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# Caversham Bridge

No 684

[www.cavershambridge.org](http://www.cavershambridge.org)

February 2022

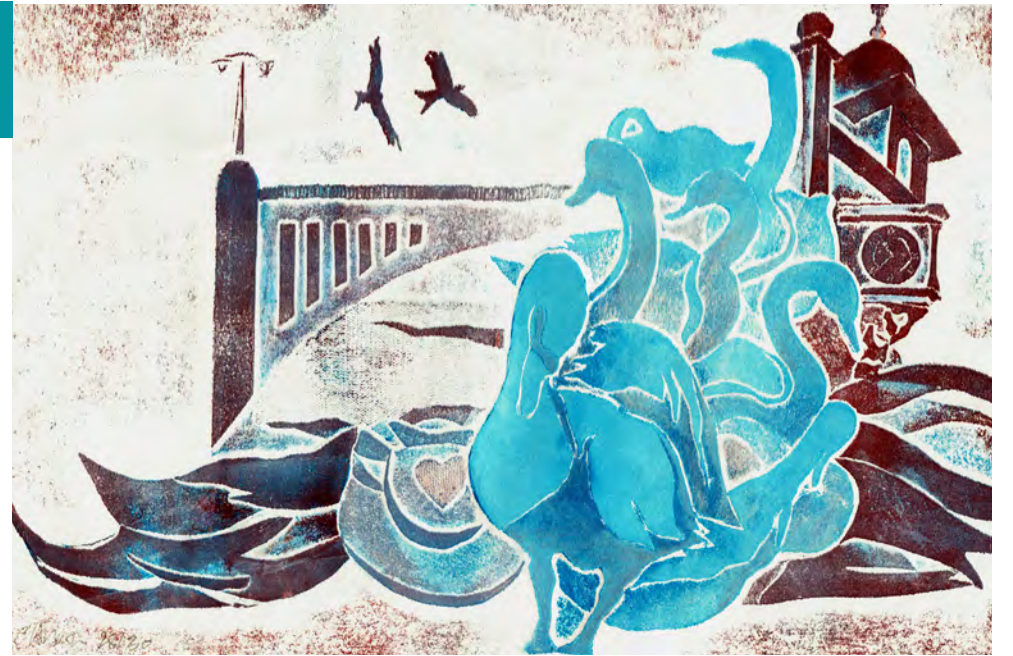
## SIGNS OF RENEWAL

by Phil Chatfield

THIS FEBRUARY edition of the Caversham Bridge looks forward to Spring, as the days lengthen and plants and wildlife begin to prepare for the new season. Valentine's Day on 14 February has become a celebration of love and our Talking Point by Penny Cuthbert takes this as its theme (p2). Just a week later, we begin our preparations for Easter on Shrove Tuesday, 21 February, the last day before the 40 days of fasting for Lent. Traditionally we eat pancakes with sugar and lemon, but Sarah Roy offers an alternative (p15).

We also take a look at the past, with an article on the vanished Caversham Place (p8) and a review of a book on the pubs of Reading, including Caversham (p6). Our Ecotip provides timely advice for dog walkers on minimising disturbance to wildlife at a time when birds are starting to nest (p9). Our Community Connection this month has a link to improving the local environment, highlighting the work of Keep Emmer Green to transform the area around the shopping precinct (p11).

Our Creative Caversham item features Carolyn Nash, who is both musician and artist (p12), and our Local Scene painting by Janina Maher is the colourful Papa Gee's Restaurant in the snow (p13). We have included a report on changes to the Highway Code which come into effect at the end of January. If, like me, you passed your driving test years ago, you may not have looked at the Code for a while. So, we



Caversham Collage

by Carolyn Nash

thought it would be useful to highlight the changes, which are both significant and relevant to all road users (p11).

We always welcome contributions from our readers. If you have something which interests you, why not share it? To contribute to future editions of the paper, or make comments on any of our items, please contact us at:

[editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) or leave a message on our new phone number, 0118 328 2754.

## Remembering Olly



by the Editors



During the service photos Office of Matt Rodda MP

ST BARNABAS church in Emmer Green was the venue for a service of remembrance on 3 January for Olly Stephens, who died following a knife attack in Bugs Bottom a year ago. The service was taken by the Bishop of Reading, the Rt Rev Olivia Graham, and attended by around 100 friends and family. It was relayed on loudspeakers to around 200 more people outside of the church.

Olly was just 13 years old when he was murdered following an argument on social media. While three teenagers have been convicted, knife crime and its promotion through social media remains a very real threat to teenagers. His parents, Stuart and Amanda Stephens, renewed their appeal for an end to knife crime and expressed their concern over the role of social media. They have been lobbying MPs for support of the Online Safety Bill, which is due for debate in Parliament later this year. The Bill

aims to hold technology giants owning social media websites to account.

Reading East MP Matt Rodda also attended the service. He spoke of his concerns about knife crime and its promotion through social media, and his hopes for the Bill as a means of protecting our young people with more effective screening of dangerous content. He also thanked local churches, sports clubs, councillors, Olly's school and others for their work to support Olly's family and the police.

Bishop Olivia spoke of the incomparable grief of parents who have lost a child, or a sibling who has lost their brother or sister. She remarked on the "courageous way they have taken something evil and terrible that's happened to them and in the depths of their loss have found the energy to be able to say we want to do something about this".

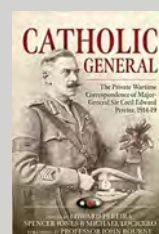
At 15.46, the moment Olly died, there was a minute's silence, and after the service, the congregation were invited to light candles in his memory.

### INSIDE

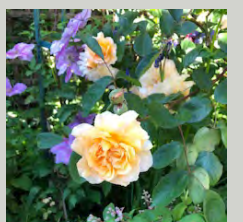
All bar none  
Reading pubs  
remembered  
– p6



The vanished  
Caversham Place  
– p8



Plant of the month  
– p10





# Know you ARE deeply loved

FEBRUARY BRINGS the arrival of Valentine's Day, which is celebrated by around 40 million Brits who spend an average of £35 each (in 2020) on gifts, takeaways and movies! I can still remember the year I came home to a kitchen full of flowers... and then my (now late) husband Simon telling me how much he'd spent on a new computer! I wonder what past Valentine's Days have been like for you – a joyful celebration of love and romance, a time of thankfulness, or a difficult day full of difficult feelings, for whatever reason? What will it be this year?

St Paul's description of love in 1 Corinthians 13 has become one of the best known and best-loved Bible passages, often read at weddings. He begins, "If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing...". When Paul wrote these words, he was writing to a church that prided itself on its spirituality, but which was considerably lacking in love. He was really telling them off, challenging them to focus less on their spiritual gifts and more on the depth of their love for one another. He then goes on to describe real love – not a romantic, sentimental kind of love, but a deep, gutsy, committed kind of love:



## Talking Point – by Rev Penny Cuthbert

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious, boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrong-doing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." (1 Corinthians 13 verses 4-8)

This is the kind of love we're all encouraged to aspire to: to think a little less about what we hope to receive in and from relationships, and a little more about what we might give. Do we encourage and build up the people we are close to? Do we forgive swiftly, and look for the best in them? Are we there for them in the tough times? Are our words and actions helping those we love to flourish? It is sometimes suggested that we might try replacing the word 'love' with our own name in these verses and see if we think the words ring true: "X is patient, X is kind, X is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude..." etc. How do we measure up?

The passage is often read at weddings. It is also often read at funerals, as part of a celebration of a life that has been well-lived, of a person who has loved well. Reflecting on the quality of their love can inspire us to try and be more like them.

