment and realised she wanted to be a nurse. It was a hard training in those days - very long hours and very little pay. But she loved hospital life. The young trainees were watched like hawks and they had to be a bit sneaky - creeping out of windows and so on to get any social life! She did meet a young doctor there however; they both happened to be on night duty. They fell in love and eventually married. Even that was difficult because of war time events. It was a story that made the national papers - a bit of light relief I suppose among all the gloom and doom of the time. Mum was nursing in Holland then, but somehow she managed to get back for her wedding, and that was in Westminster Abbey no less, because of my father's connection with Westminster school. She and my father had a happy marriage, and gave my sister Rosie and I a very loving secure childhood. Family and friends meant everything to them, as well as having two daughters - Rosie and me, they have four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. They were good community people and got involved with all sorts of charity events.

Many Caversham folk will remember Betty. With husband Darrell she used to walk down to the village from their home in St Peter's Avenue. They would do their shopping, then often pop into Warings café, or Delicious for a coffee. They were a very sociable couple.

Darrell passed away 5 years ago, and Mum would still walk down to the village on her own, although it became more of a struggle with age. Thank goodness Caversham folk are

so good and kind, because crossing the road became a hazard. Mum was very slow, her eyesight and her hearing declined, but many times the traffic would stop and wait for her. Some kind souls would stop what they were doing and accompany her home.

She loved her bungalow and intended to live her life out there but the point came when she could no longer live independently. In December 2017 she went to a very nice care home in Ilkley, near to daughter Rosie. Finally in April 2019 she suffered a chest infection. Rosie and I were with her until she passed away, very peacefully, on Friday April 19th aged 98.

She had a good long, useful life. She loved her family and friends, and she loved her hospital work. I think she was a hero in the war, nursing wounded soldiers at the front line as a Queen Alexandra's nurse. Much later she worked in the RBH in the eye department. She and Dad helped to raise money for the League of Friends of Reading Hospitals, and she was awarded an MBE for her efforts. She and the Queen looked rather similar, both of an age, both with their blue dresses and white hair! There was a celebration of her life at St Peter's Church, Caversham on Friday 21st June and we pay tribute to her life now through the columns of Caversham Bridge.

(Contributed by Liz Holton, Betty Evans' daughter)



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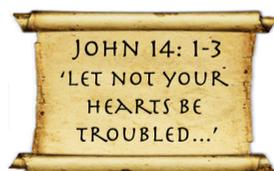
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The Emmer Green Water Tower

It is sometimes strange how things turn out. Just as I was starting to think of a suitable local history subject for the September edition, a message popped up on my computer screen from the author of the volume of the forthcoming 'Victoria History of Oxfordshire' which will include Caversham and neighbouring villages. Since he is based in Oxford, and I live in Caversham, he sometimes asks me to find things out for him. The subjects are very varied, and we can sometimes help one another out with bits of information.

In late July, he was asking which local authority built the Emmer Green Water Tower. I was fairly sure it must have been Reading Corporation Water Works, but thought I had better go into Reading Central Library and make sure. The 'Victoria History of the Counties of England' is the most authoritative local history series, if not the most interesting one for the general reader.

Hardly anything appears about Reading's water supply in books, but after looking through newspaper cuttings and council minutes, it appears that much of Caversham was being supplied with water from

Reading as early as 1902. The water was taken from the Kennet, and after treatment, pumped up to the Bath Road Waterworks, and from there some of it was pumped again to service reservoirs in Tilehurst and Caversham.

In Tilehurst itself the situation was different, with water coming from boreholes at Pangbourne, and being pumped up to the brick water tower in Norcot Road. When Reading Corporation bought the Tilehurst, Pangbourne & District Water Company in 1931, they set about building a new concrete water tower in School Road – the one in use today – and presumably the brick tower could then be taken out of service.

The first inkling of the tower at Emmer Green comes in the Minutes of the Borough's Water Committee dated 16 October 1951. A report from the Water Engineer and Manager recommended sweeping changes to the whole system, which would make it cheaper to run, and would even out the water pressure across the town, but it would need two water towers: the pre-existing one at Tilehurst, and a new one with a new reservoir at Emmer Green.

In the minutes, you can see how the money had to be borrowed to implement the improvements, when the land was bought,

and when contracts were let. Unfortunately, it never says when the water supply from the tower was turned on – presumably it was before the waterworks were taken over by the Thames Valley Water Board in 1960.

The town's water supply is an intriguing story, which really deserves a book in its own right – as, of course, do the waste water arrangements. Without them, civilisation would soon crumble.

No-one much notices these utilities until something goes wrong. I remember back in July 2014 hearing people muttering in a Caversham supermarket about there being no water when they turned on their taps that morning. Apparently, during a thunderstorm the night before, the Emmer Green tower had been struck by lightning, and it had put the pumps out of action. The interruption was soon fixed, but it had certainly got people thinking about their water supply that morning. *Happy Wanderer*



News from Highdown School

Summer Showcase

On Thursday 4th July the audience at the Summer Showcase were treated to an evening of exceptional performances. The evening was used to promote mental health and in support of local mental health charity No5. Students from all years performed and the repertoire reflected the chosen theme. Special mention should go to Natasha Parker and Ella Buckley for their exemplary work in organising and hosting the event.

