



A year in the life of Caversham: Caversham Bridge reflecting the Caversham community

When the majority of our readers receive this copy of the *Bridge* it will be just before Christmas Day or a few days after the New Year has broken. The remaining days of 2019 will deliver to us what they will. A new government (of whatever composition and colour) will follow the General Election result after Thursday December the 12th and will begin to set the various agendas for 2020. But for the time being let us look back over the columns of *Caversham Bridge* and review events and possible consequences and continuations into 2020. Looking at our page one stories with hindsight and perspective can both remind and stimulate thoughts and even suggest some pointers for the coming year. This has proven to be the year when we have been able to deliver 10 out of our 12 issues in a larger 16 page format: more stories, more pictures and a wider range of coverage. We have tried to combine successful regulars like the Reading and Caversham society reports, with a more even distribution of local news across 'our patch' as well as addressing themes of open space, housing and development, local transport, environmental issues (including Ecotips and Econet) and much wider coverage of schools and education. Neither have we neglected our local cultural and social groups, we have done what we can to advertise and promote events, and have continued to cover matters of historical and cultural importance. We have carried notable tributes and obituaries and wish to continue to celebrate 'Caversham People'. Sensitive to our historical publishing mission we continue to report on church activities and events as part of local community life as well as in the prime context of creeds, denominations, worship, charitable activity, social good and welfare. 'Talking Point' on page 2 provides a 'printed pulpit'.

In January we led on 'Caversham Post Office closure, and shopping and services in 'Caversham: changes and challenges'. Such was the force of the post office issue and the campaign by Matt Rodda MP that it was followed in February with 'Caversham means Caversham': a replacement Post Office must be located in Caversham centre, the proposal for a site in Caversham Road was not acceptable'. In March,

we reported on the 'Service for Christian Unity at Our Lady and St Anne church'. In April we congratulated ourselves on the 650th issue, and this included thanks to all our loyal readers over the last 55 years. In May on page one we focussed on 'Caversham and history: past, present and future', a theme we followed up as this has been a particularly significant year of great importance for Caversham. In June it was open spaces with 'Green spaces, Pavilion refurbishment and the Heights School: managing multiple community interests at the Mapledurham Playing Fields', issues over which there has been great controversy. In July we raised the campaign issue of 'Emmer Green under pressure from development and the work of KEG (Keep Emmer Green)'. A new Bishop of Reading, Bishop Olivia, featured on the cover of August's issue in the shape of



a substantial information release from the Diocese of Oxford. Absolutely right was the cover for September 'Around Europe in five days: CTC Children's 'Backpackers' Summer Holiday Club 2019'. The Club is an established and successful summer project for Caversham churches. In October we featured the 'Caversham Horticultural Society Annual Show', a reminder that gardening is a route to green-ness. The Diocese of Oxford provided the theme for November: 'Love your neighbour as yourself: a Christian response to Brexit'. This was a timely contribution and a practical statement showing how 'the number one

political issue facing the Nation' could be rationalized and civilised after three turbulent years of national debate. The December issue (the last for the calendar year) headlined 'Caversham remembers: William Marshal 'The Greatest Knight who ever lived''. This was a fitting way to mark the end of our annual cycle by looking back to and commemorating this very great Caversham person. We congratulate CADRA on managing the celebration and by achieving the installation of a display plaque on the Caversham Bridge as a permanent reminder of this 800th anniversary of the birth of this son of Caversham.

Looking back the editorial team can say that we have attempted a record of Caversham life over one year, and have added another stratum to the publication record of the *Bridge*. We can speculate about the balance of events in a 'social accounting' of Caversham. This is a useful metaphor for the Domesday survey was undertaken on the orders of William the Conqueror in 1086, only 72 years before the birth of William Marshal (who would have known all about the Domesday survey during his life as Crusader as well as being the Earl Marshal of England). So how does our community balance stand on the cusp of 2020? We can still claim and hope to continue being a diverse and welcoming community with a strong sense of 'place', social and community cohesion, with an awareness of the important claims of housing, transport, leisure, cultures and environment. This is a broad brush picture within which there is much detail and some degrees of contention. We did lose a Post Office; bus services exist but not as many buses run as most would like; we have added to the strain on GP services by two practice closures over two years. Housing development is still very much a concern for Emmer Green. On the plus side, the Heights School on the Mapledurham site is under construction and the Field is largely intact and having a makeover; the retail geography of Caversham centre seems to be holding together, and the Precinct does look better now after refurbishment. *CB* will continue to be a vigilant local reporter! So, keep supporting your paper, and together we look forward to whatever 2020 brings.

A Happy and Peaceful New Year to all our Readers

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All Reading Borough Libraries will be CLOSED 25th December - 1st January

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
Rev'd Andy Storch Tel: 07365 555 905

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 Andy Storch



Caversham Bridge provides a beautiful view, probably the best view of all the traffic jams in Reading. Let's face it, we know that view because we are always sitting in a queue of cars as we cross the bridge (at least going North)!

Is Brexit the 'Talking Point' for Caversham? Sitting at the top of the media agenda, no one dares predict whether or not we shall be leaving the EU come March 2020. The bridge supplies Brexit symbolism: Caversham is connected to Reading, as Britain is to the rest of Europe. Aren't connections good? Building bridges and crossing them benefits all. Historically only retreating armies destroy bridges.

But I suggest that though Brexit fills the news, it should not be the key 'Talking Point'. As Greta Thunberg says, we are sitting on an emergency. "How dare [we] look away" she challenges. Her summary gives us eight years left before we tip over the point of no return, and pass the 1.5 degree rise in global temperature. Starting with the poorest and the lowest lying lands, destruction will come. An Imperial College research paper recently explored in BBC's Panorama series, reveals that intellectual assent to climate change for many years has had little effect on our behaviour. Individuals can and must change their lifestyle whether or not there is international agreement. Three key suggestions are simply to eat half the amount of meat, fly half as often, and drive half as much.

Caversham Bridge is no traffic jam for cyclists or walkers: and the cycle paths on the pavement and beyond now make the crossing safe for bikes. Do you remember that survey 20 years ago, which exasperated Caversham residents by stopping every single car crossing Caversham Bridge (and Reading Bridge) to discover the destination of the car journey? Remember the traffic jam the survey caused then? It revealed that 80% of cars were for journeys of no more than 3 miles. For those who can, cycling 3 miles is often quicker than driving, and without parking complications at the destination.

God gave this planet to all of His creation, not just the humans. We were tasked with stewarding the planet. But our current behaviour has led the world to the brink of catastrophe. We all need to act. Cycling may not be for all, but we could reflect on where we as individuals and families can change to make a difference. It will help save the view from Caversham Bridge, and shorten that traffic queue!

Andy Storch is Curate in the Caversham Thameside Ministry

CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Are you a people person?

