

# Caversham Bridge

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October 2020

## Services are back -in church and on the tennis court

THE CAVERSHAM BRIDGE is doing its bit to support local enterprises. For this edition, we have increased the size of the paper to 20 pages to allow space for an advertising supplement focussed on Caversham and Emmer Green artists and businesses.

Our aim is to provide low cost advertising space to help boost our local economy, and more than 30 individuals and traders took the chance to promote their work. Please have a look at the supplement (pages 8-11) and *Choose Caversham* for your purchases. Don't forget to say you are responding to an advert in the Caversham Bridge.



St Martin's Precinct, hosts several businesses

photo F Smith

Outdoor activities, such as tennis, seem to have flourished since the lockdown was eased, and coaches are now being kept busy after their earlier enforced inactivity. A new open-air swimming facility at Caversham Lakes proved popular over the summer – see page 6.

This month we have introduced a new feature by Caroline Gratrix which will put the spotlight on someone from our area each month. Caroline is using her photographic skills

to illustrate the articles and will ask a standard set of questions each time – see page 15.

Over the summer we have been able to start visiting museums, galleries and historic properties and many of us have done so. But the need to book some time in advance has meant there is no opportunity to be spontaneous. With limits on the numbers of people allowed in a gallery or room, visitors are being encouraged to keep moving, making the whole experience rather joyless.

The August Bank Holiday was strangely quiet in Caversham and Reading without the annual Rock Festival. Live music feels like a distant memory. This month *Happy Wanderer* reflects on folk festivals held in the area in the past – see page 7.

Last month we reported on the Scarecrow trail in Caversham Heights. Now a Halloween Trail is planned for our area. If you would like to participate with a Halloween Display at your home, you can sign up to an online map. Families can use the map to plot a route for Halloween Eve. Larger displays may be available a few days in advance of 31 October. Those participating agree not to knock on doors or hand out treats. This is a 'look don't touch' activity to keep us all Covid-safe. For more information see our web site, [www.cavershambridge.org](http://www.cavershambridge.org). Facebook users can ask to join the Halloween Trail Group [www.facebook.com/groups/240292050609180/?ref=share](https://www.facebook.com/groups/240292050609180/?ref=share).

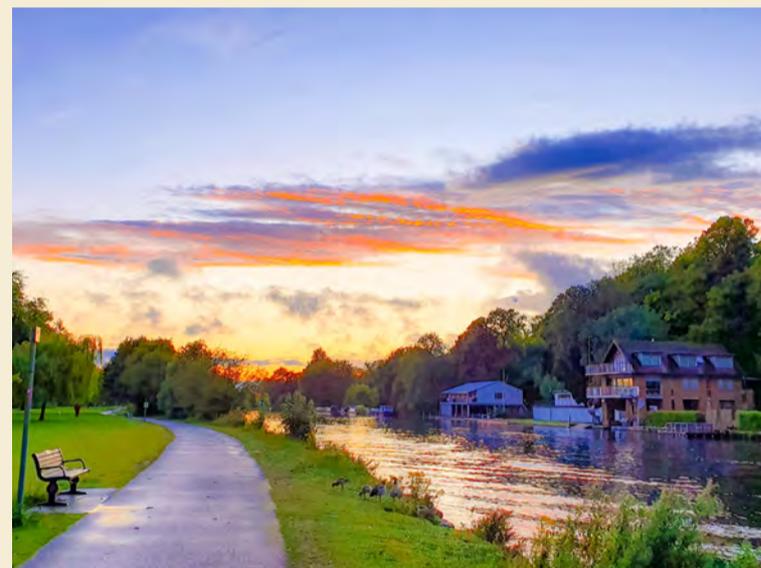
Our churches have been gradually opening up for services in the last month or so. Rules on social distancing, hand sanitising, and a ban on singing, make these gatherings very different to what we are used to. At Our Lady and St Anne's church, there are four well attended masses each week. But a lot of people are needed to steward the services and ensure compliance with the relevant rules. St Peter's church is now holding a spoken service on Sunday afternoons in the church, and St Andrews Church has a number of services scheduled. The Methodist Church in Caversham has been presenting its regular Zoom services from the church in Highmoor Road in

continued on page 3

## Summer shower sunset is a winner

by the Editors

WE ARE featuring some of the best entries in our Summer Photo Competition this month. We had a number of very good submissions, and one of our team commented, "They are all winners." The editorial team, along with Chris Walton from Walton's Jewellers, have each selected their three favourite entries. The winning entry was taken by Jerry Ainel Abeya on 25 July from close to Caversham Bridge; it shows the Thames, the Promenade and a colourful sunset.



Jerry was out for his regular evening run and took a couple of photographs which he sent to us. This one was taken from close to the Rivermead Leisure Complex after a heavy rain shower. It was taken with a mobile phone on 25 July. Jerry said, "I hope the entry will qualify. If not, I am just happy I participated. I usually take photographs of scenes along the way when I go for evening runs. These are just two of my favourites."

The judges certainly liked this one, and we thank Jerry for sharing it with us and our readers.

Photographs taken whilst out walking or running in Caversham and Emmer Green were a common thread in the entries. It seems we have been taking opportunities to explore our area in the period since lockdown began, and using our cameras and mobile phones to capture the best it has to offer.

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### INSIDE

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FOR MANY of us the past few months may have been very challenging. Some of us may have felt isolated and alone, others have been wearied by the pressures of work and children, all of us have had to adjust to a new way of life that for many has felt arid and joyless. For Christians, finding our churches closed and being unable to sing God's praises together has been a huge loss, a bit like being in exile. Even now, though some churches have reopened, the social distancing, masks, one-way systems and sanitising gel are reminders of the still-



Roses

photo P Cuthbert

present dangers of Covid-19, and of the closeness with one another that we have lost. It's tempting to wonder where God is in all of this – is he keeping his distance, too?

In our parish one of the questions we often ask one another, particularly at the start of team



## Talking Point by Penny Cuthbert

meetings, is, "Where have you noticed God?" We are encouraged to reflect over the past few days, and to think of times when we have noticed God at work in our community, or in and through the lives of people we have met.

For me, one such occasion was a lady who knocked at my door with a potted rose bush in her hand. "I was praying," she said, "And God put you on my heart. I don't know why, but I thought you might like this." I didn't know why either, but we had a good chat and I received the rose bush with gratitude. A few days later, after an emotionally challenging day, I noticed the rose was in bloom. And God whispered, "I know. I care. That's why I sent you roses."

Perhaps not everyone would attribute their acts of kindness to a prompt from God, but I do believe that he is at work in and through the acts of loving kindness that are expressed every day in our community. I also believe that, when we seek God's heart and ask him to show us the world through his eyes and to put on our hearts the things, or the people, that are on his, then we will find our hearts melting. And when someone needs reminding that God knows and cares about them, and understands what they are going through, we might even be the ones through whom he speaks.

Where have you noticed God?

Penny is Associate Vicar, St John the Baptist, Gosbrook Road

# Local clergy and church services

## ANGLICAN

### Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Ministry

St Peter, St Margaret, St John  
Rev'd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Rd  
Caversham RG4 7AD  
Tel: 947 9505 [rector@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:rector@ctmparish.org.uk)  
Rev'd John Dudley Tel: 947 0265  
Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810  
Rev'd Judith Ryder Tel: 947 3783  
Rev'd Andy Storch Tel: 07365 555 905

### Parish Office

Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX  
Tuesday and Friday 9.30 to 14.00  
Tel: 947 1703 e-mail [secretary@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ctmparish.org.uk)

### Current services

Sunday 09:30 – You Tube service - [www.youtube.com/channel/UCYMgve\\_d64enHsm1FUfwntA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYMgve_d64enHsm1FUfwntA)  
10:15 – Zoom service – <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84366839832?pwd=M2xJSUtFbGkycG1DbEFxQ1JGYWRsQT09>  
11:15 – Zoom service - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82793512985>  
Wednesday – 09:30 – Zoom morning Prayer - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/786384026>

### St Andrew

Rev'd Nigel Jones, St Andrew's Vicarage, Harrogate Road.  
Tel: 947 2788 [www.standrewscaversham.org](http://www.standrewscaversham.org)