The words are also true above all of Jesus: he was and is patient and kind. He wasn't and isn't envious, boastful, arrogant or rude. Read the gospels and you will find he lived a life of sacrificial love: healing, restoring, raising up, encouraging, forgiving, and ultimately dying for those he loved – including you and me. Jesus reveals to us what God is like. He IS love, and is the source of love.

So, however you spend Valentine's Day this year, know you ARE deeply loved, precious to God, honoured in his sight. He rejoices over you with singing. And HIS love never fails.

Rev Penny Cuthbert, Associate Vicar,  
St John's Caversham

## 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: 0118 947 9505 [rector@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:rector@ctmparish.org.uk)

Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810

Rev'd Andy Storch Tel: 07365 555 905

Contact: [admin@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:admin@ctmparish.org.uk) or 0118 996 8836  
Correspondence address: Church House, 59 Church Street,  
Caversham RG4 8AX

#### Current services

St Peter's Church –

1st Sunday of the month:

8:00 BCP Holy Communion

9:30 Service of the Word with junior choir and potential for baptism

2nd and 4th Sundays 9:30

Holy Communion using existing service booklets, with adult and junior choir and Sunday Club

3rd Sunday

9:30 Holy Communion in a new, shorter format with junior choir

18:30 Sung Choral Evensong.

St John's Church Gosbrook Road Sunday services

8:00 Online CTM Youtube channel (stays available to watch anytime)

9:30 1st and 3rd Sunday Holy Communion, 2nd All Age

Worship, 4th Service of the Word

Sunday Club for children on 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays

St Margaret's Church Mapledurham – 11:15

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: 0118 947 2788 [www.standrewscaversham.org](http://www.standrewscaversham.org)

#### Current services

St Andrew's weekly services are Sundays at 8:00 and 10:00. The 10:00 is also livestreamed on the St Andrew's YouTube channel. Prayer Book Communion at 11.30 on the first Sunday of each month. More info on the parish website. [www.standrewscaversham.org/services](http://www.standrewscaversham.org/services)  
Wednesday 8pm Compline (in church/vicarage)

### St Barnabas Emmer Green

David Howell (Churchwarden)

Email: [churchwarden@saintbarnabas.org.uk](mailto:churchwarden@saintbarnabas.org.uk)

#### Current Services

1st, 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays of the month at 9:30:

Parish Communion

1st Sunday of the month at 11:30: All Age Service

3rd Sunday of the month at 9:30: Service of the Word

Every Wednesday at 10:30: Midweek Communion

### CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)

(United Reformed Church)

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 David Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

#### Current services

Sunday – Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road – 10:30 – (also available on Zoom – email:

[martin.beukes@methodist.org.uk](mailto:martin.beukes@methodist.org.uk) for details)

Sunday – Caversham Methodist Church, Gosbrook Road – 10:30

### CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor: Colin Baker

Church office Tel: 0118 954 5353

Email: [secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)

#### Current services

Sunday worship is at 10:30 each week

A link is placed later on Sundays at:

[www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)

and on YouTube channel

[www.youtube.com/user/CavershamBaptist](https://www.youtube.com/user/CavershamBaptist) where the recorded service is shown.

### GRACE CHURCH

(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Pastor Keith Saynor

Tel: 0118 947 4529 [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: 0118 946 3009 [www.ntcreading.org.uk](http://www.ntcreading.org.uk)

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

#### Our Lady and St Anne

Mgr Patrick Daly, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue.

Tel: 0118 947 1787 [www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

#### Current services

See their web site for services at:

[www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

### St Michael Sonning Common

Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michaels, Sonning Common

Tel: 0118 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.

Our churches are open with some restrictions in place. Most have a range of on-line services, house groups and social meetings, using Zoom and YouTube. For current information, see the websites 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

#### Future editions:

Contributions for the March 2022 issue should be submitted by 1 February and for the April 2022 edition by 1 March These should be e-mailed to: [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)

Dates for advertising copy are 1 February for the March 2022 issue and 1 March for the April 2022 issue. These should be e-mailed to: [advertising@cavershambridge.org](mailto:advertising@cavershambridge.org)





## What's On the Caversham Bridge – can you help?

WE ARE LOOKING for a volunteer to help maintain our 'What's On' section for both the paper and our web site. Would you be able to spare 3-4 hours a month to collect information on events in our area and to collate these into a document for publication?

There is a monthly deadline for the printed paper, but the information can be gathered at a time to suit you. Access to the internet and social media is essential as a research tool, although some information is sent to the Editors directly. If you think you could help with this, contact us at [chair@cavershambridge.org](mailto:chair@cavershambridge.org) or leave a message on our answerphone, 0118 328 2754.

### Subscriptions

MANY OF you have already paid your subscriptions for 2022 – thank you. If

you have not yet done so, and you have access to internet banking, you can pay by direct transfer using the following information.

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Unfortunately, we have had a few payments without these details and have not been able to link them with a delivery address. So, if you think you might have omitted adding a reference to your payment details, please contact us at [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org).

*The Editors*



## Write to the editors



### Scout Christmas Post - the Result!

THIS YEAR the 89th Reading Scout Group sorted and delivered 1,698 cards across Caversham and Emmer Green, raising over £890.

About 30 Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers, Leaders, Parents and Friends of the 89th sorted the cards on the evening of Friday 17 December, and 40 teams of 'posties' delivered the cards over the weekend of 18/19. There was one card we thought we couldn't deliver as it had only names on it but, with the help of social media, the recipients were identified and the final card was delivered on Tuesday evening.

Plans are now well advanced to install the defibrillator purchased with the funds raised from the Scout Post at the entrance to the 89th Reading Scout HQ off Kiln Road. It will be available to all users and visitors to the 89th and the local community in the New Year.

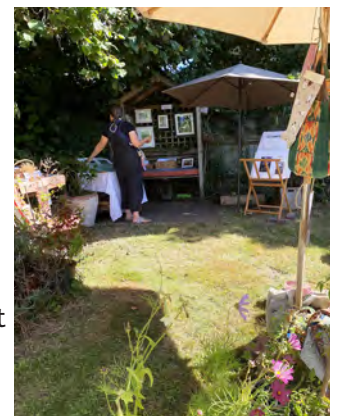
Great Scout Teamwork!

Robin Kent

### Art in the Arbour

A quick note to thank those who supported 'Art in the Arbour' in 2021. Through your support, I have managed to raise over £700 for Launchpad. In addition, money was raised for Readifood, Berkshire MS Therapy Centre, and the Grassroots Empowerment Network (GEN). It was so lovely to have the opportunity to see old friends and to meet new people at a time when we were all having to adapt to the new normal.

Liz Real



*photo L Real*

### Happy Wanderer abroad

I was interested to read the article in the January issue about the churches in Caversham, Dunedin, New Zealand. I remember that when Richard Kingsbury was rector of St Peter's here, he took a sabbatical and visited New Zealand. Among the places he went to was Caversham, Dunedin, and particularly St Peter's there. I cannot recall whether we published any item on this visit in the Bridge at the time, but I do remember his telling me that he kept in contact with the vicar there after returning to this Caversham.

Yours sincerely,  
Eric Chappell

## Poets' Corner

JONATHAN

The phone call  
I had always expected,  
The flood outpouring.  
Dam burst of grief,  
Tears and pain  
That you had suffered  
Even to the end

The hollow you have left  
Within me,  
Your hand  
No longer gripping mine.  
A soul in flight  
And I saw you  
Cool alabaster to be sure.

Long lashed  
beautiful eyes  
shut  
and yet I felt you could see me,  
hear me  
in my grief.

When you asked  
I had said  
You would always  
Be in my heart.

