

Caversham Bridge

No 676

www.cavershambridge.org

June 2021

USE THEM OR LOSE THEM

by Phil Chatfield

THIS month the Caversham Bridge is doing its bit to help local businesses recover from the impact of three consecutive lockdowns, so our theme is 'Think Local, Shop Local'. In addition to our regular advertisers, we have a four-page supplement in which we have offered low-cost advertising to local enterprises. Artists, service providers and others have taken advantage of the offer – please take a look and 'Choose Caversham' for your purchases, not forgetting to mention the Caversham Bridge!

There have been several changes in retail provisions in Emmer Green and Caversham in recent months. Gary Dudman reports a decline in home deliveries of fruit and vegetables as restrictions have been lifted, but many new customers have continued to make use of their service. A new writer for the paper, Jean Harper, has provided an article on the Caversham Market, now held weekly (p 12). Jean has also been involved in setting up a local craft market, to be held in the hall at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church (advert p 11). The True Food Co-Op has had a change in layout, making better use of the space and improving access for customers (advert

p 12). The Frangipani shop is moving to new premises in Caversham shortly, and local artist Liz Real is hosting a regular 'Art in the Arbour' sale in her Longhurst Close front garden every first Wednesday of the month (see her facebook page @lizrealart for details).

We have extended the 'Shop Local' theme to include Reading's only remaining department store, John Lewis. On this page, Rowena Waddington, a retired partner, reflects on the enduring presence of the company in our town. The move to online shopping has seen other department stores close down so, in the long run, it may be a case of use it or lose it!

Our paper is produced monthly, so it can be difficult to be topical. However, I thought the bluebell wood photograph sent in by reader Antony Gordon deserved to be included this month, as a reminder of the beautiful countryside which surrounds us. We hope you enjoy this edition of the Caversham Bridge and



Bluebells, Page's Shaw woods, Chazey Heath, 2 May

photo A Gordon

would welcome your input, either as feedback, photographs or contributions such as the reader's poem from Nicola Dominic (p 19).

Contact us at editors@cavershambridge.org

Let's Meet Outside John Lewis

by Rowena Waddington



John Lewis Reading

photo R Waddington

YOU'LL OFTEN see someone waiting outside Reading's foremost department store in the town centre, and, for many Caversham residents, this historic rendezvous is as little as a twenty minute walk away.

You know, there's nothing quite like seeing a product 'in-the-flesh', feeling the texture of a fabric, trying on an item of clothing, and being able to ask for advice from knowledgeable Partners in every department. So thank goodness we still have John Lewis (or John Lewis & Partners, to be correct!).

This well-established shop on Broad Street, Reading's main thoroughfare, wasn't always owned by the John Lewis Partnership (JLP). Until 2001, it was Heelas. Its history dates back to 1852, when the owner of a drapers shop in Wokingham, John Heelas and his sons John and Daniel, expanded their business by opening another store on Old Minster Street in Reading, which was the town's high street. We know it now as Minster Street.

Heelas' success in Reading enabled them to expand. Buildings in the immediate area were bought and demolished, including three cottages on Broad Street which became the main entrance. Among the other buildings were a church with school rooms, a pub, almshouses and more cottages. By 1882, Heelas had become so successful

that the staff increased from 10 to 150. During the first of two expansions (the other between 1980-1985*), there was even a hostel provided for unmarried employees!

By then this was a high-class store for 'county customers'. Shoppers were met at the door by a commissionaire and handed over to a floor walker who took them to their chosen department. Heelas' reputation was such that, in 1892, the Crown Princess of Greece granted them a Royal Warrant.

Let's fast-forward to 1953. A small draper's store, named A H Bull, and also on Broad Street, was owned by the John Lewis Partnership. Unable to expand that business, the Partnership decided to buy Heelas, retaining many of A H Bull's staff and, in 1954, Heelas (now trading under the JLP flag) celebrated its centenary.

So many changes and improvements have taken place over the years for John Lewis to become the shop we know now. Shopping for many has become a social affair as we can browse the departments with a friend, followed by refreshments in one of the two eateries. We can make an appointment to plan a new kitchen, and maybe have a beauty treatment whilst something we've bought for a gift is being professionally wrapped. As shoppers, we like to be acknowledged and feel our custom is valued - those things, and more, you just won't experience when shopping online!

*Look out for the name HEELAS 'etched' into the brickwork by the side entrance of the shop on Chain Street - a legacy from the extensive 1980s rebuild.

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NOTICE THE BURNING BUSHES

ABOUT THIS time last year, a month or so into lockdown, one of the questions our church leadership team asked one another was, "What are you NOT missing? Are there any positives about this strange experience?" One person replied, "I'm not missing being busy all the time."

Prior to lockdown, if I asked someone how they were, (or even if someone asked me) the reply was often, "Busy!" or "Too busy!" Perhaps for some the past year has continued to be busy, particularly for those who have been on the frontline, working in caring professions or in schools, or trying to home-school children and hold down jobs. For others, life has definitely slowed. For many this has been a good thing.

I recently read a book written for clergy called, 'Strengthening the Soul of your leadership'¹ in which the author gently encourages her readers to slow down and take time to notice where God is at work. She points to Moses' experience in the Old Testament when his attention is caught by a burning bush that is not being consumed. Moses says, "I must turn aside and look at this strange sight!" (Exodus 3, verse 3) Moses' noticing, and turning aside, leads to a life-changing encounter with God. All of Moses' future ministry flows from his encounters with God.



Talking Point by Penny Cuthbert

He is able to withstand the pressures of leadership and all the challenges life throws at him because he is rooted in God and receives his instructions, and empowerment, from Him.

Jesus' life showed the same pattern. He regularly withdrew to lonely places to pray, and stated that he

only did what he saw his Father doing (John 5, verse 19). He noticed things others might have missed - think of the woman offering her two mites at the temple (Mark 12, verses 41-42), or people jostling for the honoured seats at a dinner table (Luke 14, verse 7). And Jesus never seemed to be in a hurry. Even when he was on the way to heal Jairus' dying daughter he made time for a woman who needed not just to be healed, but to be freed from shame and guilt, affirmed as a child of God (Luke 8, verses 40-48). He was constantly alert to the promptings of the Spirit and the will of his Father.

In 2017 Bishop Steven in his booklet 'Exploring the Beatitudes'² asked us to consider, "How can we/ the church be good news in an over-active over-busy world?" Could it be that one of the gifts given us this past year has been the opportunity to slow down and notice the burning bushes in our midst, and to be a bit more alert to the promptings of God's Spirit as we go about our daily lives? If it is, that's a gift that's really worth hanging on to.

1. 'Strengthening the Soul of your leadership' – Seeking God in the Crucible of Ministry by Ruth Haley Barton (IVP 2018)

2. 'Exploring the Beatitudes' by Steven Croft (Diocese of Oxford 2017)

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
Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810
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

Current services

Sunday 09:30 – You Tube service - 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

Current services

St Andrew's weekly service is at 10am on Sunday mornings and is a livestream on the St Andrew's YouTube channel. Details on the parish website.
www.standrewscaversham.org/services
Tuesday – 20.00 - Compline service by Zoom. E-mail the vicar to join - vicar@standrewscaversham.org

St Barnabas Emmer Green

Vicar: Rev'd Derek Chandler 20 St. Barnabas Road, Emmer Green, RG4 8RA.
Tel: 947 8239. Email: vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk
Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk
Curate: Rev'd Dr Leonard Onugha
Tel: Parish Office 9476310.
Email: curate.emmergreen@icloud.com

Current services

All services listed below open to the general public and

in accordance with safety guidelines. Sunday 9.30am also accessible live via Zoom and then uploaded to Youtube, please contact the vicar for details:

Sunday 8.00am - Traditional Communion (BCP)
Sundays 9.30am - 1st Sunday: All Age Service.
2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays: Parish Communion.
3rd Sunday: Service of the Word
Wednesday 10.00am - Communion (Common Worship)

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)

(United Reformed Church, Methodist and Baptist)
Contact: Dr Alison Johnston
Tel: 0118 947 5152 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 David Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

Current services

Sunday – 10.30 – Zoom service
E-mail the Minister for details
martin.beukes@methodist.org.uk

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor: Colin Baker
Church office Tel 0118 954 5353
Email: secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

Current services

A link is placed on their website each week at:
www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk
and on their YouTube channel
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

Current services

See their web site for details: www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)

www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

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Rev'd H R Gayle
Tel: 946 3009 www.ntcgreeding.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

Current services

See their web site for Father Patrick's weekly homilies and details of opening for services at:
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 are open in a limited way at present. 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.