### Current services

Sunday – 18.00 - Service on the 'St Andrew's Caversham' YouTube channel  
Tuesday – 20.00 - Compline service by Zoom. E-mail the vicar to join - [vicar@standrewscaversham.org](mailto:vicar@standrewscaversham.org)

### St Barnabas Emmer Green

Rev'd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.  
Tel: 947 8239. [www.saintbarnabas.org.uk](http://www.saintbarnabas.org.uk)

### Office

St Barnabas Centre, Emmer Green  
Tuesday and Thursday 8.30 – 10.30  
Tel: 947 6310

### Current services

Sunday 09.30 - Morning Service on St. Barnabas Facebook & Website  
Monday 14.00 - Busybees - for pre-school children and their carers on Youtube  
Details on their web site - [www.saintbarnabas.org.uk](http://www.saintbarnabas.org.uk)

### CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)

(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC)  
Contact: Dr Alison Johnston  
Tel: 0118 947 5152 [www.cavershamparkchurch.com](http://www.cavershamparkchurch.com)

### Current services

Sunday – 11.00 – Livestreaming on YouTube  
Details on their web site at: <https://cpvc.org.uk:5152/livestream>

### METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

Rev'd Martin Beukes, 72 Highmoor Rd.  
Tel: 0118 947 2223 <https://cavhmc.org.uk>  
Rev'd D Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

### Current services

Sunday – 10.30 – Zoom service  
E-mail the Minister for details [martin.beukes@methodist.org.uk](mailto:martin.beukes@methodist.org.uk)

### CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor: Colin Baker  
Church office Tel 0118 954 5353  
Email: [secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)

### Current services

A link is placed on their website each week at: [www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk) and on their YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/user/CavershamBaptist](http://www.youtube.com/user/CavershamBaptist)  
Live broadcast starts at 10.30am each Sunday

### GRACE CHURCH (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Pastor Keith Saynor  
Tel 9474529 [www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)  
**Current services**  
See their web site for details: [www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

### RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)

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

### NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Rev'd H R Gayle  
Tel: 946 3009 [www.ntcgreasing.org.uk](http://www.ntcgreasing.org.uk)

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

#### Our Lady and St Anne

Mgr Patrick Daly, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue.  
Tel: 947 1787 [www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

### Current services

See their web site for Father Patrick's weekly homilies and details of opening for services at: [www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

### St Michael Sonning Common

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

At the time of writing, church services are affected by the pandemic restrictions, disrupting normal worship. However, church communities have adapted to the circumstances and are alive and active in new ways.

Some churches have re-opened in a limited way. Most have a range of on-line services, house groups and social meetings, using web based systems like YouTube and Zoom. For current information, see individual web sites for each church on this page or on the Churches Together in Caversham website: [www.cavershamchurch.org](http://www.cavershamchurch.org).

The Caversham Bridge is a community newspaper produced by Caversham Christian News Ltd  
Company details will be found on page 19

### Future editions:

Contributions for the November 2020 issue should be submitted by 5 October and for the December edition by 2 November. These should be e-mailed to: [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)

Dates for advertising copy are 2 October for the November issue and 30 October for December. These should be e-mailed to [advertising@cavershambridge.org](mailto:advertising@cavershambridge.org)

## Do you have social media skills?

By Phil Chatfield

THE CAVERSHAM Bridge exists to serve our local community. We would like to make greater use of the internet and social media to help connect people in our area, but we need someone with the skills and a little time to help us.

We are looking for a volunteer who could spend a couple of hours a week updating and maintaining our web site and managing social media. Could that be you or someone you know? This is a chance to be involved with developing the Caversham Bridge for the future and an opportunity to practice and improve your skills in journalism and media.

If you are interested, contact me at [chair@cavershambridge.org](mailto:chair@cavershambridge.org) to find out more.

## Services are back

recent weeks and invited a small number of people who do not have internet access to a recent service. But compliance with social distancing rules means only around 25 people can be in the church. The Gosbrook Road Methodist Church has been re-arranged café style and there are plans for a large screen at the front to enable participation online. Other churches have decided to continue with their various online gatherings. See page 2 for further information.

Our schools have re-opened after the summer with many new precautions in place.

Things like musical instruments or books, which were shared in the past, are now allocated to a particular class. And a lot of time is spent washing hands!

Last month we included a reader survey with the paper seeking your views. So far we have had over 160 replies and we expect more in the next few weeks. Thank you if you have responded, and if not, please do take the time to give us your feedback. If you do not have a copy of the survey form, please let us know and we will deliver one to you. Contact us at [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)



View from St Peter's tower – competition entry

photo by N Smith

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## Caversham Bridge

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Email us at: [circulation@cavershambridge.org](mailto:circulation@cavershambridge.org) giving your name and address, or telephone 947 1370.

The annual subscription including delivery is £5.00. Alternatively copies of this paper can be purchased from: Caversham Emporium in Church Street and in Emmer Green at the True Food Community Co-Op in Grove Road, opposite St Barnabas church.

# Learn about Black History Month

by Rev Headley Gayle

BLACK History Month is an annual observance originating in the United States, where it is also known as African-American History Month.

It has received official recognition from governments in the United States and Canada, and more recently has been observed in Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. It began as a way of remembering important people and events in the history of the African diaspora.

It is celebrated in February in the United States and Canada, whereas in Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, it is observed in October.

As a continuation of the Churches Together in Caversham (CTC) conversation, 'Captured by God's vision for a multicultural church', which was featured in the Caversham Bridge last month, Black History Month will be celebrated on the 19 October 2020, an occasion in which CTC members are encouraged to join in the conversation.

New Testament Church of God will host the zoom CTC conversation, and the guest speaker will be Dr Joel Edward, who was General Director of the Evangelical Alliance from 1997 until 2009.

Prior to taking on this role, he was working as a probation officer alongside service as a NTCG church pastor, and General Secretary of the African and Caribbean Evangelical Alliance.

He was the International Director for Micah Challenge, and a Commissioner of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. He has presented on BBC's Radio 4 Thought for the Day, a feature of the Today Programme.

'The Zoom Conversation on 'Captured by God's vision for a multicultural church' will be available from 18:30 on 19 October - Zoom ID 97003464570, Passcode 014294. The meeting starts at 19:00.'

It is my hope that we will all learn something valuable, and gain a better understanding of the vastness and cultural diversity which make up God's Church.

## Milkshake Mentors



Enjoying our milkshakes

photo A Clarke

by Anna Clarke

LOCKDOWN and the ensuing months have been particularly challenging for young people. They now face a return to school where there will be new rules and restrictions. For those beginning secondary school and going into unfamiliar environments, it's going to be an even bigger change.

As Children and Families Worker at St John's Church in Caversham, I am looking to support young people through this time and am pursuing training in supporting youth through mental health issues. I want to spend focused time with those moving up to secondary school to give them the opportunity to share how they are feeling about the transition – both the worries and the excitements.

I approached *The Collective*, the café situated on Church Street in Caversham, to see whether they would be interested in partnering with the youth group to offer discounted drinks. Susie and Sam, founders of *The Collective*, were more than happy to be supporting our youth in this way and so Milkshake Mentors was born!

The idea is that we (the young people and youth leaders at St John's) will meet periodically for a milkshake and a chat. In doing this, I hope this church group will become a safe place where the young people feel able to share whatever is going on and to support and pray for one another. It's about sharing the highs and lows and journeying through those together. I find it's easier to chat things through with a drink in hand. So I'm very grateful to Sam and Susie for their willingness to support us in this.

If you're interested in finding out more about youth groups at St John's, to contact me at:

[anna@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:anna@ctmparish.org.uk)

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# IT'S ALL HAPPENING

## One way? No way!

THE ILL-FATED Westfield Road/Gosbrook Road one way traffic scheme was initiated at the end of August and caused significant traffic jams as motorists negotiated the changed priorities. By 2 September the signs, road marking and bollards had all been removed, and traffic had returned to normal. One problem which occurred was the disruption to bus routes, in particular the 800 diverting via the Upper Henley Road, leaving passengers heading for stops on Gosbrook Road a long way from their destination. The scheme was introduced as part of a Government initiative to encourage walking and cycling, but was unpopular with residents and drivers. Some ignored No Entry signs, causing more chaos.