Art

What a fantastic year for our students in Art and Photography. Art Club and Enrichment classes have produced murals throughout the school. Working in collaboration with Reading University PGCE art teachers, Year 9 Students designed an amazing mural in the 'The Gallery' reminding students of Highdown Values.



Music Technology

Year 12 Music Technology students went to Southampton Solent University for a day. They were offered the opportunity to look at and use the high-tech recording equipment, with one of the bands even getting the chance to record their cover of 'Supersonic' by Oasis.

Plastic Free Schools Group

Term 5 saw the start of our Plastic Free Schools group. The group started by sending round a questionnaire about plastic cutlery and plastic bottle usage in the canteen - resulting in changing the suppliers from plastic to wood cutlery, starting in September. The canteen are trialling alternative drinks containers with paper straws to phase out sales of drinks in plastic bottles.

Teacher Training

Massive congratulations to the 22 trainee teachers we have supported and developed into fully qualified QTS standard teachers from University of Reading, Oxford, Brighton and UCL. Each was a full time member of the Highdown Community working with a mentor in their department and with Andy Love and Ciaran Sheridan across the school.

Sixth Form

Life in Highdown Sixth Form is not only about studying and exams, but also about self-discovery, future careers and giving back to the community. Sixth Formers have made a great contribution to the school, through student leadership, Year 7 mentoring, the STEAM ambassadors' scheme and primary schools visits with Dr Love. Year 12 students organized the annual Christmas party for Brookfields SEN pupils, Careers support and work experience have underpinned their studies.

Our Sixth Form students hosted Business students from Maartens College in the Netherlands and worked on a marketing project. A group came second in the Fastech challenge, in which they designed a piece of wearable technology.

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Jack Eyston of Mapledurham House: a tribute

The saying "We shall not see his like again" is probably as apt an epitaph for the late Jack Eyston as any other such phrase. Born in 1934 of parents who both sprang from devout and landed Catholic lineage he represented to an intense degree the tenacity and doggedness of their heritage. In this country we think of nobility as possessing a title. Jack represented that centuries-old branch of nobility which possessed no title but boasted a pedigree of impeccable armigerous descent. One of his proudest possessions was an illuminated scroll showing the more than 100 coats of arms of his illustrious antecedents. Jack was indeed of noble descent but carried that distinction so lightly that unless one knew about it one might never have guessed it.



It is probably true that Jack's legendary firmness of purpose and diligent pursuit of aims stemmed in part from his heraldic lineage but also in part from the knowledge that from the time of the change in religion from Catholicism under Queen Mary back to an English version of the Protestant faith under Elizabeth I in 1559, his Eyston and Blount ancestors clung tenaciously to the old faith. Their fidelity cost them staggering sums of money in fines and taxes over the centuries. I recall a conversation with Jack during which he revealed to me his sense of pride at their fidelity as well as the injustice they endured at being shown the evidence in the archive of the Palace of Westminster of just how much they had paid year on year. He never complained about the fact of it but one might have gathered from his general attitude to the contemporary financial demands of his landed position that he understood all too well the reality of the centuries during which his ancestors had borne and been burdened with more than their fair share of taxation and tariff. His attitude to fiscal state impositions was always dictated by his Christian conscience and sense of public duty and obligation. Yet it was ever tinged with that canny awareness that governments exist as much to accrue revenue as to provide service. For him, vigilance as well as compliance should of necessity accompany one's civic duty.

The historic landmark of Mapledurham House which is only accessible by land by a steep descent into the valley of the Thames on the Oxfordshire side, is a fine example of late Tudor architecture. Its preservation and present excellent state of maintenance is one of Jack's outstanding achievements. Soon after his marriage to Lady Anne Maitland in 1968, they moved into the estate while the house was still uninhabitable. The determination of both of them to restore it soon began to bear fruit. It was a task that would have daunted and discouraged a couple with less determination and zeal. Moving into the estate and living at first in the Mill House they began with vigour and imagination to restore and repair every aspect of its partly ruined main house. Visitors today can enjoy the fine detail of its interior without perhaps being aware of the cost in energy as well as income of its restoration. Recent repair work of the great and typical Tudor chimneys revealed just how central the Catholic faith had been to its identity. A traditional 'priests' hide' was discovered in one of the chimneys, with its access cleverly disguised underneath the flagstones of the fireplace. This find not only gave Jack an enormous amount of satisfaction but also assured him that the position of Mapledurham as a centre of Catholic survival in the Thames valley was enhanced.