The Caversham Bridge is a community newspaper produced by Caversham Christian News Ltd

Future editions:

Contributions for the July 2021 issue should be submitted by 14 June and for the August edition by 12 July. These should be e-mailed to:
editors@cavershambridge.org

Dates for advertising copy are 25 May for the July issue and 22 June for August. These should be e-mailed to
advertising@cavershambridge.org

Time for action

by Steve Hendry

Reading Voluntary Action



READING VOLUNTARY ACTION promotes and supports individuals and groups who make up our town's diverse voluntary and community sector. As part of this work we encourage, support and celebrate volunteering and social action. Over the coming months we will share the stories of organisations, projects and individuals working in different ways to improve our town.

This month we focus on The Woodland Improvement Team (WITeam) which is a volunteer group led by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) in Berkshire, to improve the condition of five woodland priority habitats in Reading and Woodley. Works have been taking place since January 2020 at Bugs Bottom and Clayfield Copse in Caversham with support from Reading Borough Council, who manage these sites.

Improvement tasks have involved removing non-native, invasive species (such as laurel and variegated archangel) which, if left alone, spread and outcompete native flora. With the help of volunteers, the woodland habitats can be improved for wildlife and plants to flourish in the future.



Volunteers at work

photo TCV

At Bugs Bottom, 350-400 young tree whips of a variety of native species (in keeping with those found within the Hemdean Valley) were planted by volunteers. They were planted along the central bridleway in early 2020 to bolster the wildlife corridor. More were planted in December 2020, to replace failed trees that suffered because of a lack of aftercare due to the pandemic and dry spring.

Quote from volunteer, Peter:

"It was the most enjoyable three hours I have had in a long time. Using bow saws and loppers we had to clear local woodland of Rhododendron and Laurel. It was really exciting and great exercise, and we made huge strides in cutting down these overgrown bushes. I also had the pleasure of meeting a new group of people. I thoroughly recommend getting out there and trying it."

If you would like to get involved, the group runs regular weekly activities on Tuesdays each week (generally 10:00-14:00), rotating across the five sites. Whilst the impacts of the pandemic still affect us, we are running activities at a reduced capacity to ensure everyone's safety. We try to rotate volunteers if activities are over-subscribed, and joining activities can be a one-off or regular thing depending on your availability, no specific commitments are required!

Inspired to get involved? Find out more about this opportunity and many others by visiting

www.rgneeds.me.

Trees for Tom

by Phil Chatfield

LAST MONTH we featured Captain Sir Tom Moore's eldest daughter, local Homeopath Lucy Teixeira.

Following her father's funeral in February, people asked how they could do something other than sending cards and flowers in his memory. Tom's message of "Tomorrow will be a good day" resonated with Lucy's colleagues, who asked what they could do. She suggested planting trees and within days there was funding for 17,000 trees. This sparked the idea of planting trees in Tom's name. He had a lifetime of being in nature and the natural world and an abiding love of his home county, Yorkshire. Like every grandparent, he saw the future of the world through his grandchildren, and had voiced his concern about their future.

So Lucy set up www.treesfortom.org to celebrate his life and those who lost their lives due to Covid-19. Lucy asked TreeSisters to help grow a forest in memory of her beloved father. He was a passionate nature lover and a global citizen, so his forest will be both local and global. The Woodland Trust will turn donations into native trees and cherished woodland in the UK. An announcement about an ancient piece of woodland to be planted in his name is due soon.

Cali White of TreeSisters, says: "It is a privilege to be involved in Lucy's Trees for Tom initiative. It's wonderful to think his spirit will be carried across the world as trees are planted from Brazil to Borneo. Trees which will help our fight against climate change as well as providing habitat for endangered species and long-term employment for local people, especially women." To plant a sapling tree costs just 40p, including planting, protection, monitoring and reporting. So each "Tree for Tom" costs 40p, or 100 trees for £40.

Our forests are crucial stabilisers of our global climate. A simple gesture of planting trees leaves a lasting legacy, helping mitigate climate change in memory of this extraordinary man and those who lost their lives in the pandemic. Lucy would thank everyone who has already donated to treesfortom.org.

To find out more about TreeSisters, see their website at:

<https://treesisters.org/>

To donate trees in memory of Captain Tom, go to www.treesfortom.org

Award Stars



ON THURSDAY 29 April 2021 at the South West and Thames Valley Business and Community Awards, The Weller Centre won the Outstanding Contribution to the Community Award. The judges said "We wish that there were more centre likes this around the country, centres that support numerous

groups, clubs and classes in the heart of the community. This facility will help people of all ages."

The award nomination came from Claire Harrison, who founded Fifi's Vision, a support group for families of children with additional needs. Fifi's vision meet weekly at the Weller Centre and Claire is a big advocate for the work there.

The staff and volunteers spent the evening at the virtual awards with gourmet food and drinks in the Weller Centre (although a few did join virtually as well). The team almost missed the announcement of their winning, as the South West winner was given first. Deciding then it was all over, staff almost turned away from the screen. However as the Centre logo flashed up it

caught their eye and they were able to watch themselves win.

The team were surprised and (for the first time ever) speechless. This is the first award for the Weller Centre and the team are grateful to Claire for the nomination and to everyone who has helped. Staff from the centre would like to thank the volunteers who helped during all the lockdowns, local business who donated not only tinned food but fresh food and meals (and continue to do so), local people who have donated food and those who have answered our pleas online for more specific items, as well as everyone far and wide who helped raise the £1500 for the defibrillator, installation and training.

Hazel Bingham

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Alternatively copies of this paper can be purchased from:

Caversham Emporium and Fourbears Books and at the True Food Community Co-Op in Grove Road, opposite St Barnabas church.

Peter Vallance 1934 - 2021

by Leigh Furlonger, Chair Caversham Good Neighbours

IT WAS with great sadness that Caversham Good Neighbours learned of the death of Peter Vallance. Peter was Chairman of our charity for many years. Having stepped down from that position in January 2016, he remained on the committee, where he was always suggesting ways in which we could help people in need.

Throughout the pandemic, despite being well into his eighties, he

was keen to carry on as a volunteer driver to help people attend various medical appointments which they might otherwise have missed. He treated everyone with great kindness and would go out of his way to be, in every respect, 'a good neighbour'. His was a life which showed care and compassion and he lived that life to the full. He will be greatly missed by his fellow volunteers and by so many of our clients who held him in the highest regard and with deep affection.