For more on this, see:

<http://news.reading.gov.uk/caversham-one-way-systems-to-be-removed/>

## Walk our Victorian heritage



THE BELL TOWER Community Association is named after the tower at E P Collier School in Swansea Road. They organise annual Heritage Open Days - events exploring the area around the Caversham Road. This year the number of people who could attend the guided walks was limited due to Covid-19. However, they have created a virtual tour. You can watch their 20-minute documentary which follows the walk and explores some fascinating local history, scenes from the past, and the area's wealth of Victorian architectural features.

See <https://bell-tower.org.uk/news/> for a link to the programme.

## Development in Emmer Green

THE PROPOSED housing development on part of the Reading Golf Course land continues to make the news. Local MP Matt Rodda has had many responses to his survey on the subject, mostly expressing opposition. Campaign group Keep Emmer Green have maintained their efforts to encourage residents to object to the planning application for the site, with posters appearing on lamp posts and in windows.

The outline planning application for 260 houses and a Health Centre is under consideration by Reading Borough Council, and was open for consultation until 25 September. For details see their web site [http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb\\_PL/detail.asp?AltRef=200713&fbclid=IwAR13IWsx6FVLX4QcrbAvRJCruJlzTorYIAL\\_Y8u5SfEHYsYclyKI-oIBSQ](http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb_PL/detail.asp?AltRef=200713&fbclid=IwAR13IWsx6FVLX4QcrbAvRJCruJlzTorYIAL_Y8u5SfEHYsYclyKI-oIBSQ)

## Reduce plastic waste with RISC Refills

by Katherine Meehan

READING International Support Centre (RISC) is pleased to announce its newest venture—Global Refills—will be opening on 1 October. Our new zero-waste shop is a result of concern about the excess plastic being used during the Covid-19 crisis. Likewise, its impact on the live music scene, which left the Global Café unable to continue its usual schedule of folk, jazz, and open mics. We've been working steadily to repurpose the back of the café, using recycled materials where possible. We've sourced over one hundred varieties of bulk goods—pulses, pasta, household cleaning products, and more. We're especially excited to be stocking Fairtrade wines, including the first Lebanese Fairtrade wine. The Global Café will reopen alongside Global Refills, so don't worry – you'll still be able to get ethical hot chocolate, coffee, tea, toasties and cakes.

## You can help with Covid-19 research

CAN YOU spare a few minutes each day to do your bit for the fight against Covid-19?

By providing a short update on your health each day, even if you are well, using an on-line system, you can support the NHS and scientists in the UK. It takes about a minute to complete your health report. There are already over 4 million members of the public participating and helping to understand how the virus is transmitted. The data generated is shared daily with researchers at King's College London and the NHS. Their aim is to use the information gathered to help get out of lockdown safely and beat the disease.

The web site provides details of how you can sign up, and also produces detailed daily reports of infection rates across the UK. Join in now at <https://covid.joinzoe.com>

COVID Symptom Study

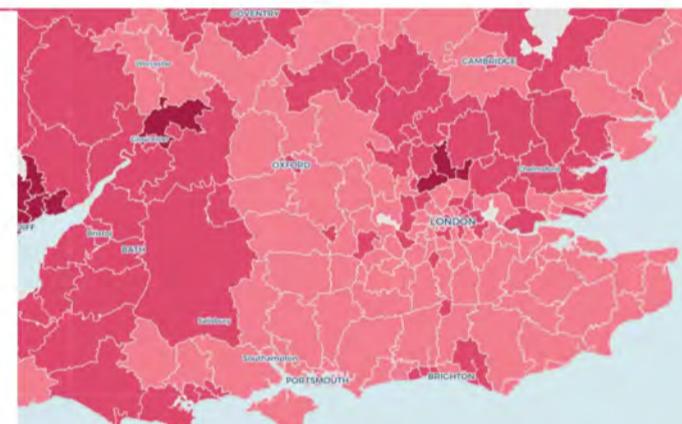
26,911

people are currently predicted to have symptomatic COVID in the UK

Estimated cases per million

- Not enough data
- 0 - 50 cases pm
- 50 - 100 cases pm
- 100 - 500 cases pm
- 500 - 1000 cases pm
- 1000 - 5000 cases pm

\*Aged 20-69  
Last update: 6 of September, 5:00am BST



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## WHAT'S ON

ALTHOUGH the effects of the coronavirus are still with us, there are a number of events planned for October in which we can take part. Our on-line events diaries are updated regularly, so it is worth checking to see what has been added at [cavershambridge.org:5154/local-info/whats-on](http://cavershambridge.org:5154/local-info/whats-on). If you have an event planned, please send us details.

**October is Black History Month** - see [www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk](http://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk) for more information. Churches Together in Caversham are planning an on-line event for the evening of 19 October organised by the New Testament Church of God. The guest speaker will be Dr Joel Edwards. Details to follow.

**Saturday 3 October** – *Reading Town Meal* – all day event in your own home  
[www.readingtowntownmeal.org.uk](http://www.readingtowntownmeal.org.uk)

**Sunday 4 October** – *Farmers Market and Artisan Fair* 10:00 – 15:00 Caversham precinct  
[www.facebook.com/CAFMarket](http://www.facebook.com/CAFMarket)

**Sunday 18 October** – *Farmers Market and Artisan Fair* 10:00 – 15:00 Caversham precinct  
[www.facebook.com/CAFMarket](http://www.facebook.com/CAFMarket)

**Tuesday 20 to Saturday 24** – *Traidcraft Sale – Fair Trade Products and more* – 9:00 – 18:00 each day  
97 South View Avenue, Garden Marquee [www.facebook.com/cavershamfairtrade](http://www.facebook.com/cavershamfairtrade)

## Celebrate local growers from the comfort of your home

by James Frost

DO YOU love food, enjoy spending time with family, and want to learn about how you can eat more sustainably? Then join in with Reading's annual celebration of locally grown and healthy food on Saturday 3 October. Let's enjoy the day together (albeit from our own households) with recipe cards, online workshops, Kahoot quizzes and much more. We even hope to broadcast live from Forbury Gardens on the day to help connect us all.

Sign up at <https://form.jotform.com/RTM2020/townmealregistration> to receive exclusive town meal inspired recipe cards delivered direct to your doorstep. There will also be a live cook-along to follow, and surplus fruit and vegetables will be made available from our stall in Forbury for you to collect, take home and add to your town meal inspired recipes.



Reading Town Meal 2019 photo EIT Food

Our online workshops will include: How to tackle food waste; sustainable food growing methods and climate change.

Sharon Fitton, Chair of Reading Town Meal Steering Group said, "While we can't all be together in person this year, our aim is for everyone

still to be able to join in and celebrate the local fresh produce of Reading. We can all join in by cooking a town meal inspired recipe from our own home and learn about how to lead a more sustainable lifestyle."

If you would like to help and support the running of this year's socially distanced town meal, please sign up to volunteer at:

<https://form.jotform.com/RTM2020/townmealregistration>. There are volunteer roles to suit everyone's skills, including donating fruit and vegetables, delivering recipe cards to households, and helping us to publicise the event.

For more information about the Reading Town Meal visit :

<http://www.readingtowntownmeal.org.uk/>, contact us on 0118 9586692 or visit our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/TownMeal> for the latest event announcements.

## Swim free

ONE consequence of the pandemic restrictions was the closure of swimming pools. Rivermead and The Lido have now reopened, although the restrictions in place to control infection mean they have a much reduced capacity and booking is essential.

Many keen swimmers have considered wild swimming in natural lakes and rivers. There are safety concerns with this. However, over the summer, Caversham Lakes Watersports opened up for open water swimming and stand-up paddle boarding on the lakes in Caversham, just off the Henley Road. The site offers plenty of parking, changing facilities, a café, and three well marked courses of between 400 and 1500 metres, as well as space for paddle boarding. It has become very popular over the summer, especially with families.

Swimmers are asked to wear a swim hat and either to wear a wet suit or have a tow float. Swimming without the confines of lanes and ropes, and the absence of any treatment chemicals, makes open water swimming quite a different experience.