My precious friend  
And now I believe  
In paradise  
At peace.  
*by Nicola Dominic*

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NOODSkin in Church Street, Fourbears Books  
in Prospect Street and at the True Food  
Community Co-Op in Grove Road, Emmer  
Green, opposite St Barnabas church





# "I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU"

by Dr Alison Johnson

2022 IS A SPECIAL year for the World Day of Prayer in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, as this year the service has been prepared by churches from the three nations. It has been both challenging and rewarding to write about the three countries that make up our area, taking account of our landscape, people, culture and our history. The theme of the service is a Bible text from Jeremiah "I know the plans I have for you". The service will celebrate our diversity and the contribution made to our countries by the many groups and individuals who have made their homes here. The Bible text is used to reflect on some of the issues facing us today: domestic abuse and disability, finding hope in difficult situations and encouragement in the help we can give to each other.

The Caversham branch service this year will be a first, as it will be hosted by Caversham Park Church at Caversham Park School, Queensway, Caversham Park Village, RG4 6RP on Friday, 4 March at 19.30. All are welcome to attend. It will be followed by refreshments (Covid-19 permitting!) and there will also be a Traidcraft stall with a range of fair-trade foods and gifts. In the event of last-minute pandemic restrictions preventing an 'in person' service, it will be

switched to an online event.

For more details, please contact your nominated church representative or call Dorothy Abrey on 0118 988 6224 or email [dorothy@gibbard.plus.com](mailto:dorothy@gibbard.plus.com)

To learn more about the World Day of Prayer movement, see [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk)



World Day of Prayer 2022 Artwork by Angie Fox, using a combination of embroidery, appliqué and metalwork.

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## In Memory of Mary Tucker 1951-2021



IT IS A YEAR since Mary Tucker, nee Wigram, passed away. Mary was born in London and brought up in a musical family. When she was 9, they moved to Smeeth in Kent, because of her mother's ill health. Her father became choirmaster there, and Mary attended Ashford School for Girls. She went on to study at Reading University, reading Mathematics and Statistics. She met future husband, Tony, in her first year and they married in 1977. They lived in London, where Mary worked as Secretary to the Chief Pharmacist at Brompton Hospital. The family relocated to Caversham

in 1982. They had three children, and Mary soon became involved in local activities. At the Highmoor Road Methodist Church Playgroup, she was secretary and a helper, making many lifelong friends. She started attending St Peter's church in 1983 and helped with Sunday Club, later setting up a Mothers' Union sewing group. In 2001, Mary became Parish Secretary and served for some years supporting the church council and helping with the management of Church House. Mary was a regular at St Peter's church, singing in the choir until retiring due to ill health. She also sang with the South Chiltern Coral Society from 1990, serving three years as Secretary. She organised the plant stall at the Parish Summer Fete in Caversham Court, and later supported the St Peter's Church Christmas Market. She was involved with a host of other activities, including Church rambles, a craft group, tennis, badminton, a house group and gardening, as well as holding parties for friends. For ten years when the children were at primary school, Mary organised an annual camping weekend for several families, known as 'The Caversham Campers'. She graduated to the comfort of a campervan, enjoying trips to Italy and the Outer Hebrides. After years of research, Mary produced two volumes of her family history, with another two nearly completed. Many holidays included detours to a Public Records Office or cemetery. She had family attachments to Armathwaite, Cumberland and Croyde, North Devon, visiting both most years. There is a bench in her memory just above the National Trust carpark at Croyde, looking over the Bay, if you are passing. Mary noted, "My faith has sustained me through the many cancer treatments I have had in recent years." She is greatly missed by family and her many friends in the community.

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# WHAT'S ON

IF YOU have an event planned, please send details to [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) We need to receive these no later than the 10th of the month before the event for inclusion in the printed paper. Later submissions can be included in our online What's On, which is updated regularly. To see what has been added check: [cavershambridge.org/5154/local-info/whats-on](http://cavershambridge.org/5154/local-info/whats-on)

**Caversham Library** opening: 09:00 -17:00 Tuesday and Friday, 13:00 – 17:00 Thursday and 10:00 – 15:00 Saturday  
[www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/all-libraries/caversham-library](http://www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/all-libraries/caversham-library)  
**Sundays** – Farmer's Market and Artisan Fair 10:00 – 15:00 Caversham precinct  
[www.facebook.com/CAFMarket](https://www.facebook.com/CAFMarket)  
**Tuesdays** – Babies and Toddlers – 10:00 -11:30 – Gosbrook Road Methodist Church- all welcome  
**Tuesdays** – Riverate Choir – 19:30 in term time - Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. Enjoy singing together. For details see <http://riverate.com>  
**Mondays** – Caversham Park Bridge Club – at the Milestone Centre, 19:15 for 19:30 start. Phone Lin 9477820 for further information.  
[www.bridgewebs.com/cavershampark](http://www.bridgewebs.com/cavershampark)  
**Wednesday 2 February** – Walk at Finchampstead Ridges – 5.5 miles 10:30 start - Pang Valley Ramblers. One of a number of walks in their programme. See [www.pvramblers.org.uk](http://www.pvramblers.org.uk) for details.  
**Wednesday 2 February** – Rosehill WI – 14:00 St Barnabas Village Hall. Guest speaker Jennifer Cowling with a talk is entitled "From Page To Stage"

**Wednesday 2 February** – Photographing Plants, Birds and Insects in your garden – 19:30 - virtual talk on Zoom by Gill Ferguson, Caversham Horticultural Society. Tickets via Eventbrite – see [www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk/events.htm](http://www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk/events.htm) for details  
**Wednesday 2 February** – Caversham Heights Society – 'Heavens Above' a talk by Dr Chan Malde, Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. Website [www.cavershamheights.org.uk](http://www.cavershamheights.org.uk)  
**Friday 4 February** – Bereavement Café – monthly drop-in for the bereaved 14:00 – 15:30, St Barnabas Parish Centre, Emmer Green, RG4 8RA Every first Friday of the month. All welcome. Contact Gillian Wilson 0118 947 8772 for information.  
**Saturday 12 February** – Artists & Makers Fair – 10:00-16:00 – Caversham Methodist Hall, 272 Gosbrook Road. Local artists and craftspeople display their work for sale. Free entry. Phone Jean 07808 966928 for information.  
[www.cavershamcrafts.co.uk](http://www.cavershamcrafts.co.uk)  
**Sunday 13th February** – Camping equipment sale – 12:00-15:00 Warren and District Residents Association – Mapledurham Pavilion. Website <https://wadra.org>

**Wednesday 16th February** – Caversham Heights Society – 20:00 'The Chilterns – an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' a talk by John Nichols. Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. Website [www.cavershamheights.org.uk](http://www.cavershamheights.org.uk) for more information.  
**Thursday 17 February** – Caversham WI meeting – 19:30 Church House (next to Waitrose). Every 3rd Thursday of the month. New members are welcome. Email: [cavershamwi@berkshirewi.co.uk](mailto:cavershamwi@berkshirewi.co.uk) Secretary: Joy Kennedy on 07786 642424  
**Monday 21 February** – Fair Trade Fortnight – Events across Reading, details will be updated on our on-line What's On page. See [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk)  
**Wednesday 23 February** – Walk around Stoke Row – 5 miles 10:30 start - Pang Valley Ramblers. See [www.pvramblers.org.uk](http://www.pvramblers.org.uk) for details.  
**Saturday 26 February** – Early Spring Concert – 19:30 - Concerts in Caversham present String Quartets by Haydn, Caroline Shaw and Ravel featuring: Ellie Fagg and Tom Norris violins: Michelle Bruil, viola: Naomi Watts, cello - St Andrew's Church Albert Road RG4 7PL. Tickets available online at [concertsincaversham.co.uk](http://concertsincaversham.co.uk) and at Caversham Picture Framers priced £15, £18, £20, with under 16s free

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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 FORMAL CLOSING date for the latest planning application for **Reading Golf Club (211843)** was 11 January 2022. However, the Planning Officer has confirmed that responses received after this date "will continue to be accepted up until the point that the application is determined." That almost certainly means that you still have time to send your comments. CADRA submitted a detailed response, see [www.cadra.org.uk](http://www.cadra.org.uk). Among other issues, we expressed concern about the secluded play area which would be between two ponds and heavily screened by trees, raising concerns for children's safety and parents' peace of mind.