WHAT'S ON

As the lockdown rules are relaxed, there are more events planned for June. Because of the impact of the virus, events like the Reading Water Fest, whilst free, require booking. Do check to see if events are running and what booking may be required. Our online events diaries are updated regularly, so it is worth checking to see what has been added at:

cavershambridge.org:5154/local-info/whats-on

If you have an event planned, please send details to editors@cavershambridge.org

Caversham Library is open for booked appointments. Limited opening: 10:00 - 13:00 Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, 13:00 - 16:00 Thursday
www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/libraries-reopening

Mondays – Time for U pram push 10:00-11:30 Caversham Baptist Church. Term time only. www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

Sundays – Farmer's Market and Artisan Fair 10:00 – 15:00 Caversham precinct www.facebook.com/CAFMarket

Saturday 29 May to 2 June – a long weekend of wildlife events in Reading for adults and children www.wildaboutreading.com

Saturday 19 June – Reading Water Fest 2021 – 11:00 – 17:00 Celebrating the 900th anniversary of Reading Abbey, Forbury Gardens, Abbey Ruins and along the River Kennet at Chestnut Walk – free but booking essential – <https://whatsonreading.com/waterfest900>

Tuesday 22 June – Reading Abbey & Reading Gaol, online talk by John Painter – 19:30 Friends of Reading Abbey and CADRA - www.cadra.org.uk

Register at Eventbrite: tinyurl.com/c4xjusb2

Saturday 26 June – Concerts in Caversham - 'Midsummer Mozart' - The Caversham Ensemble 19:30 St Andrew's Church Albert Road RG4 7PL. Tickets £20, £18 and £15. Under 16s free
www.concertsincaversham.co.uk or phone 0118 9484112/0118 9483220

Tea for two

READING MAYOR Councillor David Stevens and Mrs Stevens visited Caversham Court Gardens on Sunday 2 May to celebrate the opening of the Tea Kiosk for the season. The Mayor and Mayoress were welcomed by members of the Friends of Caversham Court Gardens and taken on a guided tour of the historic gardens, enjoying tea and home-made cake at the Tea Kiosk.



The Mayor and Mrs Stevens with Vickie Abel, Sarah and Kevin Packham, Ways & Means Trust volunteers in the kiosk.

The Tea Kiosk will be open at weekends throughout the season. Frances Woolaway, of the Ways & Means Trust, says the kiosk would very much like to return to six-day opening, but needs more charities to volunteer. So, if you know a charity that might be interested, please ask them to contact frances@waysand-means.org.uk for more information.

All change at St Barnabas

THE REV Leonard Onugha, who in recent months has been providing support at St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green, as an associate minister, is moving to become Rector of the Parish of Finchampstead and California. The parish brings together St James Finchampstead and St Mary and St John California with the former garrison church at Arborfield Green. He has a proposed start date of the end of July - to tie in with St James' Day.

After 21 years at St Barnabas, the Rev Derek Chandler is also moving; he is to become Chaplain at the College of St Barnabas, Lingfield. Derek's last Sunday at St Barnabas will be on 25th July.

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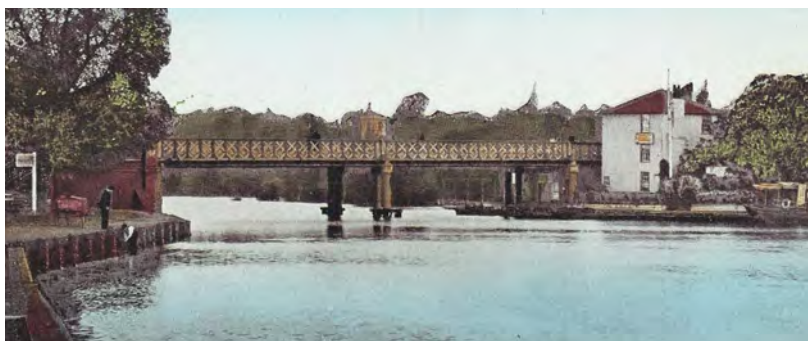
Building our community

Planning update from Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA), bringing you a summary of planning and transport matters affecting the RG4 area

THE MAJOR application for housing on Reading Golf Club has, not unexpectedly, proved very controversial and has attracted a very large number of comments, both for and against. It is expected to be determined at the Planning Application Committees on 2 June or 23 June. These meetings can be viewed online, either live or later on their YouTube channel. www.reading.gov.uk/council/democracy

An application (210373) has been submitted to convert the disused restaurant on Piper's Island (the island reached from Caversham Bridge on its downstream side) into a three-bedroom house. The island takes its name from Mr Piper, the Ferryman, whose house stood on the island until the construction of the present bridge. No major change in external appearance is proposed and CADRA has commented that this is something of a missed opportunity. It is not an attractive building and occupies one of the most prominent and sensitive sites anywhere in the Borough, sitting right in the middle of the river and adjoining the historic bridge and Conservation Area.

As always, you can find the latest Planning List showing all the significant planning applications under consideration from www.cadra.org.uk. The left hand column links to the Council page with plans and documents. The right hand column shows any comments from CADRA.



Picture of the old Caversham Bridge showing Piper's Cottage

IT'S ALL HAPPENING

89 days

by Fred Smith

JO BELL, who lives in Caversham Park Village, completed a Lands End to John O'Groats virtual walking challenge of 1083.8 miles in April. She was raising funds for two animal charities: the Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad and Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land. She started on 29 January and hoped to finish by end of April. She nearly didn't make it, as she suffered a stroke in March which affected her right arm and leg.

Despite this setback, which resulted in a five day hospital stay, she was determined to complete her fundraising challenge. Her strong motivation saw her complete the full distance on 27 April. Her final steps were taken at The Mill Theatre in Sonning, where she works.

Congratulations Jo. To find out more about the charities and Jo's fundraising efforts, see:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/joanne-bell27 and www.justgiving.com/fundraising/joanne-bell28



Final steps at the Mill Theatre photo G Sandhu

Can you help the hall?

DUNSDEN VILLAGE Hall serves the needs of the community in all its diversity, but is itself now in need of new volunteer trustees. For more details see the Caversham Bridge website <https://cavershambridge.org:5154/archives/category/volunteers>

Note the closing date for applications is 15 June. If you would like an informal chat about the roles available and for more information about the hall, please contact David Woodward, chairman@eyedunsden.org

To find out more about Dunsden village hall, please visit www.dunsdenvillagehall.co.uk

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Reading Abbey & Reading Goal
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www.cadra.org.uk

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Drawing conclusions

Welcome back to 'Fourbears Recommends' where we briefly review a couple of titles chosen from our bookshop 'Fourbears Books' on Prospect Street. It's been great to welcome customers back into the shop since we reopened in April. If you haven't popped in yet please do come and say hello and tell us what you've been reading!

by Alex Forbes

EVERYONE HAS heard of Star Wars, and many have fallen in love with their iconic characters. A 'How to Draw Star Wars' book has recently been released and it's great. It takes the reader on a step-by-step journey through each element of your favourite Star Wars characters, and by the end the picture looks pretty impressive. The book starts off with easier characters before progressing to more complex ones as you gain confidence. The fridge door at home is now awash with Star Wars characters! I'd definitely recommend the book for any child (or adult) who enjoys drawing!

For a more adult read, Snowblind by Ragnar Jonasson is the first in a detective series set in

Iceland. The story follows Ari Thor, a young police officer, who is transferred to a quiet fishing village in northern Iceland. When a dead body turns up Ari Thor has to put his policing skills into practice while struggling to adjust to his new surroundings. Ragnar is a master at bringing the atmospheric, claustrophobic scenery to life, meaning there is often a sense of unease as he tries to solve the crime. This is a classic whodunnit mystery, which isn't gruesome. A lovely read for a Sunday evening.

Happy reading, whatever you pick up and hopefully see you in the shop soon. We have started our monthly subscription service where you can get a different book each month based on your tastes and interests. Do get in touch if you would like to know more.



The Bear has the answers photo Alex Forbes

Music in Nineteenth Century Reading: A Family History

by Gordon Cox



IN THIS fifty-page book, I trace the influence of three generations of the Binfield family on the musical life of Reading in the nineteenth century. Their story tells how they:

- Created the **Binfield Music Warehouse** in Friar Street which became a highly successful business selling music and musical instruments for over a century,
- Organised an ambitious series of **Triennial Berkshire Musical Festivals** between 1809 and 1846 based in St Lawrence's church and the old Town Hall,
- Established a **Singing School** which attracted hundreds of adults and children, and
- Founded **The Royal Berkshire Academy of Music**.