For opening times and news of next summer, follow their web site at:

<https://cavershamopenwaterswim.co.uk>

Follow their Facebook page at:

[www.facebook.com/cavershamlakes](http://www.facebook.com/cavershamlakes)



On the beach photo Caversham Lakes Watersports

## Time for your flu jab?

BALMORE Park Surgery have advised their flu vaccination programme will be different this year. They are expecting a high demand, but need to maintain a COVID-secure environment.

They will hold clinics for different groups at different times. This will take account of vaccine delivery and government guidance, as well as protecting their patients, and they advise patients over 65 to check their web site for availability.

Vaccine for patients aged 18 and over, but under 65, in an at-risk category will not be received until October, meaning their first clinic for this group cannot be until 17 October, with a second planned for 24 October.

Patients under 18 in the at-risk category will be scheduled in due course and as soon as possible. Patients aged 50-64 who are not in one of the at-risk categories are being included in this year's programme but will not be invited until November/December, depending on the vaccine supply.

The surgery will send all patients a letter with details of the booking system. It will not be possible to book before receiving the letter as it will be needed in order to have the vaccination. Appointments cannot be booked in person at the surgery.

by Phil Chatfield based on information from the Balmore Park Surgery web site

[www.balmoreparksurgery.co.uk/news\\_archive](http://www.balmoreparksurgery.co.uk/news_archive)

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# A time to sing and dance

by Happy Wanderer

WHILST looking for something completely different, I came across this old programme, which brought back happy memories.

The festival was held annually, but only for a few years, and I would guess that this 2001 event was the last. The object was to give people a good time, and to collect money for various charities, some local and others national. The brochure states: 'We do not charge an admission fee to our Festival, but we do aim to raise money to benefit our supported charities...'

This 2001 festival seems particularly

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ambitious – maybe too ambitious. The main events were held on the 'wrong' side of the river, near the Rivermead Leisure Centre. There was a main marquee, and a children's marquee. There was a beer tent run by the West Berkshire Brewery, who had brewed a Festival Ale for the occasion. Salter Brothers ran boats up and down the river, with live music on board. The Riverside Bar (now called River Spice) welcomed performers and festival goers, as did the Three Men in a Boat Bar, which was a part of the Holiday Inn (now the Crowne Plaza Hotel).

In Caversham itself there were events in St Martin's Precinct, at the Crown Inn on the bridge, and at the Clifton Arms in Gosbrook Road where there was dancing on the car park. Ceilidhs and barn dances were held in St Anne's Hall in Washington Road. It was a real community effort and, with around 50 sessions over three days, it must have taken a great deal of organising.

**'...strange costumes and sword fighting...'**

In previous festivals I remember the Morris Dancers, with a hobby horse, on the car park of the Clifton Arms, and there was a visit from the Mummers, who performed the traditional play in the bar. This involved strange costumes and mock sword fighting between St George, the Slasher, and Prince Saladin, and the antics of the 'Doctor' who brings them back to life. The 'regulars' didn't know what to make of it.

One Caversham pub which did not open its doors in 2001 was The Millers Arms in Paddock Road, which must have closed a year or two before. I remember the day we moved to Caversham in 1984. Being always short of money, we 'moved' ourselves. It was the hardest day's work I've ever done. It involved, among other things, moving a very heavy cast iron 'Cannon' gas cooker, a tank of tropical fish, and a few thousand books. Halfway through, at lunch time, we went to The Millers and ate bread and sausages, which we enjoyed in the sunshine in the garden by the river. The bar room was oak-panelled, and had an electric organ, and there was a skittle alley by the side. It was a sad loss when it went.

I mention it here because for at least one of these festivals, the pub featured large in the programme. The main events were held in a marquee in the garden, and I recall the seating was bales of straw. Happy days!

## 2001 PROGRAMME

15th - 17th JUNE

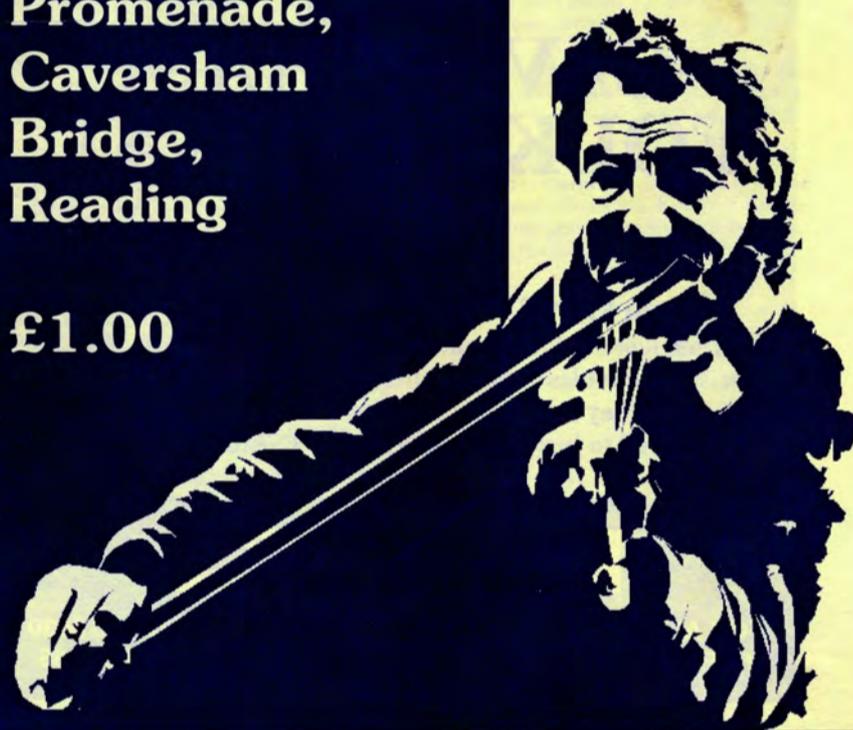
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## Wordsearch

Harvestime by C Moloney

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# All hands to the wheel

...bikes, bats, birds and bras - local traders battle to stay in business

OVER the last few months, many of us have turned to local shops and services to see us through the lockdown. We have told the stories of how some of these, like *Dudmans* the greengrocer, have adapted.

But for many small businesses, it has been a difficult time with no work coming in for months. Even essential service providers, like plumbers

by Phil Chatfield

and electricians, had almost no work in the early part of the year.

The Caversham Bridge is supporting small local businesses with this supplement, providing low cost advertisements to help them promote their services. We are also highlighting the work of local artists. Without the Caversham Arts Trail and similar events, it has been difficult for them to sell their works. Elestr Lee, who has written our Creative Caversham series of articles, provides more information in this supplement.

Some businesses have managed to adapt. For example, taking pilates classes online using Zoom, which is what Sue Hopcutt has done. For

unique bird and bat boxes. He now has a stall at Caversham Market and has set up an online ETSY shop. See his advert for details.

Restaurants, cafes and pubs have all experienced a very difficult time. Some adapted to provide take-away meals, but even some traditional 'take-aways' such as local fish and chip shops remained

*continued on page 11*

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AW Cycles, Henley Road photo F Smith

some, the nature of their services meant they could not work at all. Sandy, the bra fitter, had only just launched her business when Covid-19 restrictions hit. Others, such as sports therapist Stevie Oldfield and lymphatic massage expert Nicola Kenworthy, are now trying to rebuild their businesses with new practices to protect their clients and themselves from the virus.

Not all shops were closed through the lockdown. Essential supplies were maintained by small local stores in our community as well as our local cycle shop, *AW Cycles* and hardware stores. *Caversham Homecrafts* in Church Street, one of our local hardware stores, will be closed for a week in October, between 11 and 18, to allow the owner, Neil Asbury, to carry out a major refurbishment.

For some, lockdown left them with no work. Ian Rayney was concerned about where future business would come from and thought he was too old to retrain in any new skills. He found himself researching bird nesting boxes, as he wanted to build one for a robin in his garden. He could not find what he wanted and hence Bird and Bat Art was born in his garage, making



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# Looking for a little local inspiration...?

by Elestr Lee

CAVERSHAM and Emmer Green have a flourishing community of arts and crafts people. This has become obvious in the past ten years since the advent of the Caversham Arts Trails. Every year since 2010, local artists have opened their studios for the carefully planned trails, which people can walk or cycle round, to view the work on display, watch demonstrations – and catch up with other regular ‘Trailers’!