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

www.cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk
0118 948 3466

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

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
9.00am and 10.30am Sunday

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

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Caversham Bridge

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Email address is: editors@cavershambridge.org
Advertising copy for the February 2020 issue should be sent Friday 4th January. The date for the March 2020 issue Friday 1st February.
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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- Reading Borough Council adopts Local Plan
- Reading Golf Club to make planning application
- Local MP opposes Golf Club development plans

Reading Borough Council adopts Local Plan

The Reading Borough Local Plan was adopted at a meeting of Council on Monday 4th November 2019. The Local Plan sets out the planning policies to manage development in Reading up to 2036. It is now the main document for deciding planning applications in Reading, and replaces the previous development plan documents, the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Sites and Detailed Policies Document, which no longer apply. The October issue of the KEG Newsletter detailed what was in the Local Plan so far as it concerns Reading Golf Club land and it is now quite clear that any planning application by the Club to develop the whole of the land within the boundary of Reading will be outside the Local Plan framework. The Local Plan has been through a very comprehensive process and appraisal by an independent Government Inspector including a public hearing.

Reading Golf Club

Reading Golf Club has stated recently to their members that the Local Plan is not seen as a major obstacle to submitting a planning application for the whole of the Emmer Green site that is within the Reading Borough Council boundary - not just the 3.75 ha defined as defined by Policy CA1b in the Local Plan. Quite why this is the case when the ink on the Local Plan is barely dry is beyond comprehension.

What happens when the developers submit a planning application? KEG is of the opinion that any planning application which is outside the constraints of the Local Plan must be rejected immediately by the Council. Amongst a variety of other planned actions we will be taking a very firm stance on this in discussions with the Planning Office. Despite promises from the developers, the health and welfare of us all and our local environment are being threatened. The prospect of losing this valuable green space and recreational facility to hundreds of houses in the heart of Emmer Green is unthinkable.

Local MP Matt Rodda opposes Golf Club development plans

Matt Rodda MP has said he is strongly opposed to development on Reading Golf Club. He has asked local residents to help him demonstrate the strength of opinion against development by completing a survey he has sent out. He says: "Building a large housing estate could take several years and is likely to lead to severe disruption nearby, due to noise, lorry movements and loss of trees and wildlife". He adds that Reading council have "identified enough brownfield land for almost all the housing needed in the borough until 2035 and as a result I believe there is no need to develop the golf course" If you have not already done so, please complete and return the survey to Matt Rodda's office and let him know your views. Download the survey from the KEG website.

Our Mission

KEG is determined to keep up the fight against developers who profit at the expense of the local community and at the loss of the surrounding countryside KEG will continue to keep you informed on all local planning matters so do let us know if you have any questions or suggestions



Photo courtesy of Ian Morgan

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Caversham Through the Year

2020 Calendar

available mid November at Caversham Emporium (beside Warings Bakers)

ALL PROCEEDS TO THE YEMEN APPEAL

Les Cooper in the garden

It is a new year and just what should we be doing in the garden? How about suggesting... not a lot? At least not much outside but possibly quite a bit inside the house?

Perhaps you have already received a few seed catalogues and don't they do a good job of whetting your appetite. Enjoy yourself and browse through all the delights they offer. Dare I make the suggestion that when you make out your seed order you become a little bolder and go for something a bit different: for example why not try growing a couple of climbing plants. Personally I really like Chiltern Seeds whose catalogue lists thousands of types of seed for you to grow. So here are three suggestions for you to try.

'*Quamclit lobata*' a vigorous climber with twining stems reaching about 12 feet (but don't worry too much about height) which has a lot of slender hanging flowers that start crimson gradually turning to yellow. An inadequate description but you will love this little plant. It is allegedly a half-hardy perennial but I always grow it as annual because it's not difficult.

My next suggestion is '*Clematis tangutica*' / '*Radar Love*' it is easy to grow but worthwhile. With '*lovely yellow, pendulous lanterns followed by seed heads*' (the catalogue description) it flowered in August from a March sowing. It is a hardy perennial.



Lastly how about '*Asarina scandens*' / '*Snow white*' a lovely climber with beautiful, pure white bell shaped flowers. Possibly slower to come into flower than the other two but it produces a showy display. Sadly it is a half-hardy annual although the catalogue suggests it could be a greenhouse perennial.

Go on ...grow a climber up your tall fence you only need to fix some mesh for it to scramble up. I am sure you will enjoy looking at it during the summer.

If you want a catalogue here is the address: Chiltern Seeds, Crowmarsh Battle Barns, 114 Preston Crowmarsh, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX 10 6SL

Jack Frost



**Look out! Look out!
Jack Frost is about!**
**He's after our fingers and toes;
And all through the night,
The gay little sprite
Is working where nobody knows.
He'll climb each tree,
So nimble is he,
His silvery powder he'll shake;
To windows he'll creep
And while we're asleep,
Such wonderful pictures he'll make.
Across the grass
He'll merrily pass,
And change all its greenness to white;
Then home he will go
And laugh 'Ho, ho, ho,
What fun I have had in the night.'**
Cecily E. Pike

Reverse Santa at the Caversham Emporium



Jayne from the Caversham Emporium with Reverse Father Christmas.

At the Late Night shopping event on December 6th, this lovely old gentleman, a '*Reverse Father Christmas*' was at the Caversham Emporium shop to receive Christmas presents on behalf

of the children on the Lions Children's Ward at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. The response from the people of Caversham was wonderful and many toys were given. If you missed this opportunity, there is still more time to give presents in at the Caversham Emporium and the shop is open every day. Sadly Reverse Father Christmas will be too busy to come back again.

WHAT'S ON IN AND AROUND CAVERSHAM: JANUARY 2020

DATE	EVENT
5th	Farmers Market and Artisan Fair – Caversham precinct. 10.00am til 3.00pm.
7th	Alpha Course at Thames Tower, Station Rd Reading RG1 1LX. 7.30pm. Explore more about life, faith and meaning with Alpha. Enjoy food, a short talk and a discussion. 6 sessions. No pressure, no follow up and no charge.
9th	Storytime at Caversham Library for under 5's. 2.00pm – 2.30pm. Free. Need to book. (Also on 16th, 23rd and 30th Jan.)
19th	Farmers Market and Artisan Fair – Caversham Precinct. 10.00am til 3.00pm.
26th	All Day CSD Fitness Festival. Train with qualified instructors. 9.00am til 5.00pm. Queen Anne's School, 6, Henley Road. RG4 6DX.
29th	Abbey School 'Stay and Play' free activity session. 9.30am til 11.00am at Abbey Junior School RG2 7AH
30th	Quiz Night at Topsy Bean in Prospect Street. 8.00pm Teams of 6. £2 per person.

New Residents parking scheme – Lower Caversham

A new residents parking scheme came into force on 2nd December in parts of Lower Caversham. Streets including South View Avenue, St John's Road, Ardler Road and Washington Road now have a two hour limit on daytime parking. The scheme was introduced following informal and formal consultations, partly in response to the rise in commuter parking in the area.

It is clearly having an effect, as can be seen in this photo of South View Avenue in the following week! But one question will be, has the problem simply been displaced to nearby streets not subject to control?



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'The Heroes of Woodley Airfield': a report from the History of Reading Society

The subject of the November talk was *'The Heroes of Woodley Airfield'*. The speaker was Joy Pibworth, a member of the Society's committee and who lives in a house built on the site of the former airfield.