The Binfield family harnessed their skills as impresarios, teachers, performers and composers to build and sustain the town's musical life.

The Author

Gordon Cox, formerly a senior lecturer in music education at the University of Reading, has published several books on the history of music education, including 'The Origins and Foundations of Music Education: International Perspectives' (Bloomsbury 2017) co-edited with Robin Stevens. He has lived in Reading since 1980 and is organist of Redlands Parish Church, St Luke's, Reading.

'Music in Nineteenth Century Reading' is intended for readers interested in local history, family history, and musical history. Published by the Scallop Shell Press, it is available for £11.50 including P&P, or copies may be collected from Gordon Cox for a cost of £10 (gordoncox50@gmail.com, 0118 9868 963), or from John Mullaney (JGMullaney@aol.com, 0118 9470 478).

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Wildlife

by William Cecil



Urban fox

photo courtesy of pixabay.com

Lock up your chickens, Reynard is back

I SWEPT open the curtains one morning recently to find the metal sculpture of a heron had been tumbled over on the patio. There was only one explanation; the fox was back. A very disappointed dawn raider, but new to the territory, hence the heron incident. A few days later I saw it.

A couple of years ago the fox trotting through the garden every evening was not very healthy. Its coat was patchy and its brush bedraggled, and the last sighting I had was when it was in full flight being chased by the black monster. The shame of it – a fox being pursued by puss.

The new Reynard is young, sleek and bushy-tailed, and makes a regular evening commute through the garden in search of rats, mice, insects, unwary birds and metal herons. Foxes are also on the lookout for a vulnerable chicken run where they will kill everything within reach, despite the fact that they can only carry away one at a time.

Foxes are common all over the world; Antarctica is the only continent without them. So the red fox is well established here, but the law of nature says that all animals must have a predator to keep their numbers manageable.

In Britain the last wild bear is thought by some to have been killed in the Bronze Age 3000 years ago. Others think bears, brought here during the Roman invasion, survived until the Middle Ages 1500 years ago. The last wolf was shot in Scotland in 1680. As a result, there was no predator left to control foxes, which is why we have so many pubs called the Fox and Hounds – hounds were trained to hunt foxes - but hunting was made illegal in 2004.

However, poultry farmers demand protection for their free-range birds. Now the only way to control fox numbers is by shooting, but sometimes the marksman only wounds. The same applies to jay-walking foxes hit by cars. The sad truth is that if a wild creature does not die brutally but swiftly to feed a predator and its family, it will die slowly and painfully from disease or starvation. Some charities do their best but there is no Nature Health Service to provide tender, loving care or a set of dentures for a toothless fox so that it can carry on hunting rabbits.

As a rule Reynard lives from one to three years, but a wily old fox or a cunning little vixen can survive up to 10 years so let's hope my newcomer does not become a victim of roadkill or a savage black monster.



Tumbled Heron

photo F Smith

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Help our hedgehogs

by Tricia Marcouse

WITH THE exception of their habit of trampling down any seedlings by the fenceline, hedgehogs are the gardener's best friend, as they are one of the few things to eat slugs. The name comes from their habit of wandering next to a hedgeline or fenceline rather than out into the open. Although once a hedgehog knows that there is a bird feeder with food tossed on the ground, in garden A and another in garden C, it will scuttle directly across garden B, day or night, ignoring any humans in the way!

A hedgehog may need to travel 2km a night to find food, water, a mate, or a nest site. In the town, the decline in hedgehog numbers may be due to back garden developments reducing sites for

nests or hibernation or to impenetrable barriers between gardens, forcing them onto pavements and roads.

Students at Reading University have a Hedgehog Champion, and are working to develop Hedgehog Highways around the town, starting from Whiteknights Park.

On the other side of the Thames, Caversham needs its own hedgehog highways; a network of routes from garden to garden. A 13 x 13cm (5 x 5") hole in walls or fences will let hedgehogs through, but will be too small for most pets.

Log your hedgehog hole (man-made or natural), as well as any hedgehog sightings on www.bighedgehogmap.org

where you will also find other tips for helping them.

At the moment, there are only 3 holes marked for the whole of Caversham, and precious few sightings logged for 2020, so your assistance is needed to improve the records and let us see where more help is needed.



Hedgehog

photo Hedgehog Street Natalie Plaxton

Think Local, Shop Local



St Martins precinct

by **Phil Chatfield**

THE CAVERSHAM Bridge is once again supporting local businesses with this special supplement, and providing low cost advertising to promote their offering to our community. Jude Chapman of the Caversham Traders Association, which supports local traders in Emmer Green and Caversham reflects on the impact of the lockdowns on the 'high street' and our independent traders (p 10).

Despite the challenges, new businesses have been established with an optimism for the future. Fourbears Bookshop, Nathan's Nibbles and The Caversham Picture Framer have been working hard to establish and build their businesses. Fourbears

offered an order and collect service, and the Picture Framer had a January window display on David Bowie and the work of a number of artists featured in an on-line gallery <https://cavershampictureframer.co.uk/buy-online>. And local resident Dario Simoncini has set up an Italian Deli in Reading, which opened in May. Working with his partner Walter, they will deliver Italian foods and wines free of charge in the Reading and Caversham area. See their advert on this page for more details.

photo P Chatfield

Local artists and craft producers have had almost no opportunity to exhibit their work in the last year. Many have continued to paint, carve, shape and create throughout, and now have plenty of new works to offer. Although the Caversham Arts Trail has been cancelled again this year, a number of artists will be exhibiting at the Arts Trail in Henley (10/11 and 17/18 July) and Whiteknights Studio Trail (26/27 June). We have sustained our 'Creative Caversham' series of articles by Elestr Lee throughout the year, and Elestr has written an article for this supplement on the many talented people in our community (p 11). A new occasional feature for the paper, 'A Crafty Cuppa', is highlighting local craft producers, some of whom will be selling their products at a newly established craft market to be held in the Gosbrook Road Methodist Church on Saturdays. See their advert (p 11) for details.

Our theme for this supplement is 'Think Local,

Shop Local' and the final article, by Jean Harper, reports on Caversham Artisan and Farmers Market (p 12). Established in 2017, it is now a weekly event providing an opportunity to buy fresh foods and local products.

Our community has a diverse and vibrant range of independent shops, cafés, restaurants and services which need our continuing support. So, before you go online, ask yourself if you can 'Think Local, Shop Local'. And please remember to mention the Caversham Bridge when responding to any of these advertisements.

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Traders work to bring village streets alive again

by Jude Chapman

Vice Chair of the Caversham Traders Association and owner of Dancia International

THE LAST time I put pen to paper for The Caversham Bridge was in early autumn last year. At that time, non-essential shops such as mine had been trading for a few months after the end of the first lockdown. Cafés and restaurants were several weeks behind us and taking full advantage of the 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme in an effort to make up for at least some of their lost trade. Little did we know that the worst was yet to come. By November, we were forced to close again for a month. And then, after reopening for just two and a half weeks, the long-awaited prospect of Christmas trade came to an abrupt end with a lockdown even longer than the first.

Throughout all three lockdowns, the Caversham Traders Association (CTA) has been there for local business owners. We have provided them with the weekly opportunity to log in to a Zoom meeting and talk with others facing similar issues and challenges. To ask advice, share problems, and just to have a chat during what we all know could be a very lonely time. There was networking taking place too; given the time to get to know each other's businesses really well, members started to use one another's services and discuss potential joint ventures.

And so the Caversham business community comes to life once again. It is largely thanks to the people of Caversham that our village has emerged from this crisis with a high street that looks remarkably similar to that of March 2020. Yes, our favourite businesses have been battered, but they've weathered the storm through adapting their methods of trading and through the loyalty of local residents. Unlike many other small shopping centres, there are just a couple of empty units in Caversham. In fact, we've even gained a new independent

book shop during this time – Fourbears on Prospect Street.