On the commercial side, Jack's initiative and enterprise lasted throughout his life on the estate. His building up a fine herd of dairy cattle will be another of his lasting legacies to his heirs. In many conversations over the years he

talked about improvements, investments and obstacles – both personal as well as financial – to his latest schemes. He was nothing if not utterly consistent in the struggle to overcome every hurdle of opposition and what he saw as any bureaucratic impediment to the progress of his plans. It is perhaps not inappropriate or out of place here to say that in his perception of a major hindrance to all that he believed in and supported economically and prudentially, the EU was one of his 'bête noires'. Severance from it filled him with anticipation of better times to come. Another topic of conversation was his belief – shared by many in the business – that the superstores inadequately remunerated dairy farmers

for their produce. It could not be entirely for profit that he pursued the goal of excellence in milk production. He was eclectic in his approach to the economy of funding expenditure and maintenance. Film and television projects found a welcome location for their productions. Scenes for the battle of Waterloo from the ITV production of 'Vanity Fair' were filmed on the fields of Mapledurham. Those fortunate episodes of engagement with modern media enterprises were just some of the sources of revenue that Jack employed in his vocation to place the Blount ancestral home on a firm and secure footing. The house was always open to the public from spring to autumn but events and fairs also formed part of its attractions.

No visitor to the house could ever mistake that it was a Catholic family home. The chapel, built in the 'Strawberry Hill gothic' style was not a museum exhibit but a regularly used place of worship. It was the third such chapel in the house. The previous two had been above ground level and secret. I had the privilege for more some thirteen years of celebrating Holy Mass monthly for the family and local villagers and visitors. Jack's brand of Catholicism was of the traditional unostentatious variety. That too was a part of his inheritance. Loyal Catholic families like his learned to practice their faith discreetly and without fuss. Never loosening or weakening the long thread of continuity with the old religion which led back to their medieval forbears they professed loyalty to the faith while at the same time being loyal to the monarch of the day. Excluded from politics for centuries they quietly carried on their business on a local level. The visit of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother to the house in 1982 was a proverbial champagne moment for its owners. Two cedar trees planted on that day commemorate the visit. Jack was a member of two Catholic Orders of Knighthood, the Papal Knights of St Gregory and the Sovereign and Hospitaller Order of Malta. In the latter he undertook for several years in succession to accompany sick and elderly infirm people on pilgrimages to Lourdes, the Catholic shrine in the Pyrenees. It was another aspect of his 'noblesse oblige' conviction and character. Having done all he could to stabilise and secure the family estate and its historic house, Jack departed this life on 23rd April, 2019, appropriately enough for this most English of local squires, the feast of St George. His death was accompanied by all the Church rites due to a man of deep faith and lively adherence to its principles and precepts. May he rest in peace.

[Family portrait of Jack Eyston, with Lady Anne and children c. 1977 by M. J. Blackburn, AIP, Caversham. Reproduced from: R. Williams. *Mapledurham House, Oxfordshire: history and description of contents*. St Ives: Beric Tempest, 1977.]
(Tribute contributed by Monsignor Antony Conlon, HEL, PhD, Parish Priest of Our Lady and St John, Goring on Thames.)

The William Marshal Triptych



Pamela Earl with the Triptych

'Caversham Manor'. It was here he chose to end his days and Caversham is said to have been one of his favourite places. He died on 14th May 1219 and his body lay in state at Reading Abbey.

Historic conservation researcher, Pamela Earl, thought that a tapestry to commemorate the 800th anniversary in 2019 of the death of William Earl would be appropriate and so Thomas Walker, a member of the Pastel Society was commissioned to design the William Marshal Triptych. The mounted triptych, (72cms x240cms) comprising three panels which must be displayed together, was unveiled on 19th May 2019 at Pembroke Castle for the William Marshal Festival and is on permanent public display there in a purpose built cabinet.

Thomas Walker describes the project as follows:

"My task to design this embroidered triptych was complex, the endeavour being to include as many of the key episodes as possible without cluttering the overall layout. The brief, however, was to provide a design in indelible ink that could not be changed (even so one or two minor historical inaccuracies, pointed out by expert medievalists, did have to be put right!). This time, the transfer onto the cloth was achieved by digital printing and the stitching done over it." Creating the tapestry took a year of research and 8,000 hours of embroidery over four years. It contains 18 different colours of Appleton's 2 ply crewel wool that is excellent for shading as colours can be mixed in the needle.

The Triptych was made by a tapestry group in Lewes in Sussex by the embroidery director Clare Newby and the embroiderers included Wendy Connor, Patricia Ivens-Bentley, Ann Merricks, Wendy Murial and Borah Toff, each working on small sections that were ultimately sewn back together. *"It has to live in Pembroke Castle,"* Pamela Earl said. *"As important as William Marshal's other homes like Chepstow (and Caversham) are, Pembroke Castle seems the right place for it to hang."* Ms Earl said while she was influenced by the Bayeux tapestry, she wanted the Marshal tapestry to stand on its own.

Mr Jon Williams, manager of Pembroke Castle said: *"William Marshal had a significant life. He was one of the main influences behind the creation of the Magna Carta and is incredibly important in world history. This tapestry is a brilliant addition to the castle. It is a different way of telling history, and you can spend time studying it."*

The town of Pembroke is currently raising about £60,000 in order to build a statue of William Marshal in the castle grounds.

