



Caversham Bridge



A JUBILEE EDITION

by The Editors

MY DICTIONARY definition of jubilee includes 'a festival or time of rejoicing'. This June, our nation celebrates Queen Elizabeth's 70 years of service as monarch. And we have another 20-page edition of the Caversham Bridge which includes both a 'Talking Point' by Colin Baker which takes the Jubilee as its theme (p2) and an invitation from Churches Together to join them for a Jubilee 'Big Lunch' at Christchurch Meadows (p4).

The idea of helping others runs through several of our articles. Our 'Community Connections' item this month features the work of Kelvin Husbands and Jo McKnight and the Grassrootz Youth Club at the Milestone Centre (p11). The need to address food insecurity here in Caversham is highlighted in work of Readifood (p14) and the responses of local people to the ongoing war in the Ukraine demonstrates our concerns for the wider world (this page and p16 and 17). One of our book reviews looks at the life during World War 2 of Lily and Martin Allies,

who dedicated so much of their time to building both our community and concern for others further afield (p6).

The extra pages in the paper this month are, in part, in response to the items you have sent to us. These range from a letter from postal subscriber Joyce Hicks (p4) to the poem from Audrey Preston (p17) and the item on the new HARMONY choir (p16). Do keep sending us your news!

Our regulars are also here – Happy Wanderer takes an historical theme (p7), Janina's illustration of the busy junction at the foot of Church Road is accompanied by Martin Andrews' historical background (p15) and our Environment page looks at saving energy and the arrival of summer migrating birds (p9). Summer in the garden is the theme of the articles from Les Cooper and Louise Hampden (p10), and don't forget our 'Brighten up your streets' planter competition (p3).

Your comments and contributions are always welcome. You can email: editors@cavershambridge.org or leave a message on our answerphone, 0118 328 2754.



Fourbears Jubilee window

photo P Chatfield

We stand by Ukraine

photos and text by Phil Chatfield

AT THE START of the year, we were looking forward to the celebration of the Queen's Jubilee and perhaps an easing of Covid-19 concerns. We could not have expected a war in the Ukraine and its impacts on our lives. Two years ago, we reported rainbows showing support for the NHS appearing in our windows - now we see the blue and yellow of the Ukrainian flag everywhere.

Local people have responded generously to fund raising efforts to support the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine appeal for the millions of displaced and injured people fleeing the fighting. We have reported on some of these over the last two months and in this edition (p16-17). With no end to the fighting in sight, there is a need to share the burden of caring for the refugees across Europe.

Reading School identified a requirement for tinned food and water purification equipment through school contacts. A teacher there, Chris Evans (a former

Caversham youth worker) co-operated with the local Methodist churches to organise a convoy of vehicles to deliver foods and other vital supplies to the Ukraine. Four parents from the school took 15 tonnes of tinned food, sleeping bags and other supplies to the Polish/Ukrainian border, where they were collected by volunteers from the Ukrainian Baptist Church for delivery in Kyiv and elsewhere.

Following a survey of families, the school identified as many as 50 offers of accommodation for refugees from the war. Several families in our area have offered hospitality. Chris visited Poland early in April, where there are more than 2 million displaced Ukrainians, to try to match these offers with those in need. He was able to organise meetings with refugees and groups helping them to find accommodation. As a result, around 25 potential matches, pairing those in need with local hosts, were identified. By mid-May, the first family had arrived in Caversham, following lengthy administrative delays, and more are expected shortly.



INSIDE

Brighten up your street competition – p3



Creative Caversham – p12



New kids on the block – p18



Don't 'go it alone'!

THIS MONTH is a special one, marking a first for our nation: an extra bank holiday to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee. Seventy years of service to the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth is a remarkable milestone and well worth celebrating.

In fact, officially the seventy-year anniversary fell on 6 February 2022 but, for all the activities that will take place to commemorate this achievement, June should provide better weather (God willing). The events spanning 2-5 June include: Trooping the Colour, Beacons to be lit across the UK and the Commonwealth, a Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral, and a Platinum Party at Buckingham Palace together with a Big Lunch to be held in streets and parks all over the UK.

For Caversham and Reading, the Churches Together have planned a Jubilee Picnic (Big Lunch) on Christchurch Meadows. Bring your own picnic, chairs, and blankets from 12 noon on Sunday 5 June. At 2.30pm there will be a service accompanied by the Salvation Army Band. Everyone is invited.

It seems poignant that we celebrate our Queen's Platinum Jubilee with worship. Among her many roles is that of 'Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England'. What is also of great substance in her life is her Christian faith which is shown in the way she lives and her words so eloquently expressed each Christmas in the Queen's Speech.

What I am really taken with is her call to prayer at her first Queen's speech in 1952. "Pray for me ... that God may give me



Talking Point – Rev'd Colin Baker

wisdom and strength to carry out the solemn promises I shall be making, and that I may faithfully serve Him and you, all the days of my life."