Beechcroft sought opinion from the Council as to whether the size and significance of their proposed development at **Caversham Park (212072)** would require an EIA screening process. This is not a planning application, but it does provide more information. Plans include: conversion of the main house for 63 assisted living apartments; a 64-bedroom care home to the west of the main house; 33 houses accessed from Peppard Road; 41 new houses and 12 apartments east of the main house; refurbishment and extension of outdoor leisure facilities.

**River Academy (212061)** has now submitted a full application for the secondary school off Richfield Avenue. We have been assessing the expected views of the building, the opportunities to reduce climate change and the measures to minimise car use and have sent comments.

### St Peters Conservation Area

You may have seen that the triangle of land with the large advertising boards (next to the Barclays Bank building) is displaying an advertisement for sale or lease. This is a prominent area in the conservation area where community groups have been trying for some time to secure improvements. We have made representations to the Council concerning the importance of the site and the need for collaboration.



### Write to the editors

#### Covid-19 and the Royal Berkshire Hospital

THIS IS AN appeal to everyone to get vaccinated and boosted as soon as possible, because:

Virtually all patients seriously ill with Covid-19 at the hospital are unvaccinated. Many vaccinated people have caught the Omicron variant, but their symptoms are significantly milder, so they don't need hospitalizing.

The hospital is not overwhelmed but struggles to meet the demand at A&E and to treat non-Covid-19 patients who have waited months while their condition worsen.

Staff still are working extremely hard; they should not have to work till they break.

*Bet Tickner - A Governor at the Hospital*



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## For your bookshelf....



Welcome to 'Fourbears Reviews' where we briefly review a couple of chosen titles from our bookshop 'Fourbears Books' on Prospect Street. As a shop we have plenty of exciting plans for the rest of the year, including a bookclub, newsletter and a bigger and better Fourbears Fest. Watch this space.

by Alex Forbes

LAST OCTOBER we put on Caversham Children's Books Festival, also known as Fourbears Fest. AF Harrold was one of our most popular children's authors, and his book 'Things You Find in a Poet's Beard' perfectly captures his style and writing. The title is as silly as some of the poems contained within. A poet, author and storyteller, AF Harrold had children and adults laughing alike at his event and his poems are funny, and sometimes even sad, but always well written and full of heart. Reading and listening to poetry is attributed by many successful writers as giving them the foundations and love of writing that has benefitted their careers. 'Things You Find....' is a fun introduction to poetry for children, and adults will enjoy reading all the poems, as long as you don't mind being a bit silly.



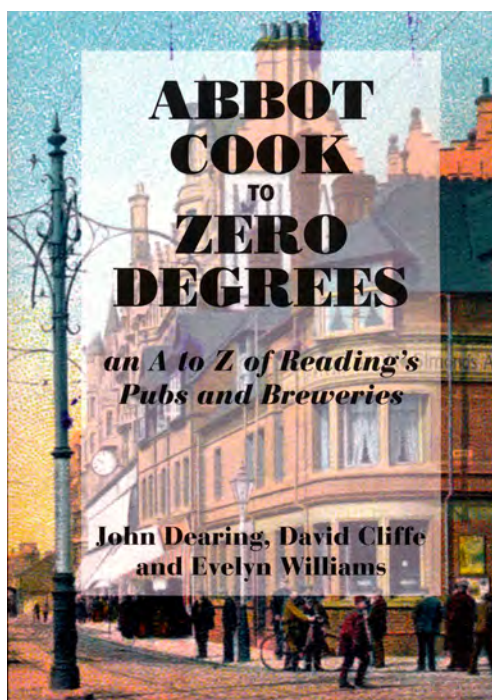
The bear has had a close shave!

photo A Forbes

'Fall' by West Camel is a beautifully written publication from Orenda Books. A man lives in his flat in a tower block. He is the last resident and is refusing to sell to the property developer, which happens to be his twin brother to whom he hasn't spoken to for 40 years. Familiar faces from their pasts appear in the tower block, and everyone has to confront the events of 40 years earlier. You are transported back to a hot summer in the 1980s. West Camel does a great job in making you feel part of the gang. It's definitely worth a read.

Thank you for reading and we look forward to sharing all our plans and reading projects.

## All bar none by Fred Smith



A NEW BOOK lists and describes all the Reading (and Caversham) inns, from the earliest records to the end of 2020. It also lists all the breweries, hence the title, 'Abbot Cook to Zerodegrees: an A to Z of Reading's Pubs and Breweries'. The Abbot Cook is the first pub and the Zerodegrees restaurant and microbrewery the last.

Thirty pictures illustrate the text, chosen for their interest and because they haven't been used in recent publications about Reading.

There is not much to say about some, but the stories of others take up several pages. Besides the facts, the book has the folklore, with anecdotes and memories from people who were drinking in Reading many a year ago.

These accounts are complemented by a street directory, listing the pubs and inns in the order in which they stood along the streets. There follows a set of maps of the central area, showing which buildings the hotels, inns and pubs occupied with a comprehensive index.

A lot of research has gone into the new publication, much of it by John Dearing, who produced a shorter book, 'Reading Pubs', in 2009. This time he is joined by David Cliffe, who ran the local studies collection at Reading Central Library, and Evelyn Williams. Evelyn's MBA dissertation compared the brewing industries in Reading and in Dusseldorf. Both she and John are long-standing members of CAMRA and the Brewery History Society.

All three are members of the History of Reading Society, which self-published the book. It was launched at the Zerodegrees Microbrewery in Reading last September. A limited number of copies were produced, so don't leave it too long if you'd like a copy! It is available from Reading Museum Shop in the town centre, or Fourbears Books in Prospect Street, Caversham, price £12.00.

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## A stylized illustration of a lotus flower and its seed pod. The seed pod is large, rounded, and orange with dark green, irregular patches. Below it, the lotus flower is shown in a yellowish-green color with dark green outlines. The background is a solid green color with a fine, woven texture.

Fungi used to be thought of as a part of the vegetable kingdom, but now they are reckoned to be in a kingdom of their own, neither animal nor plant, but with some of the properties of both. The usefulness of some of them as food, to make bread rise and to make alcohol has been known for millennia. Now scientists are discovering how vital they are in enabling green plants and trees to grow. With many species, we only notice them when they come out of the ground, or out of trees, to shed their spores.

The reason for the interest is that the Red Cage, or Lattice Fungus, very rarely occurs as far north as Great Britain, and looks so strange when it does. Accounts in old books mention the Channel Islands and the south coast of England, where it was usually recorded as being in gardens. One recent report said that there had been only five authenticated records in England, apart from this one. If this is true,

I had only seen it once before, when on holiday on Crete. The specimen was well past its best, and wasn't worth photographing, so the picture I've used comes from the cover of an old book I bought in a second-hand bookshop as a schoolboy – 'Fungi, and How to Know Them', by E W Swanton, published in 1909.

...the fungus is attracting flies...

In Caversham, the householders threw away the first fungus, thinking it was a bit of a toy which had been chewed up by a dog. They mowed the lawn and thought that was that. But altogether, 13 of these cages cropped up in succession.