William Marshal, the 1st Earl of Pembroke, was made a Templar Knight in 1219, served five kings, was one of the curators and signatories of the Magna Carta and ultimately became Regent of England. Many consider him to be the greatest Knight of the Middle Ages.

William Marshal lived in Reading during the late 12th and early 13th Centuries. He was lord of Caversham Park Estate, which was known as

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From its inception in 1899, the school was built on faith. On January 28, 1899, the *Berkshire Chronicle* reported 'an interesting ceremony' that involved the laying of the dedication and donation stones of a Roman Catholic



Construction gets underway

School to be erected in South View Avenue. The proceedings included the placing within the foundations of 'a miraculous medal, a pair of rosary beads, an engraving of St Anne, a badge of the Sacred Heart' and an inscription which stated that the school was being built in honour of Our Lady and St Anne at Caversham. In his homily, Rev Raymond Haskew asserted that St Anne's would be 'an edifice in which our children may be taught to know God and to serve Him, in which they may learn to love God above all things and their neighbour for the love of God.' Students would be educated to become 'loyal citizens of heaven, loyal subjects of the State and useful members of society' such that the school might be 'the workshop of the Divine Master'.

Subsequently - on 11th September, 1899 - St Anne's opened its doors for the first time. Headmistress Norah Bowie was the only teacher at the school which was initially attended by 32 children - 7 infants and 25 older students. Some challenges encountered and in 1900 it was said that the children attending constituted 'the illiterate refuse of the other Caversham schools.' Despite this criticism, exam results were reported to have been good!

It was in 1902 that the Sisters of the Visitation - an order of Belgian nuns - took over the running of the school. From here, St Anne's developed increasingly into a parish institution. A new headmistress - Sister Margaret Mary - was appointed and, in 1904, the HMO Inspector reported that, 'The School is effectively controlled and some praiseworthy work is accomplished'. The popularity of St Anne's grew and pressure on places increased. By 1909, the inspector's recommendations were subject-specific and included avoidance of eye strain in needlework exercises, teaching of drawing to girls and the suggestion that boys commence woodwork lessons. During the first 10 years, registers show that often many children were absent at a time due to diseases such as measles, mumps, chicken-pox, diphtheria and influenza. Such outbreaks also resulted in several prolonged periods of closure by the



An early classroom view

Sanitary Authority. Floods and severe winter weather were also reported to have made a notable impact on attendance.

In 1914, refugees from Belgium joined the school, bringing the number of pupils to 150. As a result of this influx, the majority of the congregation of Our Lady and St Anne's during the Christmas services in this year were Belgian refugees. In fact, the 10.30am Mass on Christmas Day was consequently given by a Belgian Priest in Flemish! At the very end of the year, St Anne's Hall - funded by Mrs Crawshaw - was opened by the Mayor. In 1915, the hall was used by a Red Cross Medical detachment and by May 1915 it was designated a convalescent hospital connected to the Reading Military. During the war, the children worked in the garden behind the school and for a short time in 1918 classes were shut while the staff helped with food rationing. At the end of the war - in 1919 - all the children were taken by tram car to Palmer Park for the Peace Celebrations. In fact, trips were surprisingly frequent and lessons were regularly delivered at sites across Reading. Among the excursions mentioned in the school log books were visits to the Gas Works, to the Abbey grounds and ruins, to the Museum in order to see the Silchester Collection and to Broad Street to see the King and Queen pass by on their way to the War Hospital in 1917.

Continued on page 11

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St Anne's School 120th Anniversary

Continued from page 10

By 1922, 164 children were enrolled, divided into two classes of 'Babies' and seven classes of 'Standards'. Four years later, a visit by the HMI was followed by comments on the good work throughout the school, both with regards to study and to discipline and mentioned in particular the 'eager and industrious children'. Opportunities offered were wide-ranging and included football matches for boys with children from other schools and netball matches for girls.

The Second World War years commenced with blackouts in November 1939 that caused the daily timetable to be altered and a severe winter that saw attendance slip down to a third on 2nd February, 1940. In May 1940, all schools which had closed for the Whitsun holiday were ordered to reopen after only 3 days due to the seriousness of the military situation. Part-time education had to be introduced in June when an evacuated London school of 220 children and their teachers arrived. The latter used the premises from 8.50am-1.00pm whilst St Anne's children attended from 1.30pm-5.00pm. Furthermore, school premises were kept open during the summer to cater for children of mothers doing war work and reports of air raids and bombs dropping nearby all formed part of life at St Anne's during this time. Nevertheless, progress was still made; swimming certificates were earned, school dinners began to be served and the Juvenile Employment Officer visited the school to advise school leavers.

After the war, attendance rose to 282 and, with the raising of compulsory school age to 15 in 1947, pressure upon accommodation increased. The first male teacher was appointed to the staff in 1949, taking games and PT with the boys. Under his influence, rugby was taught. The school also participated in the Musical Festival – an annual event in Reading Town Hall.