So, out of these dark times has emerged a stronger CTA - and a stronger high street. There is a greater appreciation among Caversham residents of how lucky we are to have such a wide range of independent shops, cafés and restaurants on our doorstep. Let's make the most of them!

The CTA would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported our members over the past year by shopping in Caversham. We all look forward to serving you for many years to come.

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by Elestr Lee



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C AVERSHAM'S vibrant artistic community is proof of the power of creative minds in providing new ways to express ideas, as well as to help others unleash their own artistic potential, even in the face of past year's difficulties. Social media and the use of Skype and Zoom for teaching have replaced art classes, galleries, craft fairs and arts trails. Now we are looking forward to greater freedoms, artists are once again quickly adapting to the new situation.

Nina O'Connell normally plays host during the popular Caversham Arts Trail, when she provides a gallery to display her own paintings, and the work of others. She has been sharing her latest works on Facebook and is now very happy to welcome visitors to her studio instead. "During the Arts Trail, my studio is transformed into a gallery. I now welcome studio visits, especially as they can see my authentic working space!"

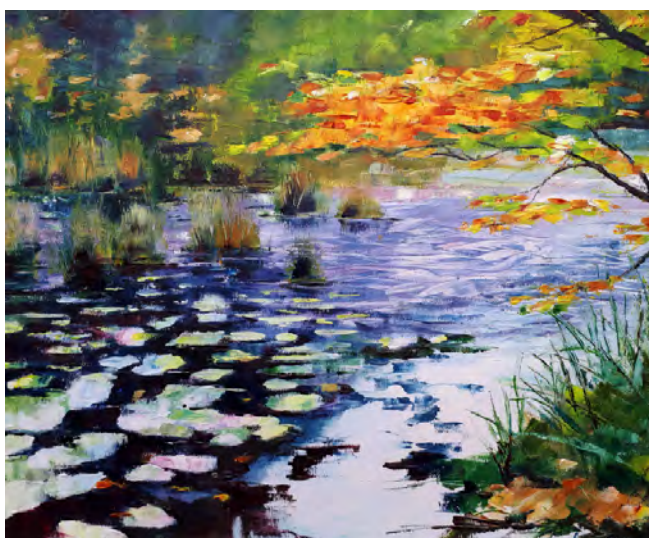
Over the past year, Janina Maher has developed her online craft teaching, and has delivered 30 sessions. "This is going very well, and I plan to continue doing 50/50 online and face-to-face teaching. There are some advantages to online – for example, you can teach classes while still wearing your slippers!"

Janina has also developed her interest in drawing – largely due to the lockdown. "When we were restricted as to how far we could travel, I started taking a closer look at the buildings here in Caversham – and they are fascinating. A drawing of the now closed Nationwide building attracted a lot of interest. I have had requests to draw people's shop fronts and houses, and I'm now looking to expand this, and have prints and cards made."

On 21 June, Marsack Street business park will be welcoming summer with a Summer Solstice Celebration. Taking place both inside the newly re-opened studio and the car park outside, there will be activities for children, live music, and a chance to see artists at work. Running from 18:30 to 21:00, it will provide a great chance to take part in a creative community event.

"We've planned the event to celebrate creatives coming out of lockdown. We're bringing together the best creatives in Caversham – showcasing the people and their work," says event organiser Sue Reeves.

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Sunday market features local produce

by Jean Harper



WOULDNT IT be a good idea to have a community market in the centre of Caversham? So thought Claire and Jodie, founders of NOODskin, and NOOD at Home. Their aim was to support the village centre, by providing additional local shopping, and to help small local businesses by giving them a new place to trade. In 2017, its first year of trading, Caversham Artisan and Farmers Market (CAFM) was runner-up in the 'Independent Retailer of the Year' category of the Reading Retail

Awards, an amazing achievement for such a new market.

Claire and Jodie had been selling their environmentally friendly soaps and cleaning products at a variety of different markets for several years and felt this experience gave them a good understanding of how to run one successfully. As Jodie explains, "We wanted to offer a wider appeal than just a farmer's market and so opted to include craft and non-food traders, believing this extra artisan element would be of greater benefit to Caversham."

Visitors to CAFM will find an amazing range of produce and products, ranging from staples like bread, fruit and vegetables to more specialist foodstuffs, houseplants, and gifts. But all the stalls will have one thing in common: all the goods on sale will have been grown, created, or crafted by the traders themselves. And if you need a little something to keep your energy up, there are some wonderful freshly cooked takeaway foods and coffee on offer.

The lockdown and safety restrictions surrounding Covid has brought its challenges, but the market has continued to trade with essential stalls. Claire and Jodie are looking forward to welcoming back more traders as restrictions are lifted. One casualty of lockdown was the seating area and food tent in the middle of the market, but this popular social hub will be re-introduced as soon as restrictions allow.

CAFM takes place every Sunday, come rain or shine, from 10:00 until 15:00 in the car park between Waitrose and Iceland. So why not pop down and visit? Follow the market on Facebook and Instagram for regular updates @cafmarket and if anyone would like to join the traders, apply for a stall online at www.cafmarket.co.uk.

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Can you spot either of these in the garden this June

by Tricia Marcouse

THIS MONTH I have highlighted two further insects you might find in your garden in



June. For more wildlife gardening tips see: www.rhs.org.uk/advice/wild-lifegarden From mid-June, the Marbled White butterfly (Melanargia galathea)

is common on unimproved grassland and on some road verges in Caversham. It's a large butterfly with an unmistakable black and white chequerboard effect. If it comes into your garden for nectar plants, do consider providing some specific long grasses where it can lay eggs and form a new colony. It likes Fescues, Cocksfoot and Yorkshire Fog.



Common Field Grasshoppers (Chorthippus brunneus) are commonly found (heard) in sunny, grassy spots, including gardens, from June to the Autumn.

The adult is about 2cm long, mottled brown in colour, with barring on the sides and a hairy underside. Lots of smaller versions in late May and early June show a breeding colony.

The males rub legs against their wings to create a single chirp. Their eggs are laid in the soil at the base of grasses and covered with a froth that hardens rapidly.

Photos by Rob Stallard, RDNHS



Turning plants to water

PAM AND PHIL Chatfield would like to thank all who supported their annual WaterAid plant sale in May. Generous donations of plants

supplemented their own stock to ensure there was plenty of choice for those who came to fill their gardens and greenhouses. As a result, they will be transferring £1400 to support the work of WaterAid in providing clean water and sanitation around the world. An additional £100 was raised towards the work of Launchpad from the sale of Pam's crafts and local artist Liz Real's beautiful greetings cards.

For more information on WaterAid see their website at:

www.wateraid.org/uk

photo Pam Chatfield

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by Tricia Marcouse

Recycling clear plastic food bags

NOW THAT we are coming out of lockdown, some of the 'recycle carrier bags here' bins that disappeared during the worst of the pandemic are coming out of wherever they've been hiding for the last six months. So it's time to review recycling options for plastic food bags.



Visit www.recyclenow.com to find out where

Many of the supermarkets, and certainly Iceland and Waitrose, are working with their suppliers to change the information on their plastic food bags or to change the type of plastic being used. But as yet there is no consistency. You may find that the open bag used for cauliflowers says 'recycle with bags at larger stores' one week and 'not recycled at present' the next, as different suppliers send produce into the shop.

However, the amount being labelled 'recycle' is increasing week by week, so look out for this on bread bags, the open bags used for cauliflowers, and sealed bags of carrots or potatoes. Shake out the breadcrumbs, soil or loose



vegetable, remove the closure from bread bags and tear out the 'reduced price' sticker if you've been a canny shopper. Then all of these can go into the 'recycle carrier bags' bin next time you aer shopping.

Please don't start guessing which of the 'do not recycle' labelled bags are suitable as there are at least three types in use and there may well be more.