Today, the site of Woodley airfield has been absorbed by the relentless urban sprawl of Reading. The western half is now a trading estate; some of the surviving airfield buildings have been put to new uses there. The eastern half was acquired for residential development in 1979 by the house builder Briants. Many of the estate's road names are evocative of British aviation history: Comet Way; Hurricane Way and Spitfire Way to name but a few.

Woodley's earliest encounters with aviation occurred shortly before the First World War. In 1913, Henri Salmel, flying a Bleriot biplane, landed at Woodley Farm during his *Daily Mail* Tour of Britain. He gave local people rides in his aircraft; among them was Arthur Russell of Swallowfield Park. In 1914, a crowd gathered in the same field to observe pilot Gustav Wilhelm Hamel demonstrate a Morane-Saulnier aircraft; that year he went missing when flying across the English Channel.

In July 1928, with the growing interest in private aviation in Britain, a group of flying enthusiasts held a meeting at the Cork Street Garage in Reading: the outcome was the establishment of the Royal Counties Flying Club; its first chairman was Arthur Russell. Soon after, it changed its name to the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Flying Club. Now its members would need aircraft and an aerodrome.

In November 1928, the owners of the Reading Motor Exchange, Jack Phillips and Charles Powis, purchased 130 acres of arable land at Woodley Farm and established there an airfield. The Reading Aerodrome at Woodley opened at Easter 1929: it comprised

a clubhouse for members, several garages and a hangar. The core business for the new aerodrome was the training school for pilots and hosting air displays.

A significant event in the aerodrome's history occurred in June 1931 when the aircraft designer Frederick George Miles accompanied by his business partner and future wife, Maxine (Blossom) Freeman-Thomas, made their first visit to the aerodrome to deliver an aircraft.

In 1932, the couple were looking for a site to manufacture aircraft they had designed. Eventually, they chose to locate the factory at Woodley Aerodrome and would go into partnership with Charles Powis who by now had a controlling interest in the airfield. The business, originally known as the Miles Aeroplane Company, completed its first prototype aircraft, the Hawk, in 1933. By 1937, such was the company's reputation that the RAF placed an order for 500 of the company's pilot training aircraft, the Magister. Post-war, with the decline in military orders, in 1947, the company was declared bankrupt and it was acquired by Handley Page.

Among the famous aviators to appear at Woodley, perhaps the most memorable was Douglas Bader. In 1931, he was part of a visiting RAF aerobatics team when during a display he crashed his aircraft while attempting low-flying aerobatics. He was treated for his injuries at the Royal Berkshire Hospital; both his legs had to be amputated and he was fitted with prosthetic limbs.

Today, among the most tangible reminders of the area's aeronautical past is Land's End House, the home which Frederick and Blossom Miles had built for themselves in 1932. In 1993, on the site of the former aerodrome, the Berkshire Aviation Museum opened; among its exhibits are aircraft built at Woodley by the Miles Company.

For more information on the lecture programme see: www.historyofreadingsociety.org.uk



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Reports from the Caversham Heights Society for November 2019

The Caversham Heights Society held three events during November, two lectures and a theatre trip. On 6th November members were exposed to some history that most of us were ignorant about, namely 'the Contribution of Indian Soldiers during World War 1'. The speaker was Interpal Dhanjal, a Sikh who now speaks on behalf of 'Legacy for Valour' which seeks to set the record straight about the contribution that Indian soldiers, sailors and airmen have made to supporting British armed forces in various wars, especially the two World Wars, but also to the Boer War and the Afghan wars. The talk was informative, illuminating and mind blowing especially as very few members of the Society would have been aware of India's contribution to different war efforts

since it was never taught in school history lessons other than under the general topic of 'Commonwealth Soldiers'. That is until recently, since it is only during the past few years that any real research has been done on this topic.

Apparently on the outbreak of war in August 1914 the British Government immediately appealed to their colonies for help. The response from India was both swift and positive. An Indian Expeditionary Force was begun to be assembled on 6th August and the first elements of this landed at Marseilles on the 24th August. Thereafter, for the duration of the war, Indian forces were involved in Europe, East Africa, Suez, Gallipoli, Mesopotamia and south China. One sixth of Allied Forces were Indian. The Sikhs, who formed only 2% of India's population, accounted for 20% of the British Army. There were 1.5 million soldiers and half a million involved in support services such as doctors, nurses, medical surgeons, vets, technical staff, plus another 150,000 engineers, signallers, telegraph operators and mechanical engineers for army vehicles. In addition India provided jute for sandbags, and for processing into other items in the factories of Dundee, cotton for tent canvas, tea, coffee and sugar and other food supplies, medicines and stores, vehicles and locomotives and many other items that were essential for the war effort. The cost to the Indian Exchequer was £850 million, in today's money the equivalent of £85 billion. The human cost can be seen in the fact that there are 403 war cemeteries in 35 countries resulting from the First World War. For the Second World War there are 288 cemeteries in 50 countries. The social and economic impact on India itself was profound and the fact that Indians felt that their contribution to the war effort was never properly recognised helped fuel the demands for first dominion status and then for full independence. Many Society members were left with mixed feelings of guilt and humility, but with gratitude for the information that we had been given.

On the 20th November Ruth Leuillette, a Senior Sponsor for Network Rail, brought us down to more local matters when she talked about 'the rise and fall of the Cow Lane Bridges', though nearly half her talk was about the upgrade and redevelopment of Reading Station, of which Cow Lane was an integral, but later, part. From December 2011 to November 2019 the whole upgrade took 8 years to complete at a cost of £85million. Over the years those of us who live in Caversham will have spent considerable time, and frustration, waiting at the traffic lights at the Cow Lane bridges, so that the fact that there is now two way traffic through the new, and enlarged, bridges is a great relief. However it was not just the bottleneck at Cow Lane that was the problem; it was far more that Reading Station had become a major bottleneck itself and lacked capacity to allow more passenger, as well as freight trains, to pass through. With the expected growth in Reading's population the need for an enlarged station had become necessary.

Ruth's talk not only dwelt on the reasons for the upgrade, and for the need for five more platforms, but was equally concerned with the difficulties and complications surrounding the whole enterprise. Regarding the bridges these had to be renewed while trains were still using the lines. New signalling and tracks, to say nothing of major electrification of the system, were being installed at the same time. In addition 23 underground electric cables were identified and had to be traced and neutralised, a means of preventing flooding under the bridges by installing pumps had to be developed, and work had to be stopped to allow several Reading Festivals to happen. The most fascinating and novel part of the talk was seeing how the new bridges were built off site and then brought to Cow Lane and manoeuvred into place using amazing lorries, cranes and dozens of workers. 2000 cubic metres of concrete had to be laid and 500 tons of reinforced steel were needed to strengthen the bridges, all of which had to be in place by key times. Despite the disruption the great benefit of this upgrade is that passenger capacity has increased by 24% and a radical new timetable was launched at the beginning of December.