Maybe its appearance is yet another sign of global warming. It's something to look out for in summer – and you certainly can't mistake it for anything else.

## Page 7



# CAVERSHAM PLACE

by Antony Gordon



Photograph taken in 1935 - The wing, shown on the right of the house, was added to the original building to provide a smoking room which, in time, became a playroom.

Interior of the house.

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In 1924 Major-General Sir Cecil Pereira (1869-1942), a British Army officer who commanded the 2nd Division during World War One, acquired 21 acres of land in what was then part of Caversham Park. He commissioned the architect Clough Williams-Ellis (1883-1978), of Portmeirion fame, who had been one of Pereira's aides-de-camp, to design a country house for his large family. One of Sir Cecil's brothers was Father Edward Pereira, who until 1929 was the headmaster of the Oratory School based in Caversham Park. Cecil himself had been a pupil there.

As his family grew up and moved away, the house became too large for Sir Cecil who moved to London, where he died in 1942. The house was let until 1948 when Sir Cecil's son, George, moved into the house with his family. However, it became too much for him and, in 1954, he sold Caversham Place to Lady Katherine

Mary Laycock for £14,000. Her son Robert Laycock was then the Governor of Malta. She died on 2 February 1959.

After her death, the developers - Davis Estates Ltd - bought up Caversham Park Estates Ltd and Lady Laycock's land for the eventual development of Caversham Park Village.

There were plans to turn Caversham Place into a community centre to serve the new estate. But the plan was eventually rejected as the building was unsuited to the purpose and the house was demolished to make way for more houses at the bottom of Ulster Close (Nos 6-11) in 1973/74. There are reports from descendants of the architect who say that Clough Williams-Ellis fought against demolition. The Milestone Centre was purpose-built as a community centre for Caversham Park Village in a more accessible location in 1978. The story of Caversham Place lasted less than 50 years and has left no trace.



Ordnance Survey map 1930s – Caversham Place shown to the right of Caversham Park.



On the left of Caversham Place are 3-5 Ulster Close, behind is Galsworthy Drive.

Louise Amanda Sheppard (BA/Dip)

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## Barking up the wrong tree

CAVERSHAM IS blessed with large public open spaces for dogs to race around. Within the town there are the floodplain meadows along the Thames, and a trio of grassland, woodland and scrub areas along the Northern boundaries at Clayfield Copse, Mapledurham Playing Fields and Bugs Bottom, leading out into Oxfordshire countryside.

Dogs need regular exercise, and also enjoy a good sniff and explore, but the scrub and woodland areas are also the nesting sites for much of the bird population in the town. More than half the population in the UK encourage birds to visit their gardens by putting out food, and some provide

nest boxes that are useful for small birds, but the scrub and woodland areas provide a much wider range of potential nest sites to suit more species, as well as the juicy caterpillars and spiders for the nestlings. Dogs exploring the scrub and woodland areas create disturbance which disrupts the adults when collecting food for nestlings, interferes with their need to rest, and hence reduces the number of successful nesting sites.

The blackbirds and thrushes have started nesting already, and many more native species will join in by the end of this month and during March, with migrant species returning later in April and May. Please encourage your dogs to race around the grassland areas, but keep them to heel or on a short leash whilst going through woodland and scrub areas, and keep your walk through these areas to the main paths.

by Tricia Marcouse

# Tree cheers

by Tricia Marcouse

THE GREEN Christmas sale at Caversham Court in December was brilliantly arranged for a rare non-rainy day and accompanied by carols from the Waltham St Laurence Brass Octet. The sale of Scots Pine Christmas trees raised just over £1,650, which will pay for the insurance, new tools and operating expenses for Econet conservation volunteers to work for another year on local sites.

Sales were less than in previous years,

possibly due to radio and TV programmes suggesting artificial trees are less messy, and a more environmentally sustainable choice which can be handed down through the generations. If you have a mansion with a large, airy, dry attic for storage this may be true. But our trees come from the essential management of lowland heath to stop the heather being shaded out by pines. They NEVER drop their needles and smell gorgeous. More will be available this coming December! Thank you to everyone who came and bought either a tree or goods from the RSPB, Local Beekeepers or FairTrade stalls.

## Confused of Caversham

I KNOW I AM not the only person confused by the recent change at our local bottle banks. New notices have appeared on them indicating we no longer have to sort them by colour (Brown/Clear/Green). After years of carefully separating the bottles and jars, it is hard not to continue to do so! Apparently, a new 'optical' sorting system has been introduced. This means the processors of the waste glass from our area can now sort the broken glass pieces into their different colours mechanically, as well as dealing with bottle tops. It is still helpful if you remove the corks, plastic sleeves and any wire closures.

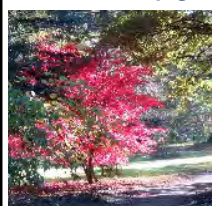
Phil Chatfield/Tricia Marcouse



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I MUST ADMIT, as I write this article I feel slightly guilty. The reason is that it's a case of writing about what I might do, and then perhaps *not* actually doing it. Having made this confession, I will now reveal my *possible* intention for the coming gardening season.

Just before Christmas, I was reading my RHS journal 'The Garden', which suggested that many modern gardeners were adopting a cottage garden style. It said there is such a need these days to make our gardens wildlife friendly that we must all do our best to achieve this. According to the writer, a good number of plants in a small area will provide diversity, and we need to relax and let our gardens go wild. To quote the article, "the gardener needs only to do a spot of coaxing and 'editing' behind the scenes".

I wouldn't class myself as 'modern', but I can see this fitting into my world. Over the years I have blamed the garden centres and newspapers for leading me astray. They have tempted me into buying plants I probably didn't need or ones I hadn't a clue where to plant. I am probably not so gullible now as I have been in the past, when I purchased things like 'climbing strawberries' that didn't climb and 'Blue roses' that weren't blue. Nevertheless, I am still too readily inclined to fall for some of the beauties on offer. The result has been shambolic at times, with my poor garden suffering as I placed the wrong plants in the right places and the right plants in the wrong places.

Equally, I haven't much of a clue about garden design, and have always made the excuse

that my garden is too small. Also, unless I win a million with my premium bonds, I cannot afford to pay someone to draw up plans and do the work for me.

So now if I have a cottage garden I might not have to worry too greatly about the design. Nevertheless, I want, if possible, to have a good display, so I will try to plant in numbers and have groups of, say, at least five penstemon or five perennial wallflowers. (Actually, the real reason is that I have taken lots of cuttings and they are waiting in my greenhouse!) Apparently, one thing I will have to remember is to plant things closer. In the past I was taught to give plants space to grow, but now I will have to crowd them together.

But wait a moment, there is already a crowd problem! I have a clump of lovely Agapanthus that flowered beautifully in 2020 (see photograph) but that didn't do at all well last year due to being jam-packed and needing more space.

Darn it, is nothing straightforward in this gardening world of ours?



The Agapanthus at its best

photo E Cooper

## Plant of the month - Bare roots

text and photos by Louise Hampden

I HAVE TO admit to being a bit of a rose collector. I'm not a fanatic but, over the years, they have crept in and found places against fences and walls, in borders and in pots. On a sleepless night I sometimes count how many I have and, at the last reckoning, it was probably over twenty-five. Some names I remember, others I have forgotten, but there are a few that have really won my heart.