It was in 1958 – with the enforcement of the 1944 Education Act - that St Anne's became a primary school, constituted of a Reception class, Infant Class and Classes I-VI. It was at this time also that the infants were given



A completed building and familiar sight today. Washington Road and South View Avenue corner

toilets, a kitchen was built on site and a new playground was laid out for the older children at the back of the school hall. The students enjoyed a wide curriculum including French for the top 3 classes, PE, dance and relationships. Interestingly, the Punishment Book from this time records a number of names familiar to the current parish! The range of misdemeanours was wide and included whistling and singing in school, spilling ink on the desk and floor, talking during Maths, persistent laziness and being nuisances in private alleyways as well as writing a teacher's name on the pavement outside school and throwing insects around the room thereby upsetting the girls. No names will be disclosed!

More recent memories have been collected by means of the school logs and also from our own alumni. Memories of First Holy Communion, Corpus Christi celebrations at Mapledurham and Confirmation Mass with the Archbishop are included among these. At a recent gathering, many alumni communicated clear recollections of Sister Christine (the last nun to be Head Teacher) who was replaced by Mr Welch c.1979. Sister Anne and Sister Sheila remained at the school, with Sister Anne being the last member

Caversham Primary Schools

The October 2019 issue of *Caversham Bridge* will carry reports from state sector primary schools in Caversham. Six local authority state primary schools north of the River Thames are represented under the North Reading Schools' Partnership. The participating schools are: Caversham; Caversham Park; Thameside; The Hill; Emmer Green and Micklands. *Caversham Bridge* will continue to cover denominational and independent primary schools in Caversham, as well as featuring the activities of Highdown secondary school.

of the Order to leave.

The log books and journals meticulously maintained throughout the years since 1899, bring to life the history of this wonderful school. One thing that is striking throughout is the long service of many members of staff. It is clear that the St Anne's community has always engendered a deep sense of service and dedication. In 1954, the Chief Education Officer summed up the atmosphere of the school in one word: love. He highlighted in particular the devotion of the nuns to the school and to the children, mentioning especially Sister Mary Aidan who left in 1967 after 33 years of service and Sister Joseph who taught in Reception for 42 years. Times may have changed; the buildings and recreation areas have been extended; the curriculum has been developed and all children now have indoor toilets! However, love and service remain at the heart of St Anne's. It is a huge privilege to be a part of this faith-filled, vibrant community in which every child is celebrated as a gift from God and I have no doubt that, although the next 120 years will see great changes, the love of Jesus will always remain at its centre.

(Contributed by Sarah Bernto, Head Teacher, St Anne's Roman Catholic School, Caversham)

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A recipe for September

Blackberry Compote

1 lb/500 gms blackberries

600ml / 1 pint water

4 tablespoons cornflour

150 gms/ 5ozs sugar

Vanilla extract

Almond flakes

Bring the cleaned berries and water to the boil and simmer until berries are soft and squasy. Rub the cooked berries through a sieve and return to pan. Blend the cornflour until smooth with a little cold water and add to the berries. Continue cooking, stirring all the time, until the mixture thickens. Remove from the heat and add sugar and vanilla to taste. Pour into a bowl and sprinkle with caster sugar and chill for 2 hours. Decorate with almond flakes and serve with a jug of cream.

Caversham 'Rock 'n' Ale' Festival

On Saturday 13th July, the 'Rock 'n' Ale' festival returned to Caversham. On a cloudy but warm evening when the sun came out for short periods, crowds of people came to enjoy this wonderful social event in support of the Motor Neurone Disease Association. Now in its 7th Year it was originally started as a tribute to Angela Fung who was a parishioner of Our Lady and St Anne's until, sadly, she died of the disease in December 2012. The 'Rock 'n' Ale' was such a success that it has taken place each year since. It attracts not only people from Caversham and Reading but also from much further afield, making it a wide-reaching community event.

The large marquee housed the stage and the bar which was provided by the Purple Turtle and served local ales and craft beers. This year the live bands were Forbury, Jadey and The Scandal, as well as the regular Dino's. Although there were tables outside which quickly filled up, fans stood in the marquee to watch and listen to the bands and even danced the night away if the fancy took them.

A hog roast provided food with the best crackling that your reporter has ever tasted – crisp but not too hard to bite - and for the non-meat eaters there was a vegetarian chilli alternative. An Ice-cream van dispensed ice cream cones to satisfy those with a sweet tooth.

There was a children's area cordoned off to keep the little ones safe where young and not so young could try out their skills with large bouncy balls which could accommodate two at a time, plates to balance on sticks and hoops to twist around, among other things. For those who only wanted to kick a ball there were goal posts set up well away from the main seating area.