Enjoying a very different experience came on the 28th November when a coachload of 40 Society members went up to the Dominion Theatre in London to take trip down memory lane to see 'White Christmas'. This was a slick and highly professional performance which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Afterwards we all enjoyed a good pub meal. Before making our way back to Reading our driver took us to see some of London's Christmas lights. The final event of 2019 was the annual bring and share Christmas Party. This was held on 4th December and was preceded by a seasonal musical entertainment given by the Glass Ensemble.

Next term's programme begins on the 15th January with a talk on 'the life and work of William Hogarth.' New members are welcome. CHS Meetings are held on alternate Wednesday evenings in the church hall of Caversham Heights Methodist Church on Highmoor Road. Talks begin at 8pm after coffee and chat. Further information can be found at www.cavershamheights.org

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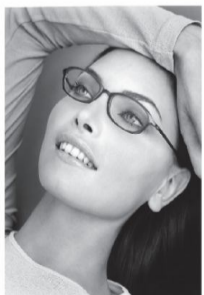
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ENVIRONMENT

Old Man's Beard

When I looked in the mirror this morning, combing what's left of my hair, I saw something that looked not dissimilar to the seed-heads of this plant, and decided it was time to write the January article for the *Caversham Bridge*.

Before doing so, I had recourse, as so often, to *'The Englishman's Flora'* by Geoffrey Grigson. My copy is falling to pieces through long use. He gives the old English names for wild flowers, and tells you in which counties the names were used. The Berkshire names for Old Man's Beard are Bedwine and Honesty. The 'wine' part of Bedwine must refer to the way the plant winds its way up trees and shrubs. In neighbouring counties it was called Bedwind – and also Maiden's Honesty, but no-one seems to have suggested why.

The plant just does not grow where I grew up, and it was not until I came to the sunny south that I got to know it. It especially likes chalk and limestone soils.

It is our only native species of wild Clematis, and has fairly insignificant flowers – in contrast to the cultivated ones I have had in the garden, with much larger, brightly coloured flowers – jackmanii, tangutica and 'Nelly Moser'. I also have less spectacular ones, flowering in early spring – cirrhosa, and the heavily scented armandii.

This wild Clematis doesn't have tendrils, but uses its tough leaf-stalks to scramble its way through trees and bushes towards the light, in hedgerows and on the edges of woods. It flowers rather late in the year – July to September – and the flowers are cream or greenish-white, and faintly scented. They are followed by the feathery white seed-heads which festoon the countryside and tend to last through the winter. I have read that dormice collect the 'beards' to line their nests.

John Gerarde, the 17th-century herbalist, wrote that it grew 'decking and adorning ways and hedges where people travel, and thereupon I have named it the Traveller's Joy... These plants have no use in physic'. The name, Traveller's Joy, has stuck, but apparently a use was found for the plant in folk medicine. Necklaces made of the stems, twisted together, were put round the necks of children who suffered from convulsions.

Other names refer to its climbing habit, and rope-like stems. As well as the Bedwine in Berkshire, it was called Climbers, Devil's Guts, and Hag Rope. Roy Vickery, the expert on plant folklore, records the use of the stems in making crab pots. They were flexible, and hard-wearing.

There are many references in the literature to the thin stems of the plant

being smoked – by poor people, who could not afford tobacco, and by children who were experimenting and copying their elders. The stalks are hollow. If you cut a length of stem, and set it alight at one end, it would draw well without bursting into flame, so you could smoke it like a cigar. The old names included Tom Bacca, Boy's Bacca, Gipsy's Bacca, Shepherd's Delight, Poor Man's Friend, Smokewood, and Whiffy Cane. One man reminisced: "It is worth mentioning that it has no hallucinatory properties however, indeed, all it does is to make you cough a lot"



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Highdown School - November 2019

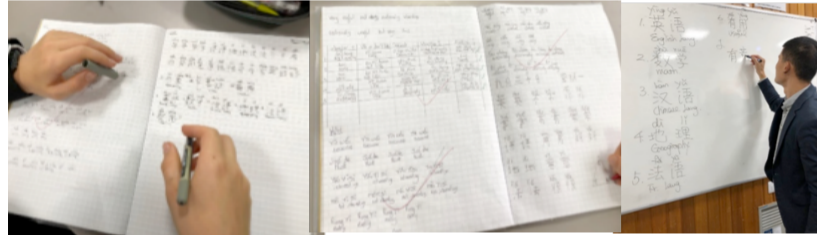
Magician at work

Year 8 Students were lucky enough to attend a session with Mr Davison. Mr Davison is not only a Maths teacher but a magician. He combined the two to give an impressive interactive show to the students.



Chinese lessons

During their Chinese lessons Year 9 students have been learning key vocabulary and developing their mastery of Chinese characters. Thank you to Mr Wu and to all our MFL teachers for their commitment to student success.



Textiles

A Year 9 textiles class worked in groups of nine to create textile prints, inspired by African art using found objects. This covered everything

from recycled materials, things found in nature, paint brushes and sponges, and their hands.

The students communicated their ideas with each other beautifully and made sure that not only did they all have something to work on but all their voices were heard.

These prints create a textile art around equality. The students will develop their printing skills further to create small bags to send to students at the school in Tanzania.



15 Hour Sports Challenge

Highdown students kick-started their half term with a 15-hour sporting challenge. 35 students all took part on Sunday 27 October to raise money for our school charity 'TourAid'. The day started before the sun had risen and at 6am students waited for the doors to open to begin a long and tiring day of sport. Many students were apprehensive about how the day would go and whether or not they had it in them to complete the 15 hours.

Students began with five hours of Volleyball. Here students were challenged to interact with other peers from all year groups. The main hall was set up with two courts and students played continuously between the hours of 6.00am-11.00am. In that time students bonded and used a wide range of skills to support one another. They were challenged to communicate, take lead, interact, and learn new skills in

order to achieve. They were cheered on and supported by Dr Capaldi, Ms Elliot, and Mr Sambrook.

At 11 am students then went out onto the Muga, joined and supported by Mr Norris and Miss Kitchingham to continue their challenge and here they played a series of mini tournaments, which included the sports of football, touch rugby and rounders. It was evident that students began to lack energy and tiredness started to kick in ... however our students continued to use their inner strength to support one another to push through their exhaustion and continue without stopping.

After 10 hours students had a well-earned pit stop and were pleased to see the pizzas arrive, donated by our local Domino's. This definitely put the smile and enthusiasm back into the game!