The artist who got the Caversham Arts Trail off the ground was Julie Simmonds, who teaches art



Nina and her painting 'Water meadow reflections, Dorchester' *photo P Chatfield*

part time in Moulsoford, Oxfordshire, as well as producing her own work.

“In 2009 I decided to do an ‘open studio’ because I wanted to meet other artists – and in the event, I met lots. In Whiteknights, the ‘studio trail’ has been going for 20 years now, so in 2010 I started the one in Caversham. It’s been going every year since then so this year we should have been celebrating our 10th anniversary. It was to have been big – normally we have between 30 and 40 artists featured but, this year, 47 had agreed to take part. So next year will have to be the big one!”

Julie is herself a ceramicist and print maker, and produces drawings, including a series of representational landscapes of Reading’s built environment, one of her latest projects. Other artists who normally take part in the Caversham Arts Trail includes Nina O’Connell, featured in the July edition of Caversham Bridge. Nina welcomes visitors to view her latest works – some landscapes, others abstract - that she has for sale. See her advert on this page for contact details, and you can book a visit to see for yourself.

Other artists in the area include Charles Burns, the silhouettist featured on page 12. Charles is offering a discount for our readers – see his advert on this page for details. Another local member of

both the Caversham Arts Trail and the Reading Guild of Artists, is Liz Real, who specialises in collage and printmaking.

So how have local artists been coping with the ongoing crisis? “I would say that for artists, they are quite upbeat. We have had more time to be creative, time to reflect, and time to try out new ideas, without any of the usual pressures to produce to deadlines,” says Julie. “We will have lots of exciting material for people to see and buy!”

So if you are contemplating buying something original, unusual, thought-provoking – and indeed, made locally – for yourself, or for a special birthday or Christmas gift, maybe find some inspiration here!

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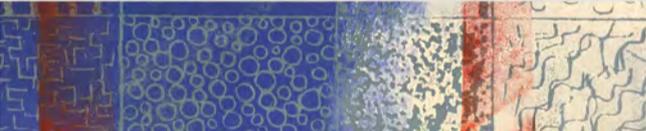
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2020 HAS been an incredibly hard year for most small businesses in Caversham. Many retailers were forced to close their doors for three months during lockdown, with those in the hospitality trade having to remain closed for even longer. But throughout that time, there was mutual support available via the Caversham Traders Association (CTA).

The CTA offers free membership to anyone with any type of business registered within Caversham and Emmer Green. In 'normal' times, face-to-face meetings are held once a month. Once lockdown happened, it was clear to us that such meetings were no longer viable. Yet we felt that the support the association could offer was probably more important than ever. So we set up a Zoom account and ran weekly meetings throughout lockdown. These meetings were very well attended, with members appreciating the chance to compare notes with other traders on how they were managing during such difficult times. We were also very grateful for the regular attendance of representatives from both Caversham Solicitors



by Jude Chapman

and Assets Accounting, who were able to answer traders' questions on legal and financial issues.

Caversham has such a wealth of small, independent businesses, and it has been inspiring to see them gradually re-open. It's hard to overstate the amount of planning, work and expense involved in making a business Covid-secure. Local traders have gone above and beyond to ensure the safety of their customers and staff. Chris Walton,

owner of Waltons Jewellers and Chairman of the CTA says, "Caversham is incredibly unusual in its diversity of small, independent businesses. It's easy to take these businesses for granted, but the truth is that they need the support of local residents to survive. So please visit your local stores; eat and drink in our fantastic bars, cafes and restaurants; use the hairdressing, beauty, health and professional services here. In fact, please *Choose Caversham!*"

Anyone living in Caversham and Emmer Green should consider following the *Choose Caversham* Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/Choosecaversham](http://www.facebook.com/Choosecaversham). This page is run by the CTA and aims to keep residents in touch with what's happening within the local business community – whether it be a new store opening, a special offer from a local business, or coverage of a local issue. For more details about *Choose Caversham*, see the advert on this page and their web site:

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Jude Chapman is the owner of dancewear store *Dancia International* and Vice Chair of the CTA.

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# All hands to the wheel cont.

continued from page 8

closed for weeks. Reopening restaurants has been a challenge, with new requirements for social distancing meaning fewer customers can be served. At least the government's 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme has encouraged people to return to our local restaurants, many of whom were very busy on the evenings the scheme operated. The next few months will be crucial to

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their longer term survival if they have to continue with reduced capacity. 'The Collective' coffee shop in Church Road had a particular challenge, as it was due to open as the pandemic struck, finally opening its doors in June. They benefited from their proximity to Caversham Court, with many people collecting coffee and cakes as they passed the shop on their way to the park.

Gary Dudman wrote in our June edition about the way his greengrocery business had adapted. He hoped newfound customers who were choosing to shop locally or have fruit and vegetables delivered, rather than buying in the supermarkets, would continue as customers for the foreseeable future.

As we move into our new world, where we learn to live with Covid-19, we have an opportunity to change for the better. Now is a good time to consider how you could increase your support for local enterprises like those advertising on these pages. And please remember to mention the Caversham Bridge if you are responding to any of these advertisements.

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## ENVIRONMENT

# Green Woodpecker bad news for ants - Yaffle has got his tongue out

by William Cecil

BIRD LIFE on the lawn is nowhere near as varied as it used to be. There are pigeons, crows, blackbirds and robins aplenty, but it is ages since I saw a wren or a dunnock.

So when I heard, then saw, my old friend the Yaffle I knew that for a while there would be a flash of colour and a cheerful chuckle to liven up the remains of the day.

Yaffle is the name many folk give to the green woodpecker because of its laughing cry. It is darkish green on the back, yellow-green below, and has a bright red cap. Males have a red moustache

outlined in black. Females have moustaches, too, but theirs are all black. Unlike the greater and lesser spotted woodpeckers, it is rarely heard drumming when in a tree.

So what is a woodpecker doing on the lawn? The answer



Green Woodpecker - BBC Springwatch 2016

photo Emma Shaw

is ants. Although it does eat other insects and even small reptiles, ants are its main diet. Ornithologists in Romania studied a pair of green woodpeckers who were bringing up 7 chicks. They estimated that, before the chicks left the nest, the parents had brought them nearly 1.5 million ants. For obvious reasons, Yaffles don't like heavy snow; one bird

was seen digging 85cm to reach an ant nest. The secret of the Yaffle's success in catching these huge numbers of ants is its extraordinary barbed tongue which can be up to 10cms long, and which it can stick out and wrap around to the back of its head.

Yaffles are easy to spot when they are in the air. They have an undulating flight with a short glide after

three or four wing beats. They dig holes in beech, willow, oak and aging fruit trees for their nests, and some holes are used for 10 or more years.

So, the ants may not agree, but I welcome back Yaffle.

## Plant Hedges for Wildlife and You

by Trish Marcouse

LOWLAND Britain was cleared of native woodland to create agricultural land. But much of the wildlife from the woods managed to live and travel within the hedgerows used to separate parcels of land. Surviving hedgerows still provide wildlife corridors through the countryside, and we can expect policies for reforestation Britain to pay for improved hedgerow management.

In towns, it is up to householders to make and maintain these corridors for wildlife. Can you help by planting or thickening up a hedge?

Gardens have boundaries that perform many different functions apart from defining ownership. They are often a wriggle-proof structure to keep toddlers and puppies in (or the neighbour's dog out). The standard wooden fence provides containment, but has a limited lifespan, creates barriers to wildlife and many have succumbed to high winds in recent years. Rather than replacing damaged fences with something similar, consider planting a hedge that will filter the winds and provide food and shelter for birds and other wildlife. This can be a beautifully clipped hedge of hornbeam, beech or yew providing a perfect backdrop to the border or a looser arrangement of different species giving nectar, fruit and seeds at different times of the year. A simple post and wire structure can define your boundary, whilst the hedge grows to final height, with wire netting if required.

Still prefer a boundary fence? That's fine, but could you grow a line of shrubs and evergreen climbers against it, and definitely provide a 13cm square hole at the base in a few places to let hedgehogs travel through your garden.