The other thing to remember is that our kerbside recycling collection does not include ANY plastic film at present, so ignore labels suggesting otherwise! If and when this changes, there will be a fanfare from RE3 and the Council, so you won't have missed it!

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QUEEN OF THE BORDER?



by Les Cooper

I HAVE been growing delphiniums for many years, sometimes quite badly, sometimes fairly well and, very occasionally, really successfully. When I meet other gardeners and mention this, I often get remarks such as:

"Oh, I love delphiniums but" ... (and here we go with problems).

Of course, I tell them delphiniums are really most obliging and, for all you disbelievers, here are my 10 suggestions for you to follow.

- 1. Ground/soil:** Delphiniums make a lot of growth within a short time period and need to have the means to do so. Prepare the soil well before planting, ensuring it is fertile by adding humus in the form of manure or compost.
- 2. Seed:** If you are starting off by growing them from seed, make sure you buy good seed. The best source is online from the Delphinium Society. I would not recommend the old Pacific strain if you desire quality.
- 3. Sowing:** Probably the best time is Spring. Do not overdo heat and certainly do not use a propagator. Sow the seed in a pot using seed compost, cover lightly with vermiculite and enclose

in a plastic bag. Place in a shady spot. Germination starts in three weeks.

- 4. Seedlings:** These need to be pricked out when the first normal leaves appear. Start growing them in a pot and when the seedlings are a reasonable size plant them outside.
- 5. Keeping seed:** If you are not sowing the seed almost immediately, keep it in a plastic container in your refrigerator (not freezer).
- 6. Slugs:** As with several other herbaceous perennials, delphiniums are susceptible to slug and snail damage. Use Nemaslug, it works for me.
- 7. Position:** Delphiniums grow best in the open.
- 8. Thinning:** For big spikes restrict the number of shoots in early May by cutting off any weaklings.
- 9. Feeding/watering:** Delphinium's rapid growth within a short time means they need a good deal of watering, plus some feed.
- 10. Staking:** Surround the plants with three canes set in a triangle, tie string around these so the spikes can sway with the wind. (Note - if the spikes are tied too firmly, they will snap).

Then, when they flower, you could find you have shades of blue, pink and white. It will be exciting, you will be so proud of yourself and realise that you are a good gardener after all.



White, blue and pink delphinium flowers

photo E Cooper



House plant of the month Spotlight on: Pilea peperomioides

by Jacqueline Winston-Silk

PILEA PEPEROMIODES, or *Chinese money plant* as it's commonly known, is one of those strangely unique plants which now feature in almost every house plant collection.

Distinct for their perfectly round leaves, which orbit a central stem like a model of the solar system; they are easily recognisable.

As the common name suggests, Pilea are native to Southwestern China and can be found growing in shaded forests at altitudes of over 1500 metres. This idiosyncratic plant is often believed to bring good fortune to its owner because of its coin-shaped leaves.

Closer to home, Pilea are cultivated as ornamental house plants and are suitable for beginner-intermediate plant parents. They enjoy bright, indirect light and prefer their soil to dry out a little between each watering. It's also recommended to rotate your Pilea plant once in a

while, to keep it from listing in one direction.

One of my favourite characteristics of Pilea is the way in which it can be propagated (propagation is the process by which new plants can be grown from existing plants). Pilea produce 'pups', tiny versions of the mother plant which surface from the soil. I've also seen wayward pups poking out from drainage holes if your plant is particularly abundant! Each pup (of which there can be many) can be cleanly cut off and rooted to create a brand-new plant. This makes Pilea the perfect plant to propagate and share with friends.

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A Crafty Cuppa – with Sarah Head

In this her second article for the Caversham Bridge, Ruth Martin, who runs Cucumber Wood Candles, interviews local crafter, Sarah Head, over a cup of coffee.



by Ruth Martin

MEETING SILHOUETTE Sarah for a crafty cuppa in her sunny garden provided a fascinating insight into the captivating art form of silhouette cutting. "Silhouettes were the precursor to photography," Sarah explained. "Disney uses them widely in his films, and silhouettes are used to illustrate the books of Jane Austen, Arthur Conan Doyle and Charles Dickens to name but a few." I realised that once your eyes are opened up to silhouettes, you see them everywhere!

One of just a handful of professional silhouette artists in the UK, Sarah stumbled into her profession quite by chance, following an unplanned meeting with a world-renowned silhouette artist. "He cut my silhouette with scissors freehand, just studying my face and cutting the outlines on black paper. He encouraged me to have a go and told me I was a natural!" There and then, Sarah was recruited

to her first assignment at the Grosvenor Hotel in Mayfair the following weekend. The rest as they say, is history!

"I love the instant connection you get with customers," enthused Sarah, "And I love going to amazing places and meeting so many interesting people." Film stars, dignitaries and royalty are among the lucky guests she has delighted at parties and events over the years, creating works of art for them before their eyes, whilst dressed either in her trademark Steam Punk hats, or in a costume to suit the occasion.

With the lockdown Sarah's work has evolved: with few events to attend, she has had to be creative and adapt her work. Zoom commissions have enabled her to cut silhouettes for people worldwide. She has also been able to set up a new mobile studio – in a vintage horsebox no less – as well as making connections with museums and schools so she can share her passion with others.

As we finished our coffee and our conversation drew to a close, Sarah picked up her trusty scissors and a sheet of black card and within minutes effortlessly created my profile in painstaking detail. I floated off down the road, thrilled with my new portrait (which took a good ten years off me I have to say!), delighted that I had learnt so much about this beautiful art form and that I had met such a talented and lovely local artist



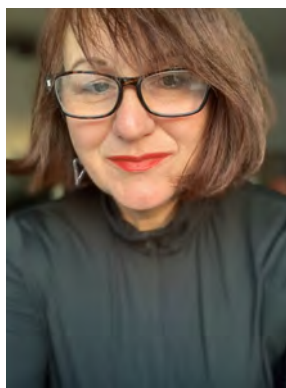
Sara and trademark hat.



Community Connections

by Caroline Gratrix

This month we get to know something about Caversham resident Kate Scott



KATE STUDIED Politics at university and then went on to law school, qualifying as a solicitor, working in private practice for 17 years. She carried on working when her two children were young, and then took a break from the law for a while. During that time, she launched a brilliant collaboration, called Cinnamon and Ginger, with friend and neighbour Rebecca Ranson. They formed a pop-up

supper club operating out of Nomad Café (now Geo Café) in Caversham and sometimes in Pierreponts in Goring.

Cinnamon and Ginger eventually both moved on to new challenges, and Kate then took over the Langdale Wills business from a colleague and friend; www.langdalewills.co.uk.

With a legal background, taking the leap to running her own will writing business was a logical next step, and now means that Kate can offer a unique and personal service. When she visits you (in person or remotely!), it will be her you meet and not an agent from a large company, where the will is written in a back office.

Kate enjoys meeting people in her own community (and further afield), talking them through what can be a daunting process and hopefully making it less so. She is approachable and friendly, yet professional. She explains things in plain English – and is partial to explanations using a diagram! She is more than happy to take the time to ensure you make the right decisions for you.

Kate is passionate that everyone should be secure in the knowledge that, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, your wishes are followed and loved ones are looked after. She offers a friendly, approachable, and committed service to make the process of writing your Will, or Lasting Power of Attorney, as smooth and easy as possible.

Tell us a bit about you.

How long have you lived in Caversham?

I moved out of London in 2004, just before getting married, as my husband's job moved out here. I was brought up in Marlow and, having parents living in Henley, I was keen to make my way back to the area at some point.

What's your favourite thing about Caversham?

I love that I can walk into the centre of Caversham from my house and pick up so many useful items from the great variety of shops, nip to the library, get a haircut, pick up a coffee and then have a mini browse, all whilst bumping into people I might know and stopping to chat. Equally, it is such a treat to be able to head out the other way and within 10 minutes be in beautiful countryside taking my Cockapoo, Josie, for a walk.

Caversham's best coffee shop?