The music continued until 11.00pm and people went home having enjoyed a wonderful summer evening's entertainment which had raised the considerable sum of nearly £4,500 to be shared by Motor Neurone Disease Association and Our Lady and St Anne's Church



The Hog Roast



The Band Jadey with the lead Singer Jadey herself



The crowd outside the Marquee

Heritage Open Day in Caversham Court Gardens: Saturday 21st September 2.00pm-5.00 pm

Guided tours of the beautiful riverside gardens and the listed 17th century summer house will give a unique glimpse into the history of the house that once stood on the site, of the families who lived there, and of the history of Caversham and its links with Reading across the Thames. Sensory tours for visually or hearing impaired people are available on request, run by experienced guides from the Friends of Caversham Court Gardens. Families can also follow an architectural trail which will take them on a fascinating journey of exploration and discovery around the listed 17th century summer house. On the way, children (4+) will search for shapes, feel building materials, measure with their bodies, draw through the window and enjoy building the house of their dreams. The activities along the trail will engage the youngest ones and even the adults will look at the building in a different way.

Clog and Step Dancing Open Evening with taster sessions

Try clog and step dancing with Aldbrickham Clog and Step Dancers at their informal Open Evenings on 8th and 15th October at Park United Reformed Church, Palmer Park, Reading starting at 8.15pm.

You will be shown some of their traditional and new dances and then invited to have a go yourself. Do not worry about footwear as there will be clogs to borrow. Male and female dancers of all abilities are very welcome, as are any musicians who would like to try out our tunes. For more information about this FREE event, visit our website: www.aldbrickhamclog.org or phone call Anne on 0118 947 4244.

Aldbrickham Clog and Step Dancers enjoy performing traditional dances from all over Britain to live music at local events and festivals, in the summer we dance at pubs with other local groups. We dance in both clogs and shoes: the type of clogs which we wear have wooden soles and leather uppers with laces. Our dances come from all over the British Isles from Shetland to Cornwall via the Isle of Man and Wales. When people think of English traditional dancing, most think of Morris Dancing. Our dances are not Morris dances, there are no bells, sticks or handkerchiefs.

Dances are for both groups and soloists, and our repertoire also includes music hall dances which are an important part of the clog and step dance heritage. Their costume is based on the working clothes worn in the countryside from the Victorian era until the First World War.



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Hemdean House School

Hemdean House School has been busy this term, fulfilling their promise to achieve 160 hours of service within the community to celebrate their 160th anniversary.

Books, Books, Books!

Mrs McMillan, the year five teacher, took her class to New Bridge nursery in Reading, on the 7th March. The year five children each read books to a group of nursery children. The nursery children were quite shy at first, but they were very excited when they met the year five class and year five really enjoyed being showed round the nursery.

Vandals!

For their 160th Anniversary community commitment, Year 4 enjoyed a morning working with Claire and Jodie from Clean Green Living. They make their own cleaning products which consist of all natural ingredients and no chemicals. Once we had learned about them and what they do, we walked to the pedestrian bridge over the river and spent some time trying to clean off the graffiti. We used up all of their soap supplies!

It was a tough job, but it really made us think about the pointless acts of vandalism that we see all over the place, and how much effort it takes to rectify it. Thank-you Claire and Jodie, we really enjoyed it and have all got super-soft hands!

Poets!

On the 28th February, Mrs Illingworth took her year two class to St. Luke's care home. The children were a credit to the school and all the residents commented on how smart they all were. In the morning the children made butterfly cakes to take for the residents. Everyone was looking forward to enjoying these with their afternoon tea. The children had prepared some paired poetry reading and a song. They also had thought of questions to ask about the life of the people they met such as what was school like? Who was King or Queen? What school dinners did they have? The residents then sang 'Daisy Daisy' to us and some of us even joined in. We have promised to return to sing our play songs at Christmas and keep in touch with a few letters and photos.

Pebbles – 'Bugs Bottom'

Years 3 and 4 visited 'Bugs Bottom' on 29th April to distribute the beautiful pebbles they decorated during their outdoor learning sessions. Hopefully, the local community will enjoy finding them and post some wonderful pictures for the children to enjoy.



Activities at Bugs Bottom



Reducing your use of plastic containers

Are you thinking about ways to reduce your use of plastic containers in response to David Attenborough's 'Blue Planet' programmes last year? One product which generates vast numbers of single use plastic bottles is milk. But, there is a simple option to help reduce use – and it is not a new idea!

Can you remember when most of us had a doorstep delivery of milk in glass bottles? You may think the milk float was a thing of the past – but it is still around and is making a comeback. And it has been updated for the Internet age. With a growing fleet of new electric vehicles, 'Milk and more' will deliver will deliver a range of products including milk and fruit juices in reusable glass bottles and many organic products. Deliveries are three days a week and if you wish, your account can be managed online. This allows you to change your order up until the evening before the delivery is due – ideal if you have run out of one of the many products they deliver!