You may ask why talk about roses towards the end of winter? The answer is that in winter nurseries supply roses 'bare root'. This means when you buy them, whether online or direct, they will have no soil on them. These plants are dormant and have not yet woken up to the warmth of Spring. It's an ideal time to buy, as they are far cheaper than potted roses bought later in the year. They can be planted out straight away, and will settle in much more easily and with a minimum of watering. Don't plant them out if the ground is frozen. Once you get them home, place the roots in a bucket of water so they don't dry out before you are ready to plant them. Just improve the soil a little if you can, water them in well, and then stand back and wait.

Most gardens these days are fairly small, so it is doubly important each plant earns its place, whether in foliage, form or flowering. In my garden, I like the

roses to flower for at least six months, which is entirely possible with a bit of research. I'd also recommend investigating disease resistance and, if you have a spot in mind, roses that will grow in sun or shade.

My ultimate favourite is Lady of Shalott. I grew her in a pot for three years then planted her out into the garden, where she displays deep peach flowers from late April through into December. The leaves are glossy and healthy, and all I do to maintain her beauty is to 'dead head' the flowers once they have died, and reduce her size by cutting back a third of it in late winter.

*...She is quite glorious...*

One rose consistently voted in the top ten is Gertrude Jekyll. She is quite glorious, with beautifully formed bright pink flowers and powerful perfume. A single bloom picked and placed by a chair is a delight. I find hardy geraniums perfect planting partners for roses, as they cover the lower stems and add an extra layer of interest. Here, I have Geranium 'Wargrave Pink' wending its way up and around her lower stems.

If you have a shadier spot in the garden, Buff Beauty is a winner. The leaves are glossy and healthy,

and the multi-headed flowers go on well into the autumn.

Finally, my newest acquisition is Eustacia Vye. Time will tell, but I can certainly vouch for the beauty of the flowers. I'm looking forward to seeing her perform in the summer months.



Eustacia Vye



Lady of Shalott



Gertrude Jekyll

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# Community Connections

by Caroline Gratrix

This month we learn something about local resident Richard Parry.



Richard *photo R Parry*

OUR COMMUNITY Connections articles aim to highlight local people who value a good sense of community. This month I was really inspired to meet Richard Parry from the Keep Emmer Green (KEG) community group. As many of you will be aware, the KEG group are opposed to the development of Reading Golf Course in Emmer Green. They are concerned about the potential

loss of green space, the effect on traffic and local services, and the subsequent environmental impact of the proposed changes. Recently they have widened their community engagement; KEG volunteers helped replant the hedging around Emmer Green Park, and are also responsible for sourcing and arranging the new plants that have been planted on the green outside Budgens. They have plans to establish hedges along the perimeter fence too, with a view to making the area a more inclusive and inviting community space. If you would like to donate any plants, or volunteer to help with some of these community initiatives, you can contact them via their website [www.keepemmergreen.com](http://www.keepemmergreen.com).

**Let's find out a little more about Richard:**  
**How long have you lived in Emmer Green?**  
We moved to Emmer Green in 1987.

**Where are your favourite places to eat, drink and shop in Emmer Green/RG4?**

I am an early-morning shopper at Budgens and McColl's in Emmer Green, and the ladies at both are keen supporters of our efforts to make the green space more attractive. Favourite eating places would be The Packhorse on the Woodcote Road and Quattro Italian in Caversham.

**How do you think we can all be eco-friendlier in our area?**

The most disappointing experience I have on a daily basis is seeing the amount of litter casually dropped around the Budgens site, particularly the food and drink packages clearly dropped from cars before they leave the car park. It would be fantastic if everybody who uses the shopping precinct took care to keep it tidy.



Planting outside Budgens *photo R Parry*

**Being part of a community yields a wealth of benefits. How would you strengthen our sense of community in Emmer Green?**

In the last three years I have become aware of just how many people really care about the local community and its environment. The number of conversations I have when tending the shrubs and flowers at Budgens is amazing. It would be good to identify a common cause that would bring all these people together. Perhaps the creation of the arboretum/public amenity on the golf course land?

**If you could bring anything to Emmer Green – an event, an experience, a shop, what would it be?**

I think the arboretum would transform the area for the community, young and old.

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## Rules of the road

text and photo by George Grubb

DID YOU know about changes to the Highway Code due to come into effect at the end

of January this year? If you do, you are probably in the minority. Despite a consultation on the changes in 2020, there has been little publicity about the revised Code, which was presented to Parliament on 1 December 2021.

The most notable change is the establishment of a hierarchy of road users, meaning those who pose the highest level of risk to others have a higher level of responsibility. For example, a cyclist will have greater responsibility to look out for those who are walking. Drivers have the greatest responsibility, and will need to look out for horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians.

In summary, some of the key new advisory measures for drivers are:

- To give way to pedestrians who are crossing or waiting to cross roads into which or from which their vehicle is turning
- To leave at least 1.5 metres when overtaking cyclists at speeds up to 30 miles per hour and more at higher speeds
- To open car doors using the 'Dutch Reach' method. This means opening the car door from the inside with

the hand that's furthest from the door handle. You can do it whether you're a driver or a passenger. So the driver should open the door with his or her left hand and the front passenger should use his or her right hand. This leads you naturally to turn your head towards traffic/cyclists coming towards you from behind, thus reducing the risk of hitting a passing cyclist, motorcyclist, or other vehicle

- Do not cut across cyclists or horse riders going ahead when turning in to or out of a junction (to prevent the so-called left hook collision)

The Code advises cyclists to give way to pedestrians on shared-use cycle tracks, to slow down when necessary and to 'let them know you are there' by, for example, 'ringing your bell or calling politely'.

According to the Reading Cycle Campaign, which works for a cycle friendly Reading, 'these changes will set new standards for sharing road space with cyclists'.

For more information see the Gov.uk website and search for Highway Code.

To learn about the 'Dutch Reach', see

[www.cyclinguk.org/dutchreach](http://www.cyclinguk.org/dutchreach) or

[www.theaa.com/driving-advice/safety/dutch-reach](http://www.theaa.com/driving-advice/safety/dutch-reach).



## Finding new pathways to self-expression



**The sound and the silence:  
how Carolyn combines both  
music and art in her life,  
as she explains to  
Elestr Lee**



*Corps de ballet* – inspired by Carolyn's love of dance. *Venice* (below left), and her original print, *Reading* (below right) All photos C Nash

LIKE MANY of those interviewed for this monthly feature, Carolyn Nash moved to the Caversham area – in her case around 35 years ago – stayed and, over the decades, has both contributed to and benefitted from the creative riches our area offers. When she was seven years old, her parents acquired a piano and she had lessons for a year. "But I didn't want to do piano. I wanted to do ballet, like my friend!" Carolyn recalls. However, as a teenager, she changed her mind; a younger sister started learning the piano and Carolyn decided it was something she did want to do. "Then my piano teacher suggested I should learn an orchestral instrument as well and, as a late starter (I was 14 or 15 by then), it had to be viola, double bass or bassoon."

Viola was chosen and, once Carolyn started playing in an orchestra with other youngsters, music really took off for her. "I got a place at the London College of Music where I took my graduate diploma. I spent a further year at Trinity College studying for my performer's diploma in both viola and piano. I did some work as a 'dep' (deputy) for the BBC Ulster Orchestra then, instead, started instrumental teaching as a peripatetic back in Lancashire. But in such a vast county this involved more driving than teaching, so I decided to use the PGCE I'd obtained from Manchester University, and spent a few years as a classroom music teacher. This was followed by further instrumental peripatetic posts in North Manchester and Sandwell, where the areas covered were not so geographically spread. Eventually I moved to Caversham, where I started working for BYMT

– now Berkshire Maestros – and I taught violin and viola in various local schools."