We are blessed as a nation to have a Queen with strong

convictions about faith and such a sense of calling to her vocation as monarch. At her coronation in 1953, wearing a white dress with no jewels or crown, she was anointed with oil by the Archbishop, who prayed inviting the Holy Spirit of God to set her apart as a servant.

The Christian life can be a challenging calling for many of us, but God doesn't want or expect us to 'go it alone'! Clearly as a Christian and monarch, Queen Elizabeth had no intention of doing so, and neither should we! This is especially so in our lives and our Queen's when we are challenged by days when things don't go our way, when we face sorrow, bereavement, loneliness or other such struggles. At such times it is always refreshing to hear the reflections of the shepherd boy, David, and became king of Israel and declared "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want".

It is in this confidence that back in 2008 Queen Elizabeth said: "I hope that, like me, you will be comforted by the example of Jesus of Nazareth who, often in circumstances of great adversity, managed to live an outgoing, unselfish and sacrificial life ... He makes it clear that genuine human happiness and satisfaction lie more in giving than receiving; more in serving than in being served."

So why not join us in celebrating at the Big Lunch on 5 June? I am praying we all enjoy beautiful weather and that everyone gets the opportunity to say thank you to God for Queen Elizabeth who said: "... the teachings of Christ and my own personal accountability before God provide a framework in which I try to lead my life." My prayer for you is that you also would find the same sense of calling.

Rev'd Colin Baker – Caversham Baptist Church

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
Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810
Rev'd Andy Storch Tel: 07365 555 905

Contact: 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

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

Wednesday 8pm Compline (in church/vicarage)

St Barnabas Emmer Green

David Howell (Churchwarden)

Email: 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

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 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

Current services

Sunday worship is at 10:30 each week

A link is placed later on Sundays at:

www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

and on YouTube channel

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

Current services

See their web site for details:

www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk

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Current services

See their web site for services at:

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

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

Future editions:

Contributions for the July 2022 issue should be submitted by 1 June and for the August 2022 edition by 1 July. These should be e-mailed to: editors@cavershambridge.org

Dates for advertising copy are 1 June for the July 2022 issue and 1 July for the August 2022 issue. These should be e-mailed to: advertising@cavershambridge.org

BRIGHTEN UP YOUR STREET COMPETITION

by the Editors

THERE IS STILL time to enter our competition to brighten up our neighbourhoods. Can you make a difference and plant up a few containers to bring interest and excitement to your front garden?

Individuals, groups of neighbours, or even a whole street, can enter, and you can use any kind of container. Let your imagination run wild - you can upcycle old pallets, paint up and plant tyres, use classic containers and hanging baskets, tin baths or even kitchen colanders. How inventive can you be with both the containers and what you fill them with - which could be flowers, vegetables, wildflowers or any other type of plant.

You have until the end of June to enter, and judging will take place in late July. The judges will include Louise Hampden who writes on gardening for us, Jackie Biddle from the



Playhatch Garden Centre, and a representative of our editors' team.

The entry must be visible from the pavement – both for judging but, more importantly, to bring a smile and pleasure to passers-by. Prizes will include vouchers for Playhatch Garden

Centre donated by British Garden Centres.

To enter, register by e-mail to editors@cavershambridge.org including the words Competition Entry in the title, or by letter to Caversham Bridge Planter Competition, Church House, Church Street, Caversham.



Write to the editors

Dear Editors

I always enjoy getting my copy of the Caversham Bridge – always interesting, but especially the April edition – bringing back memories of swimming lessons at the Lido in front of Freebody's house. The lessons were run by Major Ellershaw who, I seem to remember, lived in Playhatch. At that time the swimming area was a bit of the river cordoned off. I am afraid I was not his best pupil – my main memory is of shivering in the unheated water, and the rough gravel at the bottom was a bit hard on the feet of a small child – I was 9 at the time.

Mrs Freebody was very strict. No straying off the path – and no eating or drinking!!

I am enclosing a snap taken by my mother of me with my older sister – who became a very good swimmer. I am afraid I still can't swim properly and avoid doing so as much as possible.

Anyway, your article brought the past back to me. My mother used to take me to Freebody's to hire a dinghy for a row and I did succeed in that – happy days!

Best wishes to everyone producing the paper.

Yours sincerely,

Joyce E Hicks (nee Loveridge)



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Park Village

Stepping out in Sonning Common



by Mary Lewis

ON SATURDAY 9 April, parishioners and friends of St Michael's Church, Sonning Common, walked in support of the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development project (CAFOD) to eliminate hunger and malnutrition across the world. CAFOD had set supporters the challenge of walking

200km during the 6 weeks of Lent as a fundraising exercise.

The Parish of St Michael's covers not only Sonning Common, but also Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village. The church put together a team of more than 20 people, with each person walking 10km, to beat the 200km target. The group, aged from 1 to 80, enjoyed the local countryside in beautiful weather on a circular route organised by Peter Lewis and Stephen Fox.

On their return to the church, an outdoor tea with delicious cakes made by Krissie Stitt was a welcome treat.