So take a small step back in time to reduce plastic waste. Check if there are deliveries in your area and find details of what is available on their website at: <https://www.milkandmore.co.uk>

(Contributed by Phil Chatfield)

Meadow Day

A fine sunny July day, a meadow full of flowers and insects of all kinds, and experts from BBOWT and Reading Natural History group, to show and tell you all about them, the perfect summer afternoon. Added to this activities for children by Nature Nurture, stalls and information about bees, birds, and bats, and adopting your street. A chance to learn the lore of plants from a local herbalist, a look at the artistry of a wood turner, pick over some interesting old garden tools or plants, and then take your picnic and sit and listen to Readifolk music in the shade of the oak tree.

This is what the Clayfield Copse Meadow Day had to offer on 6th July. The meadow is there for the rest of the year, of course, flowers and grasses have been cut by now, but seeds remain for another year - what an asset this is to our parks!

The next event at Clayfield Copse is a bat walk led by Rose a member of the South Bucks and Berkshire Bat group, (she brought one of her injured bats to Meadow Day) she will walk and talk us around the site on Monday 2nd September meet in car park at 7.30. Please wear sensible shoes and bring a torch. Then, in October there will be a tree and seed gathering walk, and in December a tree planting session. The regular Sunday morning conservation work parties meet on 1st Sunday of the month. Details on www.econetreading.org.uk



Meadow Day: field studies in progress

Meadow Day stalls: plenty to keep the visitor occupied



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Caversham WI

We welcomed Marlene Voke, the Berkshire WI Federation Chairman, to our July meeting. She is a wonderful lady who has not let life's obstacles get in the way of doing outstanding work in support of the women in the county. She told us all about her beginnings, how she found her confidence to say 'yes' to the many and varied opportunities the WI offered her, and how much she has enjoyed having an active (and crucial!) role in the WI. A complete inspiration!

In August, traditionally we do not hold a formal meeting, but instead three Members will be hosting parties in their gardens, where we will be raising money for the WI and other local charities.

Ladies are very welcome to visit our friendly group: your first three visits are free. We hold meetings on the third Thursday of the month, at 7.30pm, 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/hwzj6zy> or search for "Caversham WI". For enquiries please contact our Secretary, on 947 5176.

**Caversham and Chiltern
Flower Club**

The Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club monthly meeting is at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, RG4 7BG on Wednesday 10th September at 7.30pm. Robin White will be creating floral designs with the theme 'The Link is Green'. Come along and enjoy a relaxing evening at our friendly club; visitors warmly welcomed (£6.00 at the door.) For more information please email: julie.druce@yahoo.co.uk. Find us on Facebook and twitter and through our website: www.bbandoflowers.org.uk/clubs/caversham

Rosehill WI

Last month's sales table raised £20 and the raffle £30. Thank you to all who took part. A coffee morning held at Pat Butler's house in Buckingham Drive on 22nd June raised the princely sum of £210. This money will be used to purchase supplies for the RBH hospital packs and President Arlene thanked everyone for their support. Gill was also thanked for the 65 packs that she has currently produced. A group of members had a very interesting visit to Milestones Museum in Basingstoke on Tuesday 9th July. Our speaker, John Brearley gave a fascinating talk about the English Civil War in Reading. NFWI raffle tickets will be on sale during July, August and September at a cost of £1 each.

There is a visit to Kew Gardens on Thursday, 26th September and details of this can be found in the latest edition of BFWI News. Also in the newsletter are details of other

events including a Photographic Workshop which will take place at WI House on 27th September and a Craft Taster Day to be held at Mortimer Methodist Church Hall on 12th October.

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

**Caversham Heights
Townswomen's Guild**

Summer was a quiet time for Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild. Our local Federation of Townswomen's Guilds held a Tea Dance to celebrate the 90th birthday of the national foundation of the guilds. A good time was had by all, tripping the light fantastic, ably led by our guest dancers, and indulging in a delicious afternoon tea. The main club had a visit from the Reading Fire and Rescue Service, sadly very brief as the fireman had to rush off to attend an emergency. Another afternoon tea was held in the garden of Mrs Barbara Tyler and, again, much enjoyed.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 18th September at 2.45 pm. Mrs Pauline Beck's presentation will be 'Buttons and Beads'. Any ladies wishing to visit or join us will be most welcome. We meet in the Methodist Church Hall, 74 Highmoor Road, Caversham, RG4 7BG.

**Caversham Horticultural
Society**

Caversham Horticultural Society has two events this month. On Wednesday 4th September at 7.45pm Rosy Hardy of Hardy Plants will give a talk 'Hardy Perennials for Late Summer' at 7.45pm. A £3.00 entrance fee for non-members and with light refreshments available after the talk. The venue has to be confirmed but will probably be at Emmer Green Primary School. Check website for confirmation of venue: www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk. On Saturday 14th September the Annual Show will be held at Emmer Green Primary School between 2.00pm - 4.30pm. Entrance is free.

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The retirement of Jenny Dowding: an appreciation and reflection on her ministry in the Caversham Methodist Churches

Jenny Dowding, Minister of Caversham (Gosbrook Road) Methodist Church and Caversham Heights Methodist Church has recently retired, or 'sat down' in Methodist parlance. On Sunday 28th July Jenny led worship for the last time at Caversham Heights in a joyful celebration of her ten years with us, together with the Baptism of baby Erin whose parents Katherine and Peter she married three years ago. After worship there was a farewell lunch which was enjoyed by well over 100 people.