Would you like more information on selecting hedging stock, planting and maintaining hedges? Look at the 'tree list' at [www.readingcan.org.uk](http://www.readingcan.org.uk)



Native Hedge

photo F Smith

[readingcan.org.uk](http://readingcan.org.uk) or contact [nature@readingcan.org.uk](mailto:nature@readingcan.org.uk) for advice. The Royal Horticultural Society also has useful information at: [www.rhs.org.uk/plants/articles/misc/best-native-shrubs-for-hedging](http://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/articles/misc/best-native-shrubs-for-hedging)

Autumn is the perfect time to start. Most native hedge plants are supplied as bare rooted plants between November and March. Prepare the ground before planting, digging it over and removing perennial weeds to make a trench 30-40 cm wide. The depth depends on the root growth on your plants. Preferably plant two staggered rows 15-20 cm apart and leave 30 cm between plants in the row. Stick them in at 45 degrees, going uphill if you are on a slope, so that the new vertical shoots give a nice thick hedge at the base. Water in well and mulch with leaf mould, old grass clippings (new stuff will rot quickly and heat up), chopped bark or biodegradable mulch matting. Cut the hedge hard in the first two years to get a nice thick base, and from then on trim it early in winter after the berries/nuts have been consumed until it reaches the height and thickness required. Then trim back to the desired shape each year.



## Eat Locally and Seasonally

by Phil Chatfield

DURING lockdown, particularly initially with fears of food shortages, it was very tempting to buy whatever was available during our limited visits to the supermarket. But now, with restrictions easing, it's more important than ever to support local initiatives and growers. Could you consider what locally grown foods you could include in your diet/shopping list?

Remember, locally grown produce is picked at the peak of its ripeness (rather than being harvested too early in order to be shipped and distributed to your local supermarket). Produce at 'peak ripeness' will be full of flavour and taste better than produce that has been imported and travelled thousands of miles. By purchasing locally grown food, you are helping to maintain green and/or open space in your community, and investing in the local economy.

Taste for yourself the benefits of seasonal and local food!

Locally grown produce is available from a number of suppliers in the Caversham and Emmer Green area, including:

True Food Co-Op in Emmer Green [www.truefood.coop](http://www.truefood.coop)

GeoCafe in Church Street [www.geo-cafe.co.uk](http://www.geo-cafe.co.uk)

Greenbroom Farm at Crays Pond [www.greenbroom.co.uk](http://www.greenbroom.co.uk)

Caversham Market (see What's On Page 5) –

Waitrose Car Park [www.cafmarket.co.uk](http://www.cafmarket.co.uk)

Based on item from A Rocha UK September eNews

## Plastic in the Thames

THE PROBLEM of plastic pollution in our seas and on our beaches was highlighted by Sir David Attenborough in the Blue Planet television series. But this is not a remote problem – it starts much closer to home. Even our own rivers are affected, and the Thames has some of the highest levels of plastic pollution in the world.

**'...the Thames has some of the highest levels of plastic pollution...'**

Research by scientists at Royal Holloway College and the London Zoological Society has found micro plastic pollution in the River Thames exceeds the levels found in other European rivers. As well as finding plastic fragments in the water they were also found in Thames crabs.

The particles are thought to come from the breakup of larger plastic items, such as packaging and bottles, which are washed into the river. Fibres from clothes in washing machine waste water also add to the load.

Professor Dave Morritt from Royal Holloway College warned, "The increased use of single-use plastic items, and the inappropriate disposal of such items, including masks and gloves, along with plastic-containing cleaning products, during the current Covid-19 pandemic, may well exacerbate this problem."

The researchers are calling for stricter regulations on the labelling and disposal of plastic products. They are calling for people to think about the plastic they use and throw away, highlighting how we can each help to make a difference through the choices we make every day.

Based on information from the BBC web site [www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-53479635](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-53479635) and a paper published by the researchers

[www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969720335385?via%3Dihub](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969720335385?via%3Dihub)

## A little more recycling

by Trish Marcouse

HAVE YOU noticed new recycling messages on bread wrappers these days? Something like 'Recycle with bags at larger stores'. This refers to the containers at the entrance of some supermarkets for recycling plastic carrier bags. Take off the sticky plastic tape used to seal the bag, shake out the crumbs for the birds, and collect these wrappers to put into containers on your shopping expeditions. Please don't assume that every food bag is recyclable in the same way. Some are definitely of a different plastic and some aren't as clean as bread bags, but look out for this message on food packaging over the next few months.

Please don't abandon the various organisations that have been raising money for charities by collecting bread wrappers through the TerraCycle scheme. They are still collecting and need your support. In our area there is one collection site listed at Caversham Heights Pre-school, Caversham Heights Methodist Church, 74 Highmoor Road.

See the Terracycle web site at [www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/breadbag](http://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/breadbag)

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# Rose - rose I love you



by Les Cooper

WHAT HAVE you made of the great Corona Virus lockdown? With all this time on your hands, your garden must have been perfect. No? Sadly I must confess that, due to drought, my own garden was often not a pretty sight either. However, that does not mean the Cooper garden has been a failure; let

me explain.

Our small garden is divided into 'His' and 'Her' parts. The front and some of the back are managed by Eunice, my wife, and these parts have looked very good. Eunice likes roses and they have been particularly excellent. Like so many enthusiasts, Eunice is a David Austin Roses fan and she grows quite a lot of their old-fashioned type roses. One of the best was one she has grown for a number of years and is always unfailingly beautiful. It is rambler called *Mountain Snow*, with large white single flowers and golden anthers. I would be telling a fib if I told you we have treated it well. When the bush first arrived, I planted it in half of an old barrel, which we placed in shady area near a shed. Over time the barrel has become more decrepit and our pruning method brutal (ie we cut back the branches that are in the way). Forgivingly, it has responded with beautiful clusters of flowers amongst its dark green foliage.

Obviously there are scores of outstanding roses on the market, and I am sure everyone has their own favourite, but another winner for me is *Skylark*. A name that makes you think of summer and the lark ascending into the sky. But this is a semi-double rose with open cupped, deep pink flowers with a white centre. It has made a nice rounded bush and, according to the catalogue, has a nice fragrance, though my sense of smell is too pathetic to confirm that.

The last choice is *Jude the Obscure*. A great book and a great rose, but a lousy name for a magnificent beauty. This is a free flowering bushy rose with large, cup shaped soft creamy yellow flowers. Again, darn it, it is said to have a very strong fragrance.

Climate change is clearly with us - but roses may be able to cope. Who knows? But I certainly know the one essential - Eunice has ensured her roses have been well watered this year.



Rose Jude the Obscure

photo E Cooper



Rose Mountain Snow

photo E Cooper

## ENVIRONMENT

# Give us your support....

by Sandy Chamberlin

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For more information, or to order your own bra bank email [recycling@againstbreastcancer.org.uk](mailto:recycling@againstbreastcancer.org.uk) or go online at [againstbreastcancer.org.uk](http://againstbreastcancer.org.uk)

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LADIES, you can now give your used or surplus bras a new lease of life. The charity 'Against Breast Cancer' is collecting them as part of their fund-raising effort for research into secondary spread breast cancer. In the UK, 55,200 women a year are diagnosed with breast cancer - more than 150 a day. Secondary spread occurs when cancer cells from the original tumour spread to other parts of the body where they grow into new tumours.

The charity is funding research into new treatments, improved detection, and a better understanding of how lifestyle and diet can affect the risk of secondary spread.

By depositing your bras in a Bra Bank, you will also be helping small businesses across the African Continent to sell them at affordable prices. There are Banks in Emmer Green and Caversham. You need to contact the hosts to make an appointment to drop off donations.

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For more details see

[www.againstbreastcancer.org.uk/recycling/bra-recycling](http://www.againstbreastcancer.org.uk/recycling/bra-recycling)



by Jenny Gordon

## Then and now...in praise of our NHS

A FEW weeks ago I was suffering from a severe toothache. As it was during lockdown I knew I couldn't get an appointment with my dentist, so I went to the local pharmacy for advice. It was suggested that I apply gel round the painful area and also take strong painkillers. For a few days this helped to ease the pain, but it never really went away, so I began to panic.

What could I do, if dental treatment was unavailable? How long would it be before I could actually see my dentist?