At the time of writing, over £550 has been raised. If you would like to contribute to the fundraising, please visit:

<https://walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-michaels-walk-against-hunger-2022>

PENTECOST PICNIC

A SPECIAL open-air Thanksgiving service for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, organised by Churches Together in Caversham and Reading, will be held at Christchurch Meadow on 5 June. Bring your own picnic to the 'Big Lunch' from 12:00 for all Reading residents. The service of thanksgiving for the Queen in celebration of her Platinum Jubilee starts at 14:30, with easy-to-sing hymns, and will include prayers, a brief address by the Bishop of Reading, and the National Anthem. All led by the Salvation Army Band. There will

be space in a marquee for 100 if shelter from rain or sun required.

The service coincides with the Christian holiday of Pentecost, which celebrates the Christian Church's birthday. This is when the Holy Spirit anointed the first disciples to go out and witness to Christ's resurrection. In a similar way, our Queen was anointed in 1952 and symbolically started – and continued - her reign under the authority of God.

Andrew Storch

A. B.

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St John's Day Community BBQ and Fun Time

AFTER A two-year break (for obvious reasons!), we are delighted to be able to advertise our St John's Day Community BBQ and Fun Time. This will be held on Sunday 26 June, 15:00 – 18:00 at St John's Church. As in previous years, there will be barbecued burgers and sausages (vegetarian options, too), tea, coffee, squash and cakes of all varieties, simple craft activities, indoor and outdoor games, garden fun and music. The event is free, and all are welcome. Come with friends and family and make new friends while you are here. For more information, contact Penny Cuthbert

penny@ctmparish.org.uk

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WHAT'S ON

IF YOU have an event planned, please send details to 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

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

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

Tuesdays – Babies and Toddlers – 10:00 -11:30, Gosbrook Road Methodist Church - all welcome

Tuesdays – St John's Baby and Toddler Group – 09:30 -11:00 in term time – Caversham Hall, St John's Road - all welcome.

See www.facebook.com/stjohnscaversham

Tuesdays – Riverate Choir – 19:30 in term time, Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. Enjoy singing together. For details see <http://rivarate.com>

Sundays – Farmer's Market and Artisan Fair – 10:00 – 15:00 Caversham precinct

www.facebook.com/CAFMarket

Wednesday 1 June – Walk at Christmas Common 5.5 miles – 10:00 start - Pang Valley Ramblers. One of several walks in their programme. Every Sunday and alternating Wednesdays and Thursdays. See www.pyramblers.org.uk for details.

Wednesday 1 June – Rosehill WI - 14:00, St Barnabas Church Hall. Talk about 'Way of life in South Africa' with beaded work for sale

Friday 3 June – Bereavement Café – monthly drop-in for the bereaved 14:00 – 15:30, St Barnabas Parish Centre, Emmer Green, RG4 8RA First Friday of the month. All welcome. Contact Gillian Wilson 0118 947 8772 for information.

Sunday 5 June – Pentecost Jubilee – Big Lunch from 12:00, Jubilee Service 14:30 – 15:30. Celebrate the Jubilee in Christchurch Meadows. See www.cavershamchurch.org.uk for details

Wednesday 8 June – Art in the Arbour – 10:00 – 16:00, 12 Longhurst Close, RG4 5ER. Liz Real invites you to a bee themed sale of cards, art, garden plants, beeswax products and honey. For more information, see Liz on Facebook @lizrealart Instagram @lizreal2 #artintheharbour #firstwednesday and www.lizreal.co.uk

Saturday 11 June – 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

Thursday 16 June – Caversham WI meeting – 19:30 at Church House (next to Waitrose). Every 3rd Thursday of the month. New members are welcome.

Email: cavershamwi@berkshirewi.co.uk Secretary: Joy Kennedy on 07786 642424

Sunday 26 June – Emmer Green 10K – Starting at Emmer Green Primary School with an undulating route which includes a mixture of quiet roads, farm tracks and footpaths. For further information and to enter, see their website at www.emmergreen10k.org.uk

Sunday 26 June – St John's Day Community BBQ and Fun Time – 15:00 – 18:00 at St John's Church, Gosbrook Road. Free event and all welcome. For more information, contact Penny Cuthbert penny@ctmparish.org.uk



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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

AS THE PAPER goes to press, we do not yet know whether the earlier application for Reading Golf Club, which was refused by Reading Borough Council, will proceed to appeal this month. Comments have been coming in for the applications from Beechcroft for Caversham Park. (Ref 220409 and 220410) It is a large and complex application with many different aspects. In addition to the concerns raised about pressures on traffic and local services, there are issues about the extent of public access and the many issues around the history and heritage of the site. Detailed comments have been submitted by CADRA and by the Conservation Area Advisory Committee. Caversham Park is a listed building, Grade II. Also listed are park and garden walls, entrance gates and a temple (folly) in the garden. The house and other structures were first listed in 1978. Drawing on specialist advice, planners will need to consider whether the plans would cause harm to the listed building and to its important setting within the extensive grounds.