This is a tough one, but I particularly love The Collective coffee and, with the new outside courtyard at the back of the shop, it will probably be my winner. Their cakes always look fresh and are a bit too tempting!

Where to eat in Caversham?

Our family 'go to' for a takeaway is the River Spice – I often crave their chicken tikka biryani. For a group night out, it's got to be the Last Crumb. I really like the casual atmosphere and yummy pizzas and burgers.

Where to shop in Caversham?

I have spent far too much on shoes in Cara in my time, love a browse round the Emporium, a sourdough or a sausage roll from Geo Café, burrito from Vegivores, a picture frame or other necessity from Terry's, some gifts from Griggs and Mackay and not to forget a lightbulb and some superglue from the hardware store!!! If you haven't found her yet, my lovely friend Emma also runs the Hutch Homestore up in Caversham Heights. Check her out on Instagram and facebook [@hutchhomestore](https://www.facebook.com/hutchhomestore)

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

Would love a small independent cinema in Caversham – that would be a fabulous addition. A bit like the Picture House in Henley.

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THE PERFECT PLACE TO FIND OUR INNER ARTIST



This month we meet a woman who has made it her mission to allow others to discover the joy of creativity.

Elestr Lee meets Art Jam's Sherrie Tuhy

MANY HOMES in Caversham and its surrounding area are nowadays adorned with lovingly painted glazed bisque pottery, gifted to parents and grandparents, and created in Sherrie Tuhy's Art Jam Studio.

However, if you step a little further into the studio, you will discover that painting pottery is just one of the many creative

arts on offer - and that Art Jam isn't just for the kids!

As everyone who has met Sherrie will know, she grew up in the USA in Ohio, where she studied art at university. "In the States, you have to choose between fine arts or art education, so I chose education," she explains. Sherrie duly became an art teacher, relocating to Caversham in the

80s and, apart from a break when she had children, worked at both Highdown and Hemdean House schools. She had long wanted to create a studio where she could offer the chance for all ages to discover their creative potential – and the offer of redundancy meant that, in April 2017, she finally realised her dream.

"I had always talked about it, but actually making it happen was a big step. I was worried that I didn't have a business head – after all, I was a teacher! But, on the advice of silhouette artist Charles Burns I joined Reading Business Club. They have a mentoring scheme, so two experienced businessmen took me under their wing. They put me on the right track, and I was determined not to let them down," Sherrie says.

Lockdown aside, Art Jam is nowadays a space where people of all ages can go and be creative, from glass painting and fusing, sewing, crocheting and knitting, painting, or making pots on the wheel – the list is endless. Local artists, crafters and teachers lead a range of workshops – or groups can choose to book the studio for themselves so they can work alongside each other.

Besides children's parties, Sherrie offers hen parties and small corporate functions, as well as her popular Painting and Pinot, and Pottery and Prosecco evenings for adults. "These are not too serious – the idea is that people come along to enjoy themselves, and are able to try something a bit different," she says. "It has been full on. When the first lockdown was announced, it felt good to have a break!"

During the full lockdowns Sherrie's studio has been closed. However she came up with the idea of 'takeaway boxes' which contained pottery pieces and paints which could be decorated at home. Sherrie delivered these within a 5-mile radius of Caversham, then later fired the pottery, so adults and children alike could continue to enjoy being artistic despite being stuck at home. As lockdown has eased, her after school clubs have been allowed to re-commence, and more activities are re-



*Not all Angels wear
wings,
some wear
scrubs!
Eternally Grateful*

Art Jam's tribute to NHS staff

starting, though with restricted numbers. Some of the changes enforced during the past year have actually proved beneficial. "For example, due to Covid, it is 'booking only' now, whereas originally people could just turn up. The booking system is a lot more practical!"

"Once the government announced its support for businesses, I wasn't so worried," Sherrie recalls. Watching the effects of the pandemic unfold, Sherrie very much wanted to show her support for the NHS workers in a creative way. "I had some bisque angels left over from Christmas, so I contacted my supplier and bought all the remaining angels in stock," she remembers. "With five members of my Saturday staff, we decorated 72 of them, each with a special message, and my son's girlfriend, who was working as a physiotherapist on the Covid Ward, gave them to staff at the hospital to show our appreciation."

Sherrie is concerned that, despite schools reopening, children are getting reduced opportunities to experience the creative arts. "Art Jam has been brilliant. It has achieved my dream of bringing art to Caversham, and to give everyone of all ages the chance to create. And I know everyone is desperate to get back. My mission has always been to serve Caversham – the place which has been my home and community, and which has supported me since I came to the UK.

"I love teaching and helping people of all ages to reach their potential through creative means. Encouraging others to try something different – it's all about having a go!"

More info: artjamstudio.co.uk



Happy painters pre-Covid - "Everyone is desperate to get back," says Sherrie

all photos: S. Tuhy

Sixty years afloat

by Trevor Bannister

THIS TRANQUIL view of Caversham Warren will be instantly recognisable to those who enjoy a stroll along the Thameside Promenade. It has hardly changed since it was captured by the Francis Frith collection of photographs early in the 20th century.

However, for some, the boathouse on the left of the picture has an added attraction. It was once the headquarters of 2nd Reading Sea Scout Group and for some seventy years played host to generations of boys, and later girls, who enjoyed the enormous fun of learning boating skills on these placid waters and in the process forged enduring friendships.

In 1961 the Group purchased the Boathouse for £1,250 (£28,454 in today's values). To mark the 60th anniversary of that special occasion I have compiled the following extracts from the contemporary reports in the *Reading Chronicle* and *Reading Standard*.



MAYOR OPENS SEA SCOUTS' BOATHOUSE: UNIQUE EFFORT BY READING BOYS

Since 1938 2nd Reading (Trinity) Sea Scout Group have rented a boathouse on The Warren, Caversham. Boats and canoes manned by Sea Scout have been a familiar part of the river scene for many years.

Recently the group has been able to buy the Boathouse with the assistance of parents, friends, the Ministry of Education and the Local Scout Association. An opening ceremony and garden party was held on 24 June (1961) in the beautiful garden of 'Isomer', adjacent to the boathouse, kindly lent by Mr. E. J. Carter, Chairman of Reading FC.

The Mayor (Ald. J.S. Woodrow) officiated, accompanied by Mr E. Hatch (District Commissioner) and Mr. E. Huggins (Assistant District Commissioner Sea Scouts), who handed the deeds to Patrol Leader, John Moody. In his acceptance speech, Group Scout Master, Mr. V. Maskell, especially thanked one of his Assistants, Roy Abery, who had organised most of the day's events.

The ceremony was followed by water sports, an exhibition and sideshows. A barbeque was held in the evening at 'Wychcotes', also on the Warren, by kind permission of 1st Reading (YMCA) Sea Scouts. Entertainment was provided by 'The Aces' rhythm group.

Very few Scout Groups own their own headquarters, and it is almost unique for them to own land and buildings with a river

frontage. The Group were the first Sea Scouts in Berkshire, starting in 1938, and are recognised by the Admiralty. They own a number of craft, including the magnificent 'Julian' pulling boat. They currently hold the Squirrel Trophy - a trophy competed for at an annual regatta of Reading Sea Scout groups - and the Kingfisher Trophy for life-saving. Their complement is 14 Cubs, 34 Scouts, 16 Seniors, with one Queen's Scout, five Scouters and a waiting list, so they can claim to be one of the most active groups in the county.



The Mayor aboard the Julian

Mike Symons recalls his parents were involved with the fund raising. His father administered a 'Deed of Covenant' (more familiar now as Gift Aid) in which parents and friends subscribed a monthly sum for 5 years. His father was also Assistant Chef at the evening barbeque. Mike is proud to say he can still signal 'SOS' on semaphore flags in an emergency - a skill he learned as a Sea Scout.