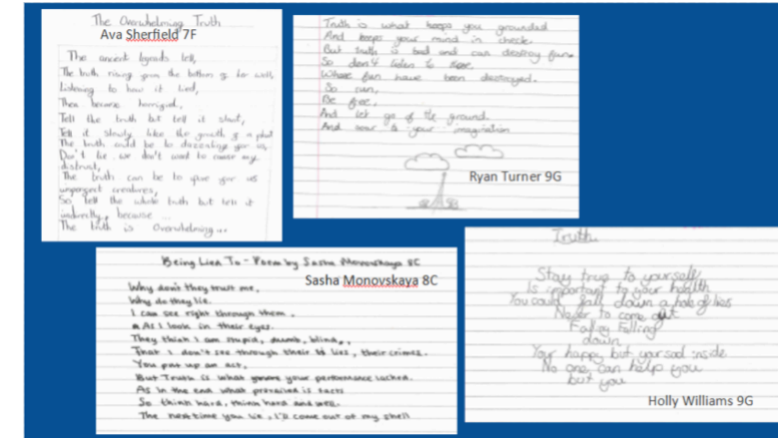
Finishing off the 15 hours, the last 5 hours were spent in the sports hall where students built their confidence in their new friendship groups and competed in dodgeball, bench ball and basketball. The day was filled with laughter, competitive spirit and determination. Thank you to Mr Sidhu who also showed his support and showed off his skills to the keen basketball players.

Miss Probert and Miss Maclachlan would like to take this opportunity to say a HUGE thank you to all those who supported this event. To the students for participating in such a gruelling 15-hour long challenge; their determination and commitment to the cause was just amazing! To the parents who supported by helping fundraise and watch some games, and to those staff members who offered a helping hand throughout the day. None of this would have been possible without you all. We finished the day celebrating with students and parents in the hall where tears of happiness and success were shared!

We raised an amazing total of £853.47 from this event

World Poetry Day Competition

To celebrate World Poetry day we ran a competition which was open to all KS3 students to write a poem based on this year's theme of 'truth



and lies.' We had a staggering amount of entries and we are pleased to announce the overall winners of each year group are:

Year 7 - Ava Sherfield 7F

Year 8 - Sasha Monovskaya 8C

Year 9 - Holly Williams & Ryan Turner 9G

Manuscripts were displayed for all to see. An honourable mention goes to the following students, who will also receive a P2 for their entry: Samuel Miskuf, Ellie Bloxham, Sara Varma, Alex Evans, Alice Nath, Irfan Idris, Lizzie Pohler, Lily Mayo, Erin Bonsall, Amelie Beard, Emily Taylor and Noah Lunnon.

Rotary Club 'Have Your Say' 2019 Competition

Highdown entered the annual Rotary Club 'Have Your Say' public speaking competition, with a record number of three teams this year.

Six Year 9 students (Daisy Rundle, Jenna Hawkes, Harriet Ranson, Clemmie Thorpe, Nikolas Argyropoulos and Panos Kotsiopoulos) battled it out on the public speaking stage against other local schools. Each team, consisting of a two students, had to present on a topic of their choice for a total of eight minutes. Highdown students spoke eloquently about issues such as ocean pollution and gender equality and Daisy Rundle (9K) was singled out by the judges for her passionate delivery. In an extremely talented field, Highdown students held their own and the judges were faced with a tremendous decision to pick the best team, as well as best speaker on the night. It is a testament to the quality of presentations this year that it took the judges 45 minutes to deliberate on the eventual winners from Bulmershe School, when only 25 minutes had been set aside in the programme notes for adjudication. Despite walking away trophyless, our students represented the school in extraordinary fashion and should be very proud of their achievement.

Maths Competition

On Thursday 20 November, four keen Highdown Mathematicians went head to head against 16 other teams from competing schools in the Senior Team Maths Challenge. A contest of doing a mix of difficult mathematics under the pressure of a time limit. They had a flying start in the first two rounds, dropping only three marks overall. The third round was a true test of grit and determination as our team had to work together to pass the answers to questions between each other in a quick fire relay. Overall, their efforts were rewarded as we came a fantastic 3rd place overall. A huge congratulations to Dylan Cook (11D), Thomas Currie (12C), Jawad Bakar (12D) and Sam Prior (12A).

North Reading Schools Partnership



Caversham Primary School

Headteacher: Ruth Perry

The summer term 2019 finished on a high with a welcome visit from Ofsted as part of their voluntary Pilot Inspection programme of schools. The two-day inspection in June was led by two Senior HMIs overseen in person by Amanda Spielman the Chief Inspector for schools.

A glorious September saw our Year 6 pupils heading off to Shropshire for a fun-packed week of orienteering, raft building, climbing, hill walking, canoeing, archery, problem solving, team building and much more.

Other events have included: a Cyber-safety workshop led by KPMG, the Junior music festival at The Hexagon, UNICEF World Children's Day to recognise our Rights Respecting Schools work, trips to Reading Museum, the Earth Trust, the Henley River and Rowing Museum and Bugs Bottom, various football festivals, Chinese Headteachers' visit, a Harvest Festival, a Macmillan Coffee morning and tours for prospective parents. It has been a busy Autumn Term!



Caversham Park Primary School

Headteacher: Gail Ray

It has been a busy time at Caversham Park Primary School recently with plenty of class visits and events. Our Year 5 Class visited the Victorian classroom at Reading Museum to find out more about life as a Victorian child: whilst our Year 6 Class visited Greys Court to learn more about life as an evacuee during the Second World War. In addition, Year 5 also took part in a celebration event at Reading Museum, where they presented information about Reading Abbey through song and dance and Year 3 visited Hill End Education Centre to learn more about life in Ancient Britain, where they spent the day making fires and stone age weapons. Meanwhile, next week our Year 4 Class go on a visit to Ufton Court to find out more about life in Anglo Saxon times. Finally, a group of our Year 6 children also took part in the Junior Music Festival at The Hexagon Theatre. It has certainly been a hands on term of learning.



Emmer Green Primary School

Headteacher: Tonia Crossman

Term 2 got off to a fantastic start for Year 5 whose trip to the Harry Potter Studios in London was spellbinding, magical and brought their creative writing to life.

The new School Council have been voted in. Their manifestos most impressed their classmates and they formed our new School Council. They have already organised a successful Children in Need Day which raised £505 and have been busy with the selling of poppies and Remembrance accessories.

A team of four Year 5 pupils were invited to take part in a Maths Challenge at The Oratory School. Our team worked brilliantly together with lots of discussions amongst themselves. Their fantastic teamwork paid off and after a well-earned lunch were awarded third place.

On Tuesday 19th November, a group of children from Years 5 and 6 took part in the Junior Music Festival at the Hexagon. The show was called 'All the King's Men' and was about the Civil war between the Royalists and the Roundheads in the seventeenth century. The children had been working really hard, attending morning rehearsals as well as rehearsing all afternoon on the day of the concert. They all performed brilliantly and it really was a great show!



The Hill Primary School

Headteacher: Natasha Crellin

It has been lovely to welcome the children back to school after a long summer break. Our Reception children have settled in beautifully and it feels like they have always been here. The Year 6 children have had a wonderful adventure to Osmington Bay. They have developed their resilience trying new activities and we are very proud to see how they have overcome over their time away. Year 3 have had a visit to the Roman Baths and enjoyed learning about Roman lifestyles. We have also enjoyed a wonderful Fireworks display put on by our dedicated and hard-working PTA.



Micklands Primary School

Headteacher: Mark Frost

This term at Micklands has been a musical affair! Our Year 4 children took part in the Junior Music Festival at the Hexagon and entertained the audience with their dramatic recount of the English Civil War. Their enthusiasm for the event was infectious and all of the parents and teachers in attendance thoroughly enjoyed their evening!