As always, you can find CADRA's 'Latest Planning Summary' at www.cadra.org.uk. Local applications include a change of use of 26 Prospect Street to allow a new dental practice. In St Peters Conservation Area, there is an application for extensions and front boundary changes at 18 Church Road. In South Oxfordshire, The Caversham Golf Club has applied for four courts for Padel Tennis under a domed roof, across the entrance road from the car park. As CADRA welcomes more members from Emmer Green, we are working through how best to feed in local knowledge to planning comments.

We learn from the Queens Speech in Parliament that: *The planning system will be reformed to give residents more involvement in local development [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill].*



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For your bookshelf....



Welcome to 'Fourbears Reviews' where we briefly review a couple of titles chosen from our bookshop 'Fourbears Books' on Prospect Street in Caversham. If you haven't been to the shop in a while, do pop down. You'll see our 'Blind Date with a Book' - a mystery book for you to take home, and also examples of our growing subscription service.

by Alex Forbes

THIS MONTH I have picked a gorgeous book by the very famous Julia Donaldson called 'Counting Creatures'. It doesn't look like a normal Julia Donaldson book, as the beautiful illustrations are by Sharon King-Chai. Each page has a different animal counting how many babies that animal has hidden behind a flap on the page. The animals range from often used animals to those less spoken about, like the Artic Hare and the Bat. It's a great counting picture book for younger readers, with a little surprise at the end which makes you want to revisit every page.

The adult book is called 'True Crime Story' by Joseph Knox. The book starts with an email conversation between Joseph Knox and a fellow author who has been conducting interviews around the disappearance of a girl in Manchester several years before. The rest of the book is filled mainly with the interview transcripts of the people involved at the time. One clever element is the presentation of the interviews as if the



Spot the bear

photo A Forbes

different characters are actually in conversation with each other, with occasional interjections from the 2 author characters about the latest revelation. This format adds pace to the story and is quite refreshing. I started to find the concept a little repetitive, but then a twist occurs in the middle, and I was pulled right back in. I found the ending a huge gut punch and one I thought about for weeks after. We will really enjoy recommending this to customers.

I hope you all have plenty of lovely summer plans, just remember to fit in some reading - it's a wonderful way to spend time - and happy reading.

Something beautiful

by Phil Chatfield

NOT LONG after moving to Caversham in 1986, we met an older but very energetic couple at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. Martyn and Lily Allies were involved in a wide range of organisations, from the Reading-Düesseldorf Association to the Caversham Heights Society. They were active in campaigns for social justice, such as the Jubilee Debt Campaign, in environmental matters and ran a Fairtrade Stall at the church.

I knew Martyn had been in the RAF, but on the rare occasions he spoke about it, he described his role as being in education and training. So it was a surprise to discover at his funeral he had been a pilot in Coastal Command during the Second World War.

A further surprise awaited Martyn and Lily's daughter, Cheryl Underhill, after clearing their house. During lockdown she had the chance to sort through a forgotten box mysteriously labelled "Belles Lettres". This apparently unassuming correspondence

transpired to be letters written between her parents at the beginning of the Second World War.

After initial hesitation at reading what were, essentially, private love letters, Cheryl became captivated by their contents. They charted the blossoming relationship between Lily Smith and Martyn Allies and their wartime experiences between 1939 and 1941. After weeks spent putting the letters into chronological order, Cheryl decided to assemble extracts into a book to share with family members. However, after further reflection, she decided a wider audience deserved to read the charming story the letters revealed. Her painstakingly crafted book 'The Box of Beautiful Letters' brings together excerpts from the letters to tell their story.

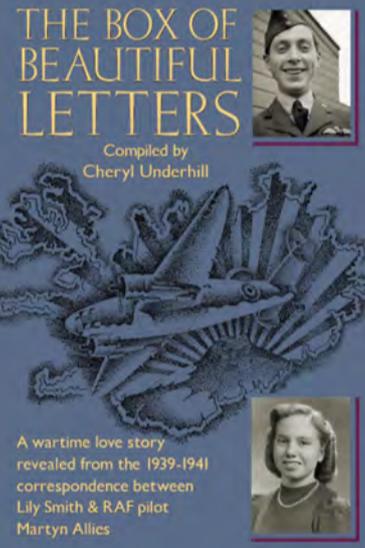
Cheryl has added her own commentary about the wartime context in which the letters were written and included some photographs of people and events mentioned in the letters. Cheryl's postscript to the letters tells what happened after the war and the fulfilling lives they went on to live.

Lily and Martyn met in London, both aged 19. They fell

in love at the beginning of the war, before the bombs had started to fall. Shortly after, Lily was evacuated to work in Torquay. Less than a year later she returned home to London, where she experienced some of the horrors of war. Meanwhile, Martyn was called up to train as a RAF pilot and his letters provide vivid descriptions of his numerous postings and alarming flying experiences, ending up in Iceland with Coastal Command.

Somehow Lily and Martyn managed to keep up each other's spirits by their prolific exchange of affectionate and ever more passionate letters.

'The Box of Beautiful Letters' is published by YouCaxton and available from Fourbears Books in Caversham.