In 1919 my father was nine years old. It was the time of the flu pandemic that killed so many. He was suffering with toothache and his mother called the doctor, who was so busy with flu patients that he was not able to attend until the next day. By the time the doctor did arrive, irreparable damage

had been done. An abscess had burst and severed the optic nerve. My father lost the sight of his eye permanently.

101 years later, I cannot imagine the pain he suffered. In those days there were no antibiotics and I don't know what treatment he would have received, if any. But it does make my own suffering pale into insignificance. Despite lockdown, I was able to contact my dentist, antibiotics were prescribed and the pain successfully eliminated.

How lucky we are to be living here and now.



# Community Connections



by Caroline Gratrix

WELCOME to my new feature, where each month we will get to know a Caversham resident a little better.

During lockdown, kind hearted local candle maker Ruth Martin suspended production of her candles to make hand creams for local NHS workers.

Ruth, along with neighbour and friend Antonia from Antonia Taylor PR, crowdfunded locally to raise the funds to make and donate an astonishing 700 bottles of hand cream. The recipients were NHS staff at The Royal Berks, Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice and Frimley Park Hospital.

### RUTH, tell us a bit about you?

I have a small business, Cucumber Wood Candles, named after a lovely local woodland. I hand pour every candle, and each one is made simply with soy wax and essential oils.

### How long have you lived in Caversham?

I moved to Caversham nearly 20 years ago, but didn't come far, as I have lived in Reading all my life!

### What's your favourite thing about Caversham?

I'd say my favourite part is the people! We live in the friendliest road and have a street party every year and, with 3 children myself, I've got to know so many locals through the schools and multitude of clubs that I ferry them to and the shops we go to.

### Caversham's best coffee shop?

I love our new café, *The Collective*. It looks so lovely on the corner of St Anne's Road, and has a great range of homewares and the chance to have a quality cuppa too!

### Where to eat in Caversham?

Oh gosh, what to choose?! For years we've gone to *Quattro's* and I think for service and great quality Italian food they have it just right, also a Lounge Breakfast at *Alto Lounge* can't be beaten!

### Where to shop in Caversham?

*Art Jam* and *Made by Tamalia* are lovely if you want to go somewhere to make and create, and I love the warm welcome you get with them. I couldn't live without *Cara!* Edd and the team are so friendly and they are so positive about Caversham.

### If you could bring anything to Caversham, what would it be?

Wouldn't it be great to have an independent cinema, I think that would go down so well here. Also it would be wonderful if we could have a little second hand book shop. Please!



Ruth Martin

photo C Gratrix



Ruth's Hand-cream for the NHS

photo C Gratrix



Ruth's Candles

photo C Gratrix

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With the cancellation of the Caversham Arts Trail for 2020, local artists have lost an important sales opportunity this year and need our support. For more about the Arts Trails and local artists, see page 9 of our special supplement in this edition.

This month we meet Charles Burns, a local artist with a worldwide audience.

# Life on the sharp edge

by Elestr Lee



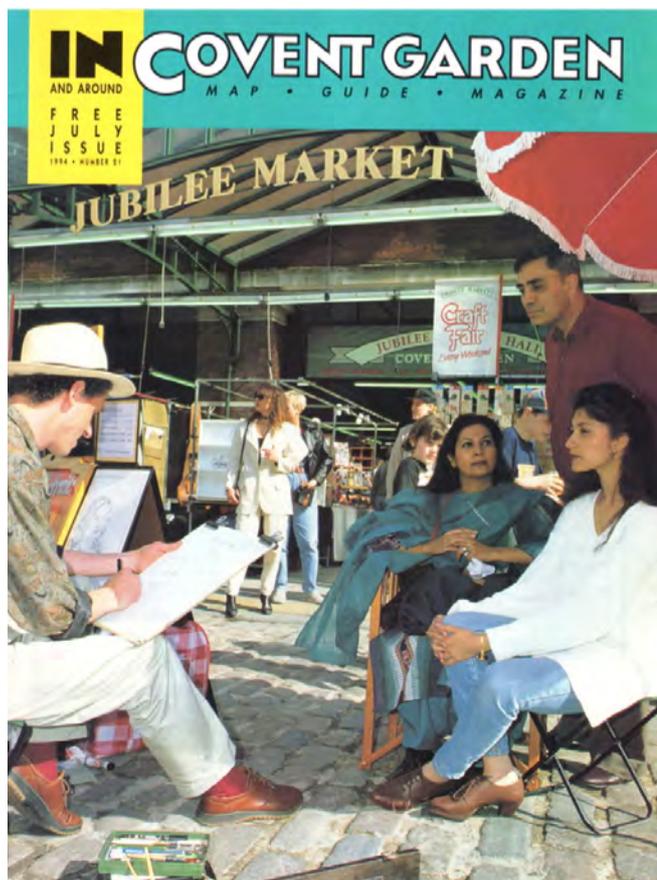
MOST artists build up a range of favoured 'tools of their trade' – but Emmer Green silhouettist, Charles Burns, lives by just one item – his surgical scissors. His latest pair has served him for 12 years so far - and he doesn't intend to hang up his scissors

just yet!

Charles studied Fine Art at Wolverhampton and, having moved to London, he managed to get a pitch at Jubilee Market, Covent Garden, where he produced ten minute pencil portraits. "The pitch fee was £50 per day, which doesn't sound much now, but this was the 80s! It was rare not to make this, especially in the summer holidays or coming up to Christmas. My pitch was where I earned my living, while my wife worked as a translator.

"I learned a lot. There is an art to selling stuff - you have to connect. At school I was very shy and introverted, so putting myself forward and engaging with people really taught me a lot.

"I started out as a portrait artist, but then I moved to doing silhouettes," Charles recalled. "As a street artist you are often approached by other artists who also want a pitch and I had to explain that Jubilee Market needed a range of skills, they would have to do something



Charles started out with a pitch in Covent Garden, doing 10 minute pencil portraits



Charles has moved his business online, and now anyone can book a session

different – why not try silhouettes? They would say, 'I can't do silhouettes!', so it occurred to me, can I?

"So I had to teach myself the skill, no one else was doing it. I had to adapt my drawing skills. I went to the National Portrait Gallery, which owns 30,000 examples



Guess who..? Even royals are thrilled with Charles' silhouettes!

by Hubert Leslie, who had been working during the 1920s. Previously silhouettists had passed on their skills to their sons, or an apprentice. By the 1980s there was only one silhouettist left and he was very elderly – the tradition had virtually died. So I had to teach myself."

Charles started doing silhouettes at his pitch in Covent Garden; then he started being approached by events planners who wanted him to entertain guests at weddings, corporate events and parties.

"In 1997 I gave up my pitch at Covent Garden and started to make my living from these events – mostly

within the UK, but also travelling to the Channel Islands, Europe and the Middle East. I have even been asked to create my silhouettes at charitable events associated with the Royal Family – and created a silhouette of the Queen at her 80th birthday party!"

Silhouettes first became very popular in the late 18th century. They were named after Etienne de Silhouette, a French Finance Minister who imposed severe austerity on the French during 1759 – 'silhouette' became the byword for cutting costs. But the profile portraits, which were quick to do, cheap and fun, also required real mastery and 'secrets of the trade', which were jealously guarded. The advent of photography during the Victorian era drove silhouettists to purchase cameras



Not just profiles of people...Charles will happily create an amazing pet portrait

instead. There was a brief resurgence of interest in the skill following World War 1, when Hubert Leslie plied his trade.

Due to the pandemic, events and parties have abruptly ended. But Charles has discovered that he has no need to pack his scissors away. Through the wonders of Skype and Zoom, he is just as able to create the perfect silhouette – he created mine (top left) within minutes at the close of this Skype interview!

"The interesting thing is that I am returning to being a street artist again, through my online street art website. People can book a time slot, so in ten minutes I can do two people – for example, someone with two children could have their portraits done.

"It's like my days back at Covent Garden – people book a slot and, once I have cut the portrait, I mount it on card, then post the finished work to the client. So while in recent years I have been booked to attend events, now I am available to the general public, and I am also available world-wide. I am very enthusiastic about being online and have put a lot of work into creating my website. My new website is truly global!

"I am also keen to become a virtual artist from an environmental point of view. When I work from my studio my carbon footprint is reduced. I can do my silhouettes using my surgical scissors and simply post them off without travelling all around the UK or flying half-way across the world."