We now switch our attention to Christmas and the opportunities this gives us to show more of our creativity. Our Foundation Stage children a busy learning their lines and songs for their Nativity, while the Year 5 and 6 children are preparing for a carol concert at St. John The Baptist Church.

Our Year 6's are also looking forward to taking their singing to the community with their annual carol concert for the elderly.



Thameside Primary School

Headteacher: Sophie Greenaway

Last Year Thameside were pleased to run fortnightly Nature School sessions for all their Year 1 children. Whatever the weather the children walked to the river and took part in hour long sessions exploring the nature of their local area. With so much research showing how important time outside is for well-being, Thameside have prioritised learning outdoors. This has been proven by our recent Inside Out award celebrating how 'happy children learn better'. As well as learning about the environment and wildlife, children have

the opportunity to develop their oracy skills as they discuss what they see around them using high-level technical vocabulary. It has proven to be such a success that this year Thameside have extended the opportunity to Foundation Stage, year 1 and year 2 children. Children look forward to their Nature School sessions and it feeds back into their classroom learning. If you're lucky you might see us exploring down by the river!



Newbridge Nursery and Caversham Nursery

Executive Headteacher: Joanne Budge

We have had a busy term at our two nursery schools, welcoming and settling the many new children who have joined us since September.

The children have enjoyed watching the seasons change and exploring leaves, conkers, acorns etc. that they have collected when out in the local area. They have been looking at pumpkins and the seeds inside as well as building a bonfire and singing some songs around it.

Children in both schools have been busy making cakes and dressing up in order to raise money for Children in Need. Combined, the schools raised over £400.

Both Nursery schools were pleased when the DfE announced continued funding for Maintained Nursery Schools for a further year until July 2021. This allows the schools to continue working with the Local Authority to seek a longer term funding solution.



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Friends in high places! Witnessing the Canonisation of St John Henry Newman in Rome

Sitting in the golden early-morning Mediterranean sunlight, surrounded by some of the most magnificent architecture in the world, in temperatures that would soon soar to a very acceptable 28C might seem like something from a travel magazine but this was no ordinary holiday. This was a Pilgrimage to Rome to be part of the Canonisation of our very own John Henry Newman; an Englishman through and through, born in London in 1801 but living most of his life in Oxford, Littlemore and Birmingham where he died in 1890.



Newman's path to sainthood began, as it does for all of us, at his Baptism but was recognised formally by the Church when Pope Benedict visited Birmingham to beatify him in a rather damp Cofton Park in September 2010. I was there on that day and now it was time for his Canonisation. So, on Friday October 11th I set off from Heathrow with three other Trustees of the St Barnabas Society* to be part of the long awaited celebration.

The central part of the weekend was the Canonisation Mass celebrated by Pope Francis on the Sunday morning, set within Bernini's 'Arms of the Mother Church' of St Peter's Square. Having negotiated the airport style security we emerged from the cool colonnades into the brilliant white space and found our seats. The Square, which is not square at all, was decked out in all its finery ready for the occasion. Hanging from the balconies of St Peter's were the pictures of the four women and one man who were to be canonised at the beginning of the Mass. We had tickets for the Mass - though it is important to say that no money changed hands - and were in our places

soon after 7.00am enjoying something of a carnival atmosphere as we waited for the Mass to start at 10.15am. That said, as we approached the beginning of the Mass a hush descended on the crowd and the atmosphere became one of intense prayer. The Canonisation started with the sung Litany of the Saints and the proclamation of the five new Saints before moving to



the same Mass with the same words and the same readings as those being used throughout the world in all of the home parishes of the thousands of pilgrims with whom I shared this special occasion. There was a very special feeling of being part of something momentous - **with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven.**

After the Mass it was time to party! Many of our meals were eaten together in the Borgo Pio where it was impossible to go even a few steps without seeing others from home, friends we had not seen for years, friends we had not seen since the day before and friends we were about to meet for the first time. For we all shared a common purpose - to celebrate with pride one of us, a Saint from our land whom we

Continued on page 11

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Continued from page 10

Canonisation of St John Henry Newman

can now call upon. What it is to have friends in high places!

As if the celebration in St Peter's Square wasn't enough, on Monday morning we went to the Lateran Basilica – the Pope's Cathedral. This was a Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by Cardinal Vincent Nichols. At one point he asked us to pause and remember with thanksgiving all those who had brought us to this place. I am sure that I was not alone in thinking of so many members of my family, friends, faithful Priests, fellow pilgrims - living and departed, both in the Church of England and the Catholic Church, who taught me so much about the Faith the Newman held so dear.

**Firmly I believe and truly
God is Three and God is One;
And I next acknowledge duly
Manhood taken by the Son.**

Looking back on the Canonisation of St John Henry Newman: a celebratory presentation at Our Lady and St Anne RC Church

Our Lady and St Anne RC Church in Caversham provided the setting for a celebratory presentation on the life of St John Henry Newman (b. 1801; d. 1890) following his Canonisation in Rome. The event itself was witnessed and is reported in this issue of the *Caversham Bridge* by Clare Gough. Clare worships at Our Lady and St Anne and is also the Director of the Choir. Mgr Fr Patrick Daly, the Parish Priest at Our Lady and St Anne had offered to host the meeting on behalf of other Reading churches, and had invited fellow Priest, Mgr Fr Michael Sharkey, to address the group. Fr Michael is the Priest at St Michael's, Sonning Common, the nearest neighbour in the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The Cenacle was well filled with familiar parish faces but also with members of other congregations. In welcoming our guest speaker, Fr Patrick was able to highlight his longstanding academic, scholarly and theological interest in Newman, including a period in 1980 – 1982 when he was resident at the English College in Rome. At that time and in other moments in the City Fr Michael has been able to use the resources of the Vatican Library to pursue his studies of Newman.

Fr Michael's presentation took the opportunity to look a little more deeply into the earlier years of Newman's life. He was an undergraduate at Trinity College, Oxford and a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. He took Holy Orders in the Anglican Church: almost the normal employment for such graduates. Newman rose to be the Vicar of St Mary's, the University church, and from that standpoint he embarked on his personal journey of deepening faith, which would lead to his entry into the Roman Catholic Church in 1845. Deepening of faith led to deepening of thought and the widening of a critique of the Anglican Church and its theological and ecclesiastical perspectives. Newman

Saint John Henry Newman – Pray for us.

(Contributed by Clare Gough)

*The St Barnabas Society is a registered charity which operates in Great Britain and Ireland. It exists to provide pastoral and financial help on behalf of the whole Catholic community to former clergy and religious of other Christian denominations and other world faiths, who are resident in Great Britain and Ireland, and who have been led by faith and conscience into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

This icon showing Saint John Henry Newman and Blessed Dominic Barberi by Marcelo Lavallen was commissioned by the Society to celebrate the Canonisation.



developed into a prolific writer and challenged Anglican orthodoxy in a number of key works. Fr Michael guided us skilfully and engagingly through these Anglican years. It must also be said that Newman wrote widely on other topics in what nowadays would be called social policy and education. His writings are still widely regarded in academic and historical circles. Newman gained a reputation for determination and tenacity in his arguments and with critics. Once he had entered the Catholic Church he moved away from Oxford collegiate life to nearby Littlemore. In due course he moved to Birmingham and was associated with the foundation of the Oratory and with training for the priesthood.