Just before a special celebration cake was shared by all, Jan and Brenda spoke about all that Jenny had achieved in Caversham over the last 10 years. Since Jenny came the two churches have worked together so supportively having joint stewards meetings, joint Church councils and because under Jenny's influence we get on so well – they decided to do a joint speech!

They believe that in so many ways Jenny has helped us all, in a quietly challenging way to make progress on our individual faith journeys and discipleship. Jenny has run some excellent courses from which many people have benefitted. 'Step Forward, The Disciple Course' which was long and intensive – but so worthwhile and so well led for so many weeks. More recently we have had the 'Bible Course' which gave us a good overview of the whole bible. In addition, Jenny has organised a number of Away Days, an Away weekend at Lindors and an unforgettable week on her favourite island of Iona. All these times/experiences have increased our fellowship together.

Then there is PMC ('Partnership for Missional Church') – the 3 years of training and experimenting and the ongoing journey. Jenny did not lead this, but it was her idea to get us involved in this programme, and her enthusiasm and guidance have helped the team no end as we seek to guide the church in the direction that God wants us to go. The Caversham Champions to End Loneliness was born out of PMC, and we are delighted to say that the Caversham Champions have been more successful than any other groups in the Reading area.

Over her 10 years Jenny has gently encouraged us to worship in a wide variety of ways – from our regular Sunday morning service, to a Tenebrae, a Passover meal and the unforgettable Silent Communion. In addition Jenny has led sessions on prayer and prayer labyrinths. All these have helped different people in different ways with understanding their faith and in appreciating varied ways of worshipping. She encouraged us to start holding a Pet Service each summer on the lawn outside. At the last one, we seemed to be overrun with dog collars – lots of the many dogs attending bringing along their owners also wearing collars! Jenny has also encouraged us to set up our Holiday at Home event. This an opportunity for those in our congregations, from our Stay-Awhile Luncheon Club and the local community who are no longer able to get away so easily on holiday, to come and enjoy lots of fun, friendship and great food all day.

As well as leading the Methodists – Jenny has been very involved in a number of CTC activities especially those aimed at children. She has been very involved with Holiday Club over the last few years: leading the worship for leaders each morning, working really well with the children and even enjoying the dubious pleasure of Wet Wednesday. She has been a member

of the REInspired Board, where her contributions were very much valued and also a regular volunteer working with the children in most of the Caversham schools. She will be really missed there and likewise at the Amersham Road Cooking Club where she has always played an active part in the monthly Sunday afternoon cooking sessions with the youngsters from the Amersham Road area. Members of the ARCC made a farewell party for Jenny who has had a long association with this project at the Weller Centre.

Our church members concluded the celebration by saying that it has been such a pleasure and privilege to have Jenny as our minister over the last ten years. She has always had a smile for us all and has always been ready to listen to everyone. She will be greatly missed and all wished her the very best for a happy retirement, blessings for the future and thanks for all she had done over the years.

Jenny was presented with a photo book from each church as a reminder of everyone she had worked with and a cheque to spend on her new home.



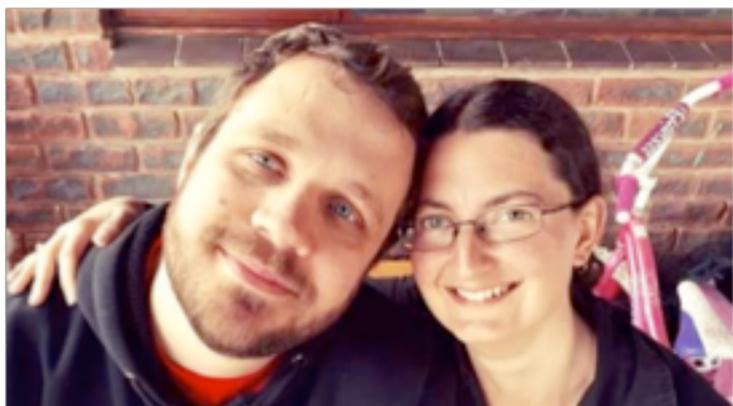
One of many gifts given to Jenny



Jenny with her retirement cake

Farewell and Welcome at Caversham Methodist Churches

For Caversham Heights and Gosbrook Road Methodist Churches August 2019 is a month of mixed feelings as we say goodbye to Rev. Jenny Dowding who has been our loving and hardworking Minister for the past 10 years. We wish Jenny every happiness as she retires. God Bless you Jenny. We publish on this page a reflection and appreciation of Jenny's work in our church community.



We welcome Rev. Martin and Nicole Beukes (pronounced 'Beercus')

We hope they will soon settle into a completely new environment and we look forward to their ministry and friendship.



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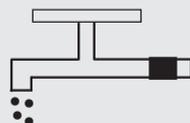
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