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VOLUME XX OF the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire was published in April this year and, as you can see from the photograph, it is a big red book, like the others in the series. It's the latest volume to appear in a project that was started in 1899 – to produce a history of every English county - and the project was dedicated to Queen Victoria.

This volume includes a history of Caversham which covers over 50 pages. The built-up part of Caversham was annexed by Reading in 1911 but, before that, all of Caversham was in Oxfordshire. The old parish was much larger than present-day Caversham. It was one of the long, narrow parishes, along



the curve of the Thames between Dorchester and Henley, each with a narrow waterfront and a long hinterland. In our case, the parish extended from the river to Kidmore End and, at its furthest extremity, to Cane End.

The four volumes covering Berkshire, with an index volume, were published between 1906 and 1927, and the

interests of local historians have expanded since then. The early volumes were very much concerned with the church and the ownership of land, and the lives of 'ordinary' working people were hardly considered. These days, we have additional pages covering agriculture, manufacturing, transport, trade,

churches, education, and welfare – and the changes which have occurred in everyday life over the centuries.

This is not an easy read: it aims at comprehensiveness, accuracy and consistency. Every town, village and hamlet gets its due coverage, and the source of every bit of information is given for the benefit of anyone wishing to find out more. So there are no humorous stories about Caversham 'characters', or accounts of shocking crimes, or lists of all the shopkeepers along Prospect Street, but you can read about life from prehistory to the twenty-first century. And there are some interesting illustrations: I particularly liked the plan and elevation of Caversham Bridge from 1811, showing the arches of masonry, the wooden section, the sections for which Reading Corporation and Oxfordshire were responsible, and the house on the island marked 'Mr. Vanderstegan, Esq'.

'...large, heavy and expensive...'

The book is very large, heavy, and expensive, but the local studies collection at Reading Central Library has a copy, so you can look at it for nothing. It is likely to be the best 'serious' history of Caversham for the foreseeable future. Eventually, you'll be able to read it on the British History Online website but, at present, it is important to bring in money from selling the book to get back at least some of the cost of producing it.

It was interesting for me to have played a small part in the writing of the Caversham section. Very sensibly, the editors wanted someone who had lived in the area for some time and who was interested in its history to read through the text and give advice. I was able to say things like, "No – we don't call it that now. Readers won't know where it is", or "Did you know about that building?" or "That firm?" The Caversham section was written between 2017 and 2020, so it is good to see the finished volume at last.

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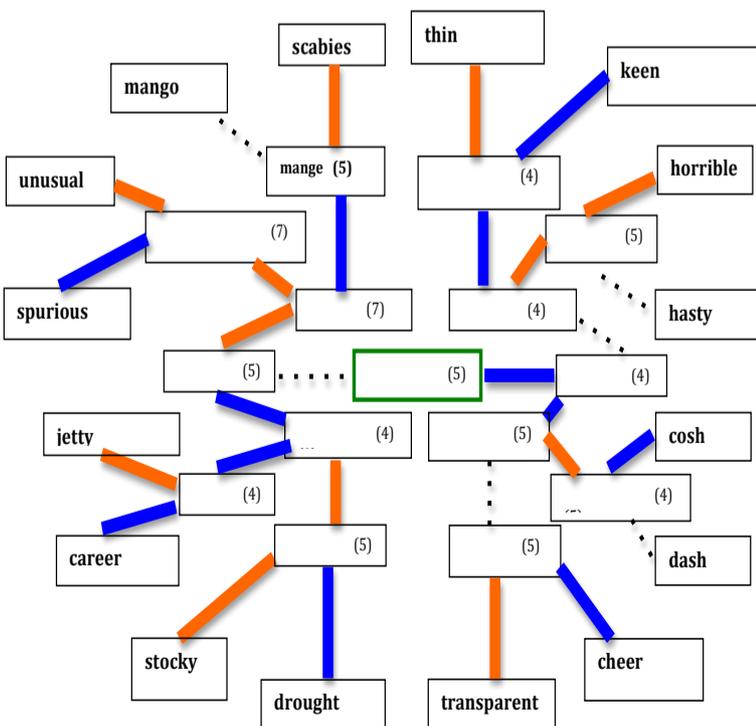
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Puzzle Corner

The Challenge by Rachel

Find the word that has the same meaning as the clue; or rhymes with; or has one letter that is different. For example: *mange* has 5 letters, differs from mango by 1 letter and means *scabies*.

Rhyme ———
Letter change ·····
Meaning ———



Answers on page 19

DOMESTIC PETS

Can you find the names of 18 of our favourite pets here?