Raising a son and twin daughters, Carolyn also teaches privately, as well as being a member of local orchestras and enjoying playing chamber music with friends. Ballet – which she fell in love with as a child – has remained a lifelong passion. "Other people do yoga or meditation. For me, dancing to music transports me. I go to a class in Shinfield, as well as in Caversham. In the past, I have taken exams and been in shows, but nowadays ballet is something I do purely for pleasure."

### End of a journey

However, Carolyn has also always enjoyed drawing, painting and other means of creativity. She has taken part in the Caversham Arts Trail in previous years, and also takes part in the Christmas Art Fair at St Andrews. While she was studying for her PGCE at Manchester, she took both ballet and drawing classes, and later she did an 'Access to Art' course. With her busy teaching and family commitments, initially there wasn't time to complete a full-time degree. For Carolyn, who had long enjoyed watercolour and printing, enrolling for the Fine Arts degree at Reading University was the end of a long journey. "I always wanted to make music – but I also always wanted to create art."

"The fine arts degree really broadened my awareness of contemporary art," she says. "I really value having done it. Nowadays, I do the things I really want to do – and it's an added pleasure when people appreciate my work and want

to buy it. I don't do it to make money – but as a means of expression."

Carolyn has a particular interest in collagraph prints – a kind of collage process in which various materials and textures can be combined to create a print. "I have my own press – though it's quite a small one," she says. And she has also taken up jewellery making, enjoying re-working old pieces, as well as taking silversmith courses at West Dean College of Arts and Conservation.

Having retired from Berkshire Maestros, Carolyn still enjoys teaching, her artistic endeavours, and dance. "The pandemic hasn't affected my art. My music pupils all switched to Zoom lessons – although this meant I had to get BT to come and replace my telephone cable, as it was completely inadequate for my broadband needs! I didn't lose any pupils during this time – in fact I gained some."

"I was able to do a tap-dancing class online. And I even signed up to English National Ballet, who were offering classes during lockdown. It was better than nothing – we all had to be resourceful!"

Carolyn reflects on the opportunities she had when she was growing up. "Instrumental lessons were free, you were even given an instrument to start on. But nowadays the costs are prohibitive, and I do worry that the only children who get such opportunities today are those who can easily afford it. I am concerned about the cuts to both music and arts courses. Art is about experimenting. We all need space to play with ideas – to explore, and to work out ways to express ourselves."

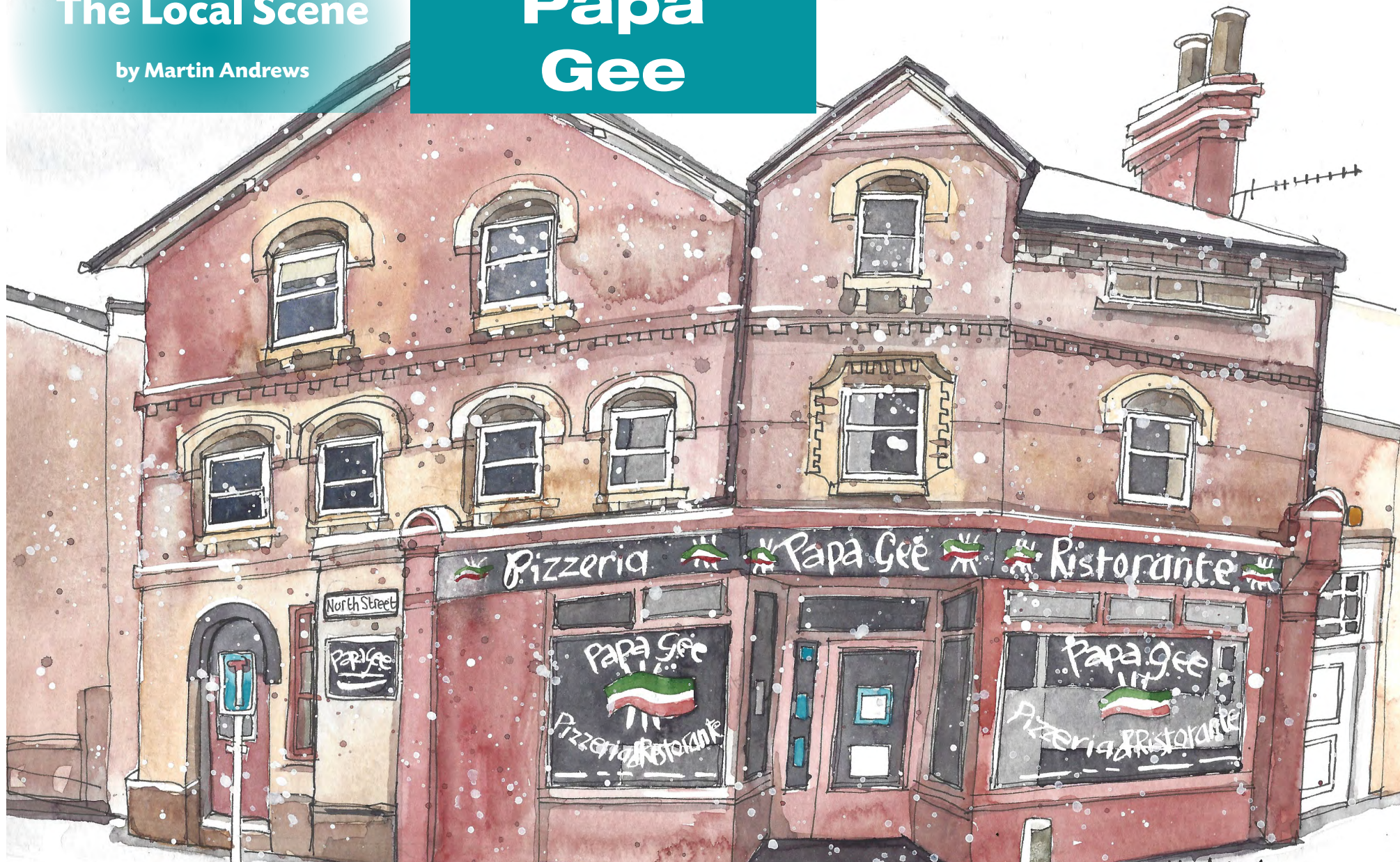




## The Local Scene

by Martin Andrews

# Papa Gee



Drawing by Janina Maher

[www.janinamaher.artweb.com](http://www.janinamaher.artweb.com)

JANINA MAHER'S drawing this month shows the Papa Gee Restaurant and Pizzeria at 5 Prospect Street in the depths of winter snow. Yet the colourful Italian flags on the windows remind us of the Mediterranean sun, and inside you will find the warmth of a Neapolitan welcome. Papa Gee (yes, he is a real person!)

started as a youth selling coconuts on beaches and then serving street food in the crowded streets of Naples. Inspired by the recipes of his mother, he eventually owned restaurants under his own name. After moving to Reading, he owned a pizzeria on the Caversham Road for many years before moving to Prospect Street in 2017. It is truly a family business: Mama Gee (Odetta) is a familiar face in the restaurant, his daughters Amalia and Anita are front-of-house, while Papa Gee is hard at work in the kitchen.

Many will remember the previous restaurant, My A La Carte, which occupied number 5. It was run by a brother and sister and the sister, Yasmina Siadatan, was winner of the famous television show 'The Apprentice'.

A hundred years ago this prominent corner position on Prospect Street and North Street was occupied by the Co-operative Society Ltd, flanked either side by Colebrook & Co. 'Purveyors of Meat, Poultry and Game, Fish and Ice' and Gale's Cycle Works. The buildings date from the end of the nineteenth century, so many other businesses must have carried on there contributing to our busy high street which is still thriving today.