To find out how you could have your silhouette cut out, see Charles' advert on page 9.

Photos by Charles Burns

# Photo Competition entries

Continued from page 1

We had two entries which tied for second place. One, taken by Louise Bedford featured narrow boats moored at Caversham Marina. Louise wrote 'Taken on 27 June 2020. A socially distanced walk to Caversham Marina after the wonderful Caversham Gossip Girls highlighted a new cafe that had opened there and were serving drinks outside. A fabulous walk and get away from the stresses of our Covid world.'

The other was taken by Debbie Baxter on an evening walk with a friend near Tanners Lane on 26 July.

The final photograph featured here was taken by Helen Lambert, Chair of the Caversham and District Residents Association, on 16 June during her daily lockdown exercise; it shows a path running through trees at Balmore Park in Caversham.

We thank all who submitted entries for this competition. Do keep taking photos and sending them to us, as our Autumn competition is now open, with a closing date of 1 November. Could you find inspiration as the seasons turn in Emmer Green and Caversham?

For full terms and conditions, go to [www.cavershambridge.org](http://www.cavershambridge.org)



Top left Balmore Park *photo H Lambert*

Above Evening Walk *photo D Baxter*

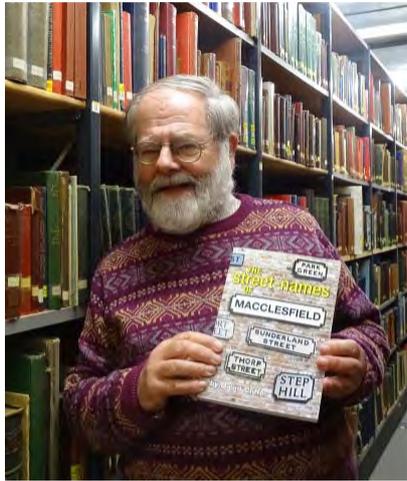
Top right Caversham Marina *photo L Bedford*

# Something New for Lockdown

compiled by Phil Chatfield

Last month we reported on some of the new and different things our readers had done in lockdown. Following this, we have received several more stories, featured here.

## Streets ahead - David



FROM BOYHOOD I've been interested in local history so, while there have been no local history meetings to go to, I've been finishing off a couple of books I've been wanting to get

published for many years. They needed a great deal of editing and re-arranging, and I was surprised at how much my literary style had changed since I started tinkering with them 50 years or so ago. One has gone to the printers, and now I have the proofs to check. They are about the town where I grew up and, having got that done, I'm now working on a book about Reading, for Two Rivers Press.

One of the nicest things I did was to edit and scan my father's old 35mm slides, put them on to USB sticks, and post them off to family members. I sent them off as a surprise, and people tell me they wept with a mixture of sadness and joy when they saw them.

And some longer pieces -

## The Sea:

The deepness, the vastness, the rawness that it holds,  
 The magic within ... is one to behold!  
 The life that it carries ... way down in the deep.  
 The beauty that continued ... even when one is asleep.  
 It has such a calmness, beyond all compare.  
 The ripples gentle ... the salt in the air.  
 It has such a violence, that cuts like a knife,  
 It tosses and turns you ... can even take life!  
 And yet, such a beauty, one can't help but share,  
 Beyond the horizon ... to way way out there.  
 And yet you still question, well what can this be?  
 One of God's wonders ... of course it is the sea!!

Sam enjoys writing them but has never had the time to collect them together or consider what to do with them. Lockdown has finally given her the space to revisit them and realise just how many she has written over the years.

## The write time – Sam

SAM, WHO lives in Emmer Green, has written poetry for years. Sometimes just a few verses written for a special occasion -

## Birthday:

A little bird told me it's your birthday today,  
 A time to celebrate, in every way.  
 But more important, in the year to come,  
 I hope you're blessed richly ... oh yeah, and have loads of fun!!

## A funny thing happened - Jenny

THE FRONT page of our June edition featured a cartoon seen in Highmoor Road during lockdown. At the time we were not able to credit the artist, but we have now tracked her down. Jenny Fogarty has lived in the road for more than 20 years and trained in graphic design. In her work, she uses her creative talent to help businesses improve their communications. As the pandemic constraints took hold, she wanted

to celebrate the efforts of the workers who were maintaining our essential services. She drew a series of colourful cartoons featuring the binmen and left them with her bins on collection days. They now brighten up the cabs of local dust carts. Jenny has agreed to allow the Caversham Bridge to feature some of her cartoons in future months. So now, with the artist's permission...



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# Spooky rhymes and racing cars

by Hazel Bingham

HERE AT the Weller Centre we saw many of our users and hirers returning during September and also welcomed in some new ones. We were very excited to see them and catch up on months of silence even if we couldn't share a cuppa. We can't quite believe how the babies have grown and changed during lockdown, and many of them are little people now! We also watched the young people go off on their first day at secondary school – most of them were just starting primary when I moved here!

September saw registration for our first ever darts, pool and air hockey championship which began 5 October. It's open to young people ages 11-14 who would usually have attended the youth club we run here. However, as this isn't possible now, we created a competition which we hope can become an annual event and even extend to other age ranges.

The month has flown by as we've been so busy, which has been great. Looking ahead to October, we have a well-earned half term packed full of activities for our young

people. Every day will start with breakfast (as every good day should), and we will offer a range of food for primary aged children to sit and enjoy here in the centre. (Take away available to all). Following breakfast, there will be craft activities and, weather permitting, some sensory circuits/sport activities for them to enjoy. Our second session of the day will be more hands on. We hope to produce 2 blankets for the centre with art work created by the under 5's and the over 5's, and race cars that our young people can build and race. We also aim to create a community silhouette and invite people to our spooky rhyme time. Our days will finish with a take-away lunch box available for anyone of school age. Keep your eyes open across the estate for pumpkin and spider CDs as these can be brought to the centre for a prize. For more information on which days the activities will be running, plus the times, please call the centre 01189475828, visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/wellercentre](http://www.facebook.com/wellercentre) or the website [www.wellercentre.org.uk](http://www.wellercentre.org.uk)

We offer the activities free of charge. Priority will be given to those on the Amersham Road Estate. However, we do welcome the rest of Caversham. Spaces are limited so please sign up early.

## MakeAbility back on the case!

By Kimble at Remap

REMAP Berkshire is once again able to design and make free bespoke gadgets and equipment for anyone in Caversham with a disability or special need where nothing suitable is otherwise available commercially. Remap Berkshire is a branch of Remap, a national charity founded in 1964 to provide free, custom-made disability equipment.

Their service has now re-started after pausing during the lockdown. Remap's MakeAbility volunteer engineers are back at work, whilst adhering to strict Covid guidelines.

Amongst the projects they completed before lockdown were:

- A retractable wheelchair ramp to allow access from the pavement into a house
- A moveable rope gangplank-handrail for a stroke victim living on a narrowboat
- A retractable bracket for a wheelchair controller

- A standard bath seat adapted to fit a narrow bath
- Plus several of their ever-useful long-reach window openers and security-bottle-top openers

Remap make no charge for their services, and there are no tedious forms to fill in, thus minimising the load for users, referring professionals or charities.

**'...Remap make no charge for their services...'**

One recently completed job by Remap Berkshire featured an ingenious moving recliner-style seat and supporting frame. This allows a young person with cerebral palsy to take a shower without his carers risking serious back injury lifting him in and out. Standard hoists were unsuitable for the bathroom. Remap Berkshire MakeAbility volunteer engineer, Andrew Roberts from Wokingham, designed and built the gadget. He adapted some ready-made components and created others from scratch, working closely with the client's family and occupational

therapist over many months.

A BBC news item featuring Remap Berkshire can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H8tmxYSeHPE>.

You can contact Remap Berkshire's MakeAbility service directly via email at [Berks.CaseOfficer@remapgroups.org.uk](mailto:Berks.CaseOfficer@remapgroups.org.uk) or by telephoning 07790 127123

For further information please visit [www.berkshire.remap.org.uk](http://www.berkshire.remap.org.uk)



Shower seat photo Remap Berkshire

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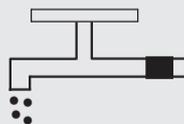
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