C C F P G I A R E E R A T A
I A A I F G E R B I L H A R
G N R B I G E C K O G I P E
O A G I E C T A H F G T R S
L R T E E K A R A P H T A B
D Y O B R E C D T A A O L E
F H C O C K A T I E L R L B
I T E R R E F L B G R T I U
S T P A R R O T A O P O H D
H A M S T E R O L D M I C G
T T I N T B E A G A T S N I
A B E I E I I M O U S E I E
A R A B B I T R L C H A H R
B G I P A E N I U G C K C H

Budgie
Cat
Canary
Chinchilla
Cockatiel
Dog
Ferret
Gecko
Gerbil

Goldfish
Guinea Pig
Hamster
Mouse
Parakeet
Parrot
Rabbit
Rat
Tortoise

Emmer Green Residents' Association 1984-2022

by Margaret Ormonde (EGRA committee member 1997- 2016)



'Picnic in the Park' in 2012

photo EGRA

Through the Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA), we asked Margaret to write a short article about Emmer Green Residents' Association (EGRA), which has recently disbanded after 38 years.

AT THE 38th AGM of EGRA in March 2022, the decision was made to disband the Association. Planning issues have always been at the heart of EGRA and, in 1984, were responsible for its founding to fight development in Hemdean Valley. CADRA, already an established group, gave invaluable advice on constitution matters. After ten years, a compromise was finally reached, a swathe of open land saved, and new residents welcomed. By then, EGRA had become an established

and respected group, so broadened the ways it served the community. Membership grew and it had a voice on other forums and Council matters, whilst maintaining its apolitical stance.

In 2000, to celebrate the Millennium, EGRA hosted an exhibition on the history of Emmer Green. A book, 'Emmer Green Past and Present' followed. In 2003, a website was set up, and quarterly newsletters were enhanced by email updates.

Planning issues resurfaced when infill development raged, often setting communities into separate camps. EGRA had members in both camps, so outright opposition without consultation was no longer an option. Guidance on how to respond to planning proposals was established, advising residents how to submit views to the Council, or to set up dedicated groups.

Regular social activities helped to bring the community together, and the AGMs were enhanced by captivating speakers, followed by free wine and nibbles! The Queen's Diamond Jubilee 'Picnic in the Park' in 2012, saw the recreation of an event that had marked the coronation in 1953.

Looking back, Emmer Green and its periphery have been marked by huge change. No-one expected the BBC, established for many years at the historic Caversham Park, to decide the location was no longer relevant. The same was true of Reading Golf Club. After more than 100 years on the same site, land deemed safe

for eternity, suddenly wasn't. In the same way that EGRA began in 1984, in 2017, a new group, Keep Emmer Green (KEG), evolved, whose function was to oppose development of the golf club site. However, the position for EGRA was more complex, as they still had a duty to consult members and express a majority view.

With the loss of EGRA, CADRA continues to offer support, welcoming involvement and membership. Embracing Emmer Green, we can work together in a productive way.

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MORE MUSICAL MEMORIES

by Edward Bradley

WHEN I WAS a young man in the 1950s, I was keen on listening to dance bands. My weekly wage was not marvellous, and my Dad advised me not to get married until I was earning at least ten pounds a week. However, with careful saving, I did eventually manage to buy an HMV gramophone to play the odd 78 rpm record, which I bought from Hackett's in the Arcade, or occasionally from Hickies in Friar Street. The 'in' music came from the big bands and probably the most famous was Stan Kenton's Big Band, with the likes of Count Basie, Duke Ellington and Woody Herman coming a close second. But being British I supported our home team music makers. Top of the list for me was Ted Heath, whose orchestra I had seen during my National Service years. I can still picture myself crowding around the bandstand with a mob of

other fans as the drummer, Ronnie Verrell, hammered away at a drum solo in a number called 'Skin-deep'. Ted's band also had three singers: Lita Rosa, Dennis Lotus and Dickie Valentine. They were good, but as lads we preferred to watch



Dickie Valentine

the band storming away with pieces like 'The Champ'.

Later Dickie Valentine became more

famous as a solo singer. When he came to Reading's Palace Theatre, my wife, then a teenager, went along to see him. She remembers watching the other girls screaming as Dickie sang 'Someone broke into my heart and stole a beat or two, the finger of suspicion points at you', and then pointing his finger at them.

On certain Sunday nights famous bands would perform at the Palace Theatre, and I rarely missed attending. I thought they were fabulous: Ken Mackintosh, Jack Parnell (later famous for conducting his orchestra at the London Palladium), John Dankworth (with his wife Cleo Laine), and Eric Delaney and his two bass drums. They were all there, plus some I have probably forgotten.

Those were the days, my friends, those were the days.

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Saving energy – reduce your boiler temperature

by Tricia Marcouse



LOADS OF organisations tell you to turn the room thermostat down to save energy and money, but we hope not to use the central heating for the next few months. There are other savings to be made right now in hot water systems, but the message is less simple, because there are so many different types of boiler and controls. There are two main settings: the temperature control on the boiler itself and, if you have a hot water tank rather than a combi-boiler, a temperature control on the tank as well. If the water temperature is too hot for your bath, shower, or washing up, and you need to run the cold tap to avoid scalds, then it is worth adjusting these controls. Reduce the setting on your hot water tank, and try turning the controls on the boiler itself down to 65°C. Then adjust this up or down a little over the next few days to get the best temperature for your family. If you use a combi-boiler, then the temperature can go down as low as you like; hot water tanks should be kept

above 60°C to prevent Legionella.