Scouting remained active at the Boathouse until the early years of this century, when the Group declined and ceased to operate. The Boathouse reverted to private ownership, incorporated into the grounds of the adjacent 'upstream' property.

However, former members of the Group, including many involved in the June 1961 events, continue to meet. But for Covid-19 they would have celebrated an unbroken run of fifty-five annual dinners since 1965. A 'Get-Together' is planned for November 2021.

We hope that the walls and grounds of the Boathouse still resound with the voices and laughter of generations of young people whose lives were shaped by the fun of Sea Scouting with 2nd Reading.

References: 'Three Flag Hoist: A History of Sea Scouts in Reading', Vic Rolfe (2004). 'Francis Frith's Around Reading: Photographic Memories': Frith Book Co (1999)

Where smooth waters glide

A NEW ONLINE exhibition to mark the 250th anniversary of the first meeting of the Thames Navigation Commissioners 9 May 1771 has been created by the Berkshire Records Office (BRO). The Records Office holds the Thames Conservancy archive, which it has used as the basis of the exhibition.

To find out more, go to:

<https://thames250exhibition.com/introduction/>



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Drawing by Janina Maher

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Local Landmarks

The Griffin by Martin Andrews

WE ARE very lucky in Caversham and Emmer Green to have so many welcoming public houses. One of the oldest is perhaps The Griffin in Church Road, close to the busy junction once known as Berry's Corner. Janina Maher's delightful drawing shows the pub as it is today, but the present building dates from 1906, replacing a much older pub on the site. The Griffin played an important role in the life of the village and fortunately a number of photographs survive showing the original buildings. These show a slightly tumbledown group of painted brick and timber buildings that might well date back centuries. The yard at the rear of the pub (now the car park) backed onto the river and provided a coach house and stabling. The river frontage was significant, because at one time the owners held the rights to the 'Eel Bucks' (large eel traps in the form of tapering baskets), and eel pie was a staple on the menu. Many advertising signs on the exterior walls promoted local businesses – Newbury's furniture, Old Joe Tobacco, Thorley's cakes and the Weekly Dispatch and, painted across the façade in large coloured letters, H & G Simonds Pale Ales & Stouts.

As well as providing hospitality, it served a more civic role as inquests were held there and local officials met on Parish business. The yard and riverbank would have been crowded with rowdy spectators on Reading and Caversham Regatta Day, especially when cheering on the final race for the 'Waterman's Purse'. This involved fishing punts and had a history of unruly and ruthless tactics. Then, in the evening, the prize giving was held at The Griffin.

In 1906 Mr and Mrs Taylor, the proprietors, celebrated the opening of the 'New Griffin', built of red brick in the Edwardian style. They still stocked Pale Ales and Stouts from the Reading brewers, Simonds (later to become Courages). The new premises boasted a smoking room as well as the usual bars and a large events room upstairs. G.B. Wheeler & Sons hired boats from the river frontage 'Let by the hour, day, or season', and fishing parties were 'specially catered for'. Good stabling was still available, but the yard would also have provided parking for the 'automobile'. The exterior of the building is little changed today, and The Griffin remains at the heart of Caversham and its warm hospitality is enjoyed by all.



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First Impressions – The ins and outs of a CV

by Laura Harmsworth

Last month Laura looked at different CV formats. This month she considers what should and should not be included in a CV.



THERE ARE no set rules in CV writing, but there are guidelines. Here is an outline of what to include and advice on what to exclude. As the chronological CV is the most common type, I'll focus on the sections for one of these.

Personal Details

- ☐ Name, town/county, phone, email, LinkedIn URL
- ☐ A title of "CV" (obvious what it is)
- ☐ Date of birth, marital status, religion, photo

Profile

- ☐ Short, interesting, and tailored to the role for which you are applying
- ☐ Relevant experience, knowledge, qualifications, training, and personal attributes

Key Skills

- ☐ 6-8 relevant skills; ensures the recruiter can see them easily and the key words are picked up by screening software

Career History

- ☐ Don't include everything about every role you've ever had - every single thing you include must be relevant to the role you're applying for and add value
- ☐ If you have a lot of experience, and the last 10 years are relevant, flesh these ones out and reduce the information on anything older
- ☐ For those with a lot of experience or who are worried age might go against them, add a

section entitled EARLY CAREER with job titles and companies, leaving out the detail and the years worked there

Voluntary Roles

- ☐ Include if it adds value to your CV by showing transferable skills or fills an employment gap

Education, training and qualifications

- ☐ Relevant training: dates, name of course, qualification and institution
- ☐ Students and graduates can add section before Career History/Work Experience

Interests

- ☐ It's personal preference if you want to include interests - I suggest only adding activities that are relevant or particularly interesting

Footer

- ☐ Include a page number and name in case the CV is printed and pages get separated

References

- ☐ It will be assumed you have these

Next month I'll be showing you how to identify and showcase your skills.

You can follow Laura on:

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on LinkedIn where she posts tips and articles regularly www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth and her website www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk



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



Get Jamming

with **Sarah Roy – The Jam Lady**



Strawberry Jam

THIS MONTH I'm taking you through how to make Strawberry Jam. Strawberries are one of the fruits lowest in pectin so need a little help to get to a setting point; either you can buy special jam sugar which has powdered pectin added, or you can buy sachets of pectin powder and add it to normal sugar.



Ingredients

1kg strawberries – fresh or frozen
1kg jam sugar (or 1kg granulated sugar with a sachet of pectin added)

Method

1. Wash the jars and lids in hot water. Put into a warm oven (175°C) for 15 min to sterilise them. Put a saucer into the freezer.
2. Stew down the fruit in a large saucepan using a masher to break down to a pulp.
3. Stir in the sugar until it dissolves. Bring to a rolling boil.
4. When the mixture thickens, test the setting point by spooning a teaspoon of the hot jam onto the cold saucer. If you push your finger along the plate and the jam wrinkles on the top then it is ready. If not, keep on boiling and test again in a few minutes.
5. Strawberries often create a layer of scum or bubbles on the top of the jam and this needs to be carefully removed before putting into jars.
6. Once ready, ladle into the hot jars right to the top and firmly seal the lids. As the jam cools, a vacuum is created and the jam is preserved.

Perfect for an afternoon cream tea. You just need to decide whether it's jam or cream first!

Follow Sarah on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/thejamladycaversham

Turn of the screws

READING HYDRO CBS announced the delivery and installation of the two screw turbines for their hydropower scheme on Tuesday 27 April. Built in the Netherlands by SpaansBabcock and rated 46kW total energy output, the screws were successfully delivered to the site by Caversham Weir before their installation. The installation operation, which required a 12-tonne crane, went off without a hitch. The next few weeks will involve affixing the screws properly into their housings, as well as carrying out the full commissioning of the system.

For more information and photographs of the installation, see:

<https://hydro.readinguk.org/we-are-reading-hydro/posts> F Smith

Poets' Corner

In hope

by Nicola Dominic

Spring arrives and hope draws near
After the onslaught of a Covid year
Pink blossoms on the trees
Never cease to delight
Birds with their songs
Kites in flight

Friends and families permitted
To gather once more
Just a note of caution, we implore
I walk by the river in sheer delight
It soothes the soul, gives my heart respite

Children on bicycles
Parents at the rear
Teenagers on the grass
Kicking a ball, raising a cheer
The playground is so special

Tiny children squeal in delight
It always pleases me
My heart in flight
And those precious little wonders
The Covid babes as they are known

So we pray for a single vaccine
For flu and the pandemic
To make this Easter tide
Both real and symbolic
Christ is risen, Covid abated

So let the bells ring out at St Peter's
Their joyous refrain
The service starts at four
We can all sing again
That Covid will no longer
Darken our door

Christ resurrected, our freedom regained.

WORD PUZZLE ANSWERS:

(From left to right) suds, moan, loam, crouch, foam, grouch, froth, **cough**, couch, troth, sofa, broth, soft, pledge, settee.

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