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## First Impressions Matter

# Cover letters

by Laura Harmsworth



*I'M OFTEN asked if a cover letter or email is required when sending your CV to a recruiter or hiring manager. I suggest writing a cover letter whether it's asked for or not.*

Your letter should:

1. Introduce you to an organisation, explain your motivation for applying to the role/company, and highlight your key skills.
2. Illustrate your level of written communication skills - check your spelling and grammar, and don't use text speak.

The key things to cover are:

1. Why you want to do this particular role.
2. Why you want to work for the company.
3. Can you do the role?

Top tips on how to write a cover letter

- One page.

- Include your name and contact details.
- State the role you're applying to. If you're applying speculatively, tell the company what area of the business you'd like to work in and why.
- What attracts you to the role and the company – read the news, business reports, company website, values, social media.
- Highlight the three key skills they are looking for and write a sentence or two about how you match this with your experience/voluntary work/interests etc.
- Thank them for reading your letter, state your CV is attached, and that you look forward to hearing

from them soon.

- Close with 'Yours sincerely' if you have their name, otherwise use 'Yours faithfully.'

If you'd like a free cover letter template, send me a message!

You can follow Laura on:

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

or on LinkedIn, where she posts tips and articles:

[www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth](http://www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth)

Her website is: [www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk](http://www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk)

Email Laura at [contact@cavershamcvwriting.co.uk](mailto:contact@cavershamcvwriting.co.uk)



## Look Left – news from the Weller Centre

by  
Hazel Bingham

NOT LONG AGO I was covered in cobwebs with a witch crashing into me. This turned into poppies and autumn leaves, quickly followed by tinsel, baubles and beautiful decorations hung, not so gently, by a group of young children. Now I find myself cold and naked waiting for ...

Oh I'm so sorry I've forgotten to introduce myself. I'm the Weller Centre Theme Tree. You can find me just inside the door, on the left. Each month I'm going to host different themes. Some of them require your input, some our under 5's will create (although I ask the adults to hang them) and some will just be informative.

I will share with you, my followers, some of the information from inside the Centre that you may not hear elsewhere. From my vantage point, I see everyone and everything that comes and goes. I can tell you I've seen some rather nice looking care packs pass by recently. I'll also have information on the groups that

meet at the centre.

The themes for February are Chinese New Year, Valentines Day and love your pet, so perhaps you could send in pictures of your pets via Facebook or email: ([admin@wellercentre.org.uk](mailto:admin@wellercentre.org.uk)) so my 'staff' can print it and hang it on to me.' Keep an eye on Facebook to follow progress and check for planned activities at the Centre.

The Theme Tree  
photo H Bingham



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# Get Jamming with the Jam Lady

Sarah Roy



HAVE YOU noticed the Easter Eggs filling the supermarket shelves in January? We must be looking forward to Lent and Easter. But before both of those, we Brits do love to celebrate Pancake Day on Shrove Tuesday. Traditionally, it was to use up all the rich foods, like butter and eggs, as Christians prepared for their period of abstinence in Lent. Nowadays, the meaning might be lost on many, but the tradition remains. I love to eat pancakes with Lemon Curd, a different take on the traditional lemon and sugar, but one that I think is even tastier. What do you love on yours?

## Lemon Curd

### Ingredients:

12 unwaxed lemons  
190g butter  
750g granulated sugar  
6 eggs, beaten

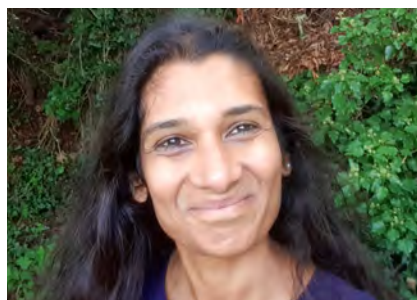
### Method

1. Wash the jars and lids in hot water. Put into a warm oven (175°C) for 15 min to sterilise them.
2. Wash the lemons, then grate off the rind. Cut in half and extract the juice
3. Melt the butter in a heavy-based saucepan then turn off the heat

4. Add the rind and juice and stir in the sugar until it has dissolved
5. Slowly beat in the eggs with a whisk - this must be done with the heat turned off to ensure the eggs do not curdle
6. Now, slowly turn up the heat, stirring all the time, so that the mixture gradually comes to the boil. Leave to boil for only a minute or so. Curd is different to jam as it thickens as it cools so don't be afraid that it hasn't boiled enough
7. When it is ready, ladle into the hot jars right to the top and firmly seal the lids. Store in a cool, dark place for up to 6 months and refrigerate after opening



Enjoy on freshly made pancakes this Pancake Day – crêpes or American Style, it's up to you!



## A spoonful of sugar....

HAVING EMERGED from uncertainty around Covid, Christmas and New Year celebrations, and the long days of January, some of us may be recalibrating our relationship with food, especially sugar.

Food is an energy source. Used well, it will maintain a steady energy level throughout the day; used badly and our energy levels peak and trough, along with our ability to function properly. When and what form of sugar we consume will determine the quality both of activity and rest periods.

As someone who is hypoglycaemic (having to watch for low sugar signs from the body), I wanted to focus especially on the impact of blood sugar regulation on all our bodies.

This is how our blood sugar (which provides us with energy) responds when we eat certain food groups:

**Slow-releasing carbohydrates:** blood sugar rises gradually over a few hours.

**Proteins with carbohydrates:** blood sugar rises slowly over a few hours.

**Sugary foods/fast-releasing carbohydrates/sugary drinks:** blood sugar rises within minutes, followed by a dramatic fall.

**Missing a meal:** blood sugar drops. Missing breakfast can have a dramatic effect because there is a long gap between dinner one day and lunch the next.

Maintaining a consistent level of energy throughout the day will improve

our resilience with the key being balancing our blood sugar. We can do this in a number of ways:

- **Never skipping a meal** - this will help prevent blood sugar drops that lead to energy lags and binges.
  - **Eating little and often** - the aim is to eat before we get hungry. This should mean eating something balanced at intervals of no more than three hours, i.e. breakfast, lunch, dinner and mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks
  - **Combining carbohydrate and protein (vegetable or animal)** at each meal and snack with approximately half the amount of protein to carbohydrate.
  - **Avoiding sugary snacks and processed ready meals with high sugar content.** There are hidden sugars in many processed foods, including cereal and juice drinks, so always look at the packaging and make balanced choices to help keep steady blood sugar levels.
  - **Staying hydrated.** Water makes up around 60% of our body mass, so when our supply is depleted, it's no surprise that energy levels will dip. So drink lots of water throughout the day to sustain energy levels.
  - **Drinking less caffeine.** Caffeine raises blood sugar and provides a false sense of energy. The long-term effect of drinking too much caffeine is to deplete the body's energy. So, try to reduce caffeine intake and swap the odd coffee for a glass of water to lead to better sugar regulation.
- So, if we weigh out that spoonful of sugar carefully, we can get the most from one of our most cherished food sources and we won't need much medicine to go down, either!

## THE CHALLENGE SOLUTIONS:

(From left to right) Foul, peeling, heard, hunch, bird, feeling, dove, **love**, emotion, dive, devotion, arrive, loyalty, fall, demotion

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EDITORS: Dr Alison Johnston, Mrs Janet Offord, Mrs Heather Gale, Phil Chatfield, Judith El-Nager  
Email: [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)

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CIRCULATION DELIVERIES:  
Email: [circulation@cavershambridge.org](mailto:circulation@cavershambridge.org)

COMPANY CHAIR: Mr Phil Chatfield  
Email: [chair@cavershambridge.org](mailto:chair@cavershambridge.org)

COMPANY TREASURER: Mrs J Belcher.  
Tel: 0118 947 4772  
Email: [treasurer@cavershambridge.org](mailto:treasurer@cavershambridge.org)

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