Turn the boiler temperature up bit by bit as you start using the central heating in the autumn to reflect outside temperatures. It may need to go up to over 80°C in the coldest periods to balance heat losses from the house. The boiler will work more efficiently at lower temperatures, but a higher boiler temperature will allow the radiators to reach the desired temperature faster.

If you have solar panels and a hot water tank, there are a couple of options. Either consider installing a simple timer to give a quick and free hot water top up using your immersion heater during the middle of the day in the summer, or invest in a sophisticated solar power diverter, which automatically directs energy to your immersion heater when you are generating more electricity than you are using. This should pay for itself in a couple of years.



HOUSE MARTIN

Migrants on the wing

by Tricia Marcouse



SWALLOW

AFTER YEARS of discussion, there is now a British Standard for developers to follow when providing nest sites in buildings. This covers the design of the nest for different species, as well as rules for positioning the nests so that birds can follow their natural social habits and be protected from predators and weather. It also specifies systems for protecting the home-owner from droppings!

Planners can specify the use of this British Standard on any new development, but they

need to know about existing nest sites in the town. Swifts, for example, nest communally and it makes sense to specify swift boxes into new developments near existing sites.

You could help by looking for the nest sites of swifts, swallows and house martins, all of whom are summer migrants flying in from Africa from May to raise their young here.

These nest sites are easy to spot and to differentiate. Swifts fly high most of the time but come down to 2nd or 3rd floor level and 'scream' at the fledglings in the nest. Even if you don't see the actual nest entrance, you'll hear the noise. There's a dedicated website for swift nest records - swiftmapper.org.uk

Swallows and house martins fly at much lower levels. They have white fronts and forked tails. The house martin is smaller and has a white throat, whilst the swallow has a longer tail and dark head and throat. martins make mud nests under the eaves of buildings, whilst swallows prefer the darkness of a barn or shed, and make their mud nests under roof beams and rafters.

Please put your nest records onto irecord.org.uk where it will feed into the local record centre. If you don't want to make your own record, just send your sightings (date, species, location) to nature@readingcan.org.uk and we'll do it. For more information about swifts and martins go to rspb.org.uk

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LET'S ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE *by Les Cooper*



I WAS wondering what I should I write about for June, and deciding that it would be about taking it easy and enjoying all the fruits of our labours. Then I reasoned that if I were to keep up the pretence that I have some kind of knowledge, I had better be more positive and

just check this out. One glance at the recommendations set out in every garden manual destroyed my illusions because, of course, as I should have known, there are a stack of jobs to do in June. Mother Nature doesn't let us gardeners get away with doing nothing.

Most books tell us we should lift and store our tulip bulbs after flowering, but that does make me question whether I am being lazy, because I do tend to leave them where they are and hope for a good display next year?

A really important task for early in the month is to support tall-growing perennials such as hollyhocks and delphiniums. This I do, as it is something worth doing, and certainly is for my delphiniums. I recommend using three four-foot canes for each plant; these are placed around the plant with string stretched around just below the bottom florets. The idea is to give the spikes the chance to sway in the wind but not to keel right over. If there is a gale, no method of holding them up will work anyway.

One job that I know really does make a worthwhile difference is to tie in new stems of climbing and rambling roses horizontally along wire or wood supports. Then you get rows of beautiful roses blooming. It is a real joy.

Another task I certainly enjoy is planting out sweet corn. I think the reason

is that the sweet corn plants grow away so quickly. You place the plantlets in blocks to help pollination, and there they seem to relish the warm June weather and, with some generous watering, they romp away in no time at all.

There are one or two jobs mentioned that I must really attempt this year. The first is to pull out any raspberry canes that are sprouting out of their dedicated area. Fool that I am, I have always left them, and then wondered why my row of raspberries looks such a shambles.

The other must-do job is to plant up a new canna. I like them and, with the threat of global warming and our summers getting hotter, let us be slightly positive and realise that in future cannas, bananas, amaranthus, and other tender exotics will be growing in all our gardens.



Delphiniums

photo E Cooper

Flowers for an Endless Summer

Text and photos by Louise Hampden

ONE VERY famous television gardener once told me that 'most gardens look lovely in June'. And we both agreed because it does not matter whether your garden is preened to perfection or a bit on the wild side; the freshness of growth, the vibrancy of the leaves, the floral display of cultivated and wildflowers, coupled with that unmistakable scent of summer, makes every garden a joy.

However, the trick is to find out how to keep that glorious summer display going until the first frosts of Autumn. Now you can cut some plants back after their first flush of glory and you can dead-head some varieties of roses and hardy annuals so that they keep going, but eventually exhaustion sets in and, by August, it's all looking tired.

What we need are plants we can plant out now, in June, that reach their zenith of floral fireworks when others have fizzled out.