In the less than the space of an hour we the listeners felt much better informed about Newman's life and could especially appreciate the wider context of his times and environment. The talk was followed by a thoughtful and inquiring Q & A session which could probably have run on a while. Fr Patrick directed our attention to refreshments, but not before giving a warm vote of thanks to our speaker. For those who attended the parish visit to the Beatification Mass at Cofton Park in 2010 presided over by Pope Benedict XVI, this local celebration provided a bridge to the past and a culmination to a year of anticipation. It may indeed be a while until another British Saint is canonised, but St John Henry Newman is not only an icon of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, but is one that can be shared across the British Christian communities at large. For more information, his biographer Ian Kerr is a major source. He has written extensively on Newman and is a first port of call for any reader who wishes to go further (*Ian Ker. John Henry Newman: a biography, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988 & 2009*).

(Contributed by Stephen A. Roberts)

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Churches Together in West Reading, Tilehurst & Southcote

Sunday 19th January 2020, 6.00pm at Emmanuel Methodist Church, Oxford Road, Reading. Preacher: Bishop Olivia. Music: The Band of Reading Central Salvation Army. Enquiries to: Revd Robert Bathram: revbar@yahoo.com

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Churches Together in Caversham & Churches Together in Reading

Wednesday 22nd January 2020, 7.30 pm at Reading Minster of St Mary the Virgin; Chain Street, Reading, RG1 2HX; Service of Prayer for Christian Unity Led by John Bell. Enquiries to Revd Dr James Mather: 0118 972 2551



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New name for group aiming to increase friendliness in North Reading

Just over 2 years ago 'Caversham Champions to End Loneliness' was formed following a work-shop in Caversham library. With the help of Reading Voluntary Action (RVA) the group has

become an independent community organization and is adopting a name that is easier and more accurate: Ctel (pronounced 'see-tell') North Reading. A revised logo is to be launched shortly and the revised email is ctelnorthreading@gmail.com

The Aim of the group is 'To make North Reading an inclusive community where no-one feels iso-lated, by providing support, information and encouragement to initiatives that lead towards that vision'.

So far, in attempting to make North Reading a friendlier place we have:

- Produced different Pledge Cards with ideas such as regularly phoning someone up, offering to go with someone to a new group and talking to someone you would not normally speak to.
- Made shopper bags with the message 'It may only take a smile' and with our contact details.
- Identified special tables in cafes with 1 or 2 Ctel members, inviting people to join them.

- Held a workshop to give advice and support about holding a street party.
- Made available up to date information about groups and activities that can be passed on to anyone contacting us with the backup of Reading Borough Council's Neighborhood Coordinator, the Reading Services Guide and the Readifriends Toolkit

How to hold a Street Party

Following a successful workshop last year we are hosting two more in January 2020 in conjunction with RVA on 'How to hold a Street Party'. These are free and will be held on Thursday 6th January at 6.00pm and Saturday 18th January at 2.30pm both in the upstairs room at the Griffin in Caversham. No booking required. This is an excellent opportunity to help defeat one of the most damaging issues of modern life today. Last year several street parties were held and people commented afterwards, "It makes the road so much more friendly", "It was lovely to see people I haven't seen for ages", and "I will say hello when I see my neighbours now!"

CLUBS

Rosehill WI

President Arlene Riley welcomed all members and guests present to our November meeting held on 6th November on a rather dismal late autumn afternoon. An article was placed in *BFWI News* thanking all those WIs who had donated the hospital packs, including a letter from

Rebecca Streeter. Once again, thanks to all who contributed. Groups met across the month offering varied activities. Subscription envelopes will be distributed at the December meeting for collection in February. New Committee members are needed next year and we were reminded to think about joining the Committee.

The November speaker was Toni Kent who spoke about 'Council House to Comic via Corporate' telling us about the changes in her life style. This was followed by a short talk by Bob Whelpton (the Chocolate Man) about the latest chocolates that he had available, and also very kindly gave us some samples to try. Thank you Bob, we always welcome your visits.

There will be no meeting in January. We meet at St Barnabas Church Hall in Emmer Green on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.30pm.

into the notorious Chamber of Horrors, never to forget what we saw there.

Believe it or not, today Tussauds has branches in Amsterdam, Beijing, Bangkok, Berlin, Blackpool, Sydney, Hong Kong, Las Vegas, San Francisco, Shanghai, Washington, New York, Orlando, Hollywood, Singapore, Vienna and New Delhi, making Madame Tussaud one of the most famous women in the world.

But who was she and what do we actually know about her? Chazey WI will be finding out the answers at our February meeting when Tony Weston will present his illustrated talk 'A Woman of Wax' at St Andrews Hall in Albert Road, Caversham Heights on Friday 7th February, at 2.30pm.

We have welcomed lots of new members to our friendly group in 2019 but you don't have to be a member to come to hear it - your first two visits are free. You can get in touch for more information and a copy of our upcoming programme for 2020-21 by emailing us at chazeywi@berkshirewi.co.uk or find us on Facebook.

Chazey WI

Madame Tussauds wax museum has long been one of London's major tourist attractions and many will remember school trips when we were led nervously

£3,500 raised for The Yemen Crisis Appeal

On 7th December at the St Peter's Christmas Market the magnificent sum of £3,500.00 was raised for The Yemen Crisis Appeal. Yemen is in the midst of the worst famine the world has seen this century (UN). War has cut off food supplies, power and healthcare and an estimated 24 million people are in need of aid. Tragically, 85,000 children have already died.

The Market was busy all morning with sales of wonderful crafts made by the St Peters Craft Group plus beautiful wreaths and table decorations. There were homemade Christmas cakes and puddings, biscuits, fudge, chutneys and jams which were quickly snapped

up. The Tombolas were popular for both adults and children and also Guess the Number of Sweets, Find the Treasure Chest, Guess the Panda's Name, the Buzzer game, Lucky Dip, Raffle and the

ever popular Hoopla! Copies of St Peters Christmas Quiz, the Choir CD's and Caversham through the Year Calendars sold well. Beautiful hand crafted Reindeer were also very popular and all enjoyed delicious refreshments in the Vanderstegen Chapel Cafe and hot mulled apple juice outside. A most enjoyable event. Well done St Peters!

The panda's name was 'Pom pom', guessed by Kay Perry for grandson Ellis.



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Caversham church receives Bronze Eco Church Award

The June issue of CB included an article on a new 'Eco Church' award scheme established by 'A Rocha UK' to encourage churches to consider the environmental impacts of all aspects of their activities.

Caversham Heights Methodist Church registered for the scheme in April 2019 and undertook a variety of projects to prepare their application for a Bronze Award. An ecologist undertook a survey of the church grounds and identified a number of opportunities for improvements to benefit nature. A 'Ground's Management Plan' has been adopted, which identifies

the steps needed to implement some of these suggestions. One change already made has been the introduction of a number of 'Bee and Bug hotels' around the grounds and a small pool for bees and other insects.

Other changes include a move to using more environmentally friendly cleaning products in the church premises and the introduction of a 'Hotbin' composter for kitchen and garden waste. A series of 'Eco Tips', originally written by a church member for its newsletter, are now being published in the *Caversham Bridge* each month.

In addition, Caversham Heights Pre-School, which uses the church premises, has established a new recycling scheme for materials which would otherwise end up in our dustbins. With the support of the church, a series of collection boxes, which are open to the public, have been installed. These provide a means of recycling toothpaste tubes, tooth brushes, food sachets, plastic bread bags and a number of other materials. For details see their Facebook Page, <https://m.facebook.com/>

story.php?story_fbid=382401319339230&id=293254164920613_

By the end of August the church was able to submit an application for a bronze level 'Eco Church Award' and the award was confirmed at the end of September. This is only the second such award in Reading (after St John and St Stephen in Orts Road, which has a Silver Award) and the first in Caversham. Preparations are now in hand to identify actions to progress to the Silver Award.

For updates on progress, see the church Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-Center/Caversham-Heights-Methodist-Church-1493711080933326/>

Information on the 'Eco-church' award scheme is available from A Rocha UK at www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk

If you are interested in being involved with the local churches' environmental network, please contact Phil Chatfield at pchatfield@waitrose.com



The bee hotels and pool



The Bronze Award

Using more environmentally friendly cleaning products in the church premises and the introduction of a 'Hotbin' composter for kitchen and garden waste. A series of 'Eco Tips', originally written by a church member for its newsletter, are now being published in the *Caversham Bridge* each month.

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Fighting fatbergs

The word "fatberg" was coined after the discovery of a 130 tonne blockage in the sewers of Whitechapel in 2017. They are caused by a build-up of wipes, fats, oils and grease in the sewers. Fatbergs have increased in frequency recently, causing around 300,000 sewer blockages each year, at a cost of around £100 million. In addition, they cause sewer flooding in thousands of homes and businesses and damage to the environment.

Sewers designed only for water, toilet paper and human waste are increasingly used as a rubbish bin. The sewer system simply cannot cope.

Small changes in our kitchen and bathroom habits could make a big difference.

Do not put any of the following down the kitchen sink: oil, margarine, butter, fat, cooking sauces and food.

Wipe pans with kitchen paper and dispose of this in your bin before washing them. Cooking oils and fats need to be left to cool and solidify before being disposed of in the bin. Larger volumes of cooking oil can be taken to your local civic amenity site for recycling into fuel.

Do not use the toilet as a disposal system – wet wipes and nappies are major causes of sewer blockages and should be disposed of in your dustbin.

For more information, see <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/be-water-smart/Bin-it>

(Contributed by Phil Chatfield. Based on information from The Environment magazine, September 2019 and Thames Water)

ROCKET ROLLS

the simplest party dish!

125gms Ricotta

2 tbsps Pesto

12 slices of Prosciutto

50gms Rocket leaves

Mix the ricotta with the pesto and season with salt and pepper. Cut the prosciutto slices in half widthways and spread the ricotta mix over them. Lay some ricotta leaves lengthways so that they poke out at each end. Roll each slice of ham up and place on a serving dish. Sprinkle with ground pepper. Cover with cling film and keep in the fridge for up to 2 hours until ready to use.

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'Reverse' Advent calendar (*'Giving – not receiving'*)

During Advent this year we are inviting people to participate individually in a 'reverse' Advent calendar (giving not receiving) by putting a food or household item into a box for each day during Advent (similar to Harvest festival giving). Tinned and dried foods, and things like tissues or toilet rolls are the best kinds of things: best to avoid Christmassy items, in this case. These boxes will be presented at the Carol services at Caversham Heights Methodist Church on 22nd December and on Christmas morning, and then taken to Readifood on Monday 30th December, when they reopen. Other Caversham churches also encourage Readifood collections over the period and beyond.



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HOMELESS

No family – scared Dark Street, sleeping in a shop doorway – If I am lucky – with muddied sleeping bag and maybe an old umbrella to keep off the rain.



Discarded food - hope it doesn't upset my stomach! – If it does where can I find an open toilet and somewhere to wash

Where do I go to get medical help?

Occasionally someone might give me a coin. But I have heard that people are advised not to give money as it could be used to purchase drugs – but that is a generalisation and hurts those of us who genuinely need it for food.

The occasional kind word wouldn't come amiss

The winter is the worst with cold biting wind, snow sometimes, frost and rain. I am always happier in the brighter days

Coffee morning at 'The Bite' Café at Emmer Green

For the past year, on a Thursday morning from 10.30 to 11.30

a member of the 'Champions' team set up a table with a small board inviting anyone who would like company and a chat to come and share the table. Initially just one or two people joined us but over the year the numbers have risen to 9 or more.

We would like to thank the staff of THE BITE for their help and willingness to allow us to use their premises

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News from St Anne's school

In the middle of November, Year Three went on an amazing trip to Butser Farm, where they tasted life for Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age man and undertook a variety of wonderful activities. Having gathered in a Stone Age hut, complete with camp fire and animal furs, the children learned first about daily life and the construction of houses for early man. This was followed by a fantastic opportunity to undertake some archaeology; the children dug for tools and dated their findings using knowledge of materials and designs.

Next followed a taste of prehistoric writing/drawing with chalk rock, slate and leaves. The afternoon brought fence-making by weaving sticks and jewellery-making with fine bronze wire. On a lighter note, on 15th November a Onesies Day was held throughout the school to raise money for the Children in Need appeal. Lots of fantastic outfits were worn and a wonderful amount of £146.45 was raised.

Report by Mrs Bernto, Head Teacher.

Photos by St Anne's school show



Bronze wire jewellery



Fence making



The archaeology session in progress



Some of the children in their Onesies

St Anne's School choir sings with Rivarate choir

Lola and Lizzie from Year 6 wrote the following account of their evening.

In the evening of Saturday 23rd November, the St Anne's School choir performed at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church with the Rivarate choir. Led by the incredible Mrs Asbury, we sang 'Doe a Deer' from the Sound of Music, 'Sing a Song in Unison' and 'Roller Ghoster'. Nearing the end of the concert, we joined with the adult choir to sing 'Sansa Croma', a playground song from Ghana. During the concert we especially liked hearing the solo violinist, the saxophonist and the performance of 'Maxwell's Silver Hammer'.

We are very lucky at St Anne's to have our indefatigable Music Teacher, Mrs Asbury, who shared with us her passion for Music.

Please join us for our Christmas Carol Service on Thursday 19th December at St Anne's Church.

We will also be joining Rivarate again for Carols in the Precinct on Saturday 14th December.

(Carol service is at 6.00pm and choirs meet at 10.00am in the precinct)

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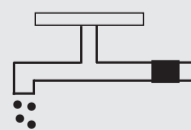
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