First and foremost, I will make a plea for dahlias. Once thought to be old fashioned and relegated to be grown in rows on allotments, they

are now at their pinnacle of popularity, and will take centre stage with their flamboyancy. I love Mexican Black, one of the first to flower, and Thomas Edison – a totally bonkers colour which will



Dahlia Thomas Edison

make you smile. I grew a few other dahlias from seed last summer and they flowered quite late in the season, but there were some gorgeous dark leaved varieties and superb colours. The tubers have overwintered well and are currently showing growth now.

I would also include zinnias. Early June is not too late to sow these directly from seed, and they will germinate like mustard and cress. My all-time favourite is Purple Prince, and I grow these and other varieties for cut flowers.

And if you see any asters on offer, I suggest you snap them up too, as they will start to flower in October and go on well into November. The variety Little Carlow is super reliable year on year, and I have several clumps in my garden, beloved not only by me, but by bees, butterflies and, in winter for their seed-heads, by birds.



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Community Connections



Edge. I started youth work here 18 years ago with Churches Together, which set me on the path to working with young people and wanting to make a difference in the area.

Jo: Born and Bred (a long time!) I attended local schools - Thameside and Highdown. I had a spell in London and backpacked around Asia and Australia in my mid 20s. I spent many years in the corporate industry in Reading town centre and am now raising my family here.

by Caroline Gratrix

Community People – Meet Kelvin Husbands and Jo McKnight from Grassrootz



The Grassrootz Caversham Team of Staff and Volunteers Photo T. Perkins

WHEN OUR community lost 13-year-old Ollie Stephens in a senseless murder, local mum Jo McKnight was determined to give our local children a safe space to meet, play and hang out. She spent months researching different options and venues, and struck lucky when introduced to Reading youth worker, Kelvin Husbands.

Kelvin has been running Grassrootz Youth Club in Coley for some time and was looking to expand in Reading. Jo and Kelvin secured a venue at the Milestone Centre and gathered a team together. They launched in March and the club is thriving. On the Tuesday night I went, there were around 35 boys and girls there. Some were being coached in boxing by local fitness professional Natalie Higley, others were outside doing sprints. Some played in the park and others chilled inside chatting, while a few gamed on the play-stations. They were supervised by a brilliant team of volunteers, and there was a good atmosphere of fun and laughter. As I left, all the children headed outside for a big team game; it was heart-warming.

Kelvin said there has been a lot of community support and positive feedback for the youth club, and a couple of local community members have popped in to pay subs for children who might not have the £3 a week to attend.

They are keen to welcome anyone with appropriate skills to run an activity with the kids. The club meets every Tuesday night 19:00 – 20:30 and welcomes all 11–16-year-olds. To find out more, please email Kelvin on kelvin.grassrootz@outlook.com.

Kelvin / Jo, tell us a bit more about you.....

How long have you lived in Caversham?

Kelvin: I moved here around 30 years ago and love the area. I went to The Hill Primary and Chiltern

Where are your favourite places to eat, drink and shop in Caversham?

Kelvin: I'm one of Mo Kebabs best customers. I have a soft spot for Wings Fish & Chips, with Caversham Stir Fry a close third. I hold lots of meetings in Costa and Alto Lounge, and am regularly spotted in Waitrose purchasing their grapefruit squash.

Jo: The Collective, Vegivores and Alto Lounge. Post school runs, I spend a lot of time in Waitrose and Iceland looking for a good deal, and I think I've purchased every dino Terry's has to offer.

How do you think we can all be eco-friendlier in RG4?

Kelvin: Use public transport more, take advantage of the nice scenic routes and bike rides on offer and more car sharing.

Jo: Traffic on the local roads keeps increasing. Before parking permits my road was a car park. More park and ride schemes or 'leave your car at home' initiatives by organisations in town. We are lucky to have a nice commute along the river to the station and town centre.

Being part of a community reaps a wealth of benefits, how would you strengthen our sense of community in Caversham?

Kelvin: The importance of the community is massive; there are different sub sections in our area, and it would be great to bridge gaps and show what a nice place this is to live in – watch this space.....

Jo: Spreading a more positive and kinder vibe.

If you could bring anything to Caversham, an event, an experience, a shop, what would it be?

Kelvin: A Community Hub – Facilities for children to play safely at no cost, for example football, basketball and a BMX track all with flood lighting – a safe space for young people.

Jo: Like Kelvin, more things for our youth – a gym exclusively for teenagers would be amazing.

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Tackling knife crime

text and photo by Phil Chatfield

OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS article brings a sad reminder of the dreadful impact of knife crime, especially affecting young people. As part of a campaign to tackle knife crime in our area, Thames Valley Police and Reading Borough Council have installed a community knife amnesty bin in Caversham. The bin offers members of the public the opportunity to dispose of knives and bladed articles safely and anonymously. It is securely attached to the wall of the public lavatory in the car park at the rear of Waitrose. The bin is designed to allow a knife to be deposited whilst preventing anyone reaching in. It is checked regularly, and the contents carefully disposed of.

Speaking when the bin was installed, local councillor Adele Barnett-Ward, Lead Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities, said, "We need to work together to prevent more tragic losses. If you or someone you know carries a knife, please use the amnesty bins to hand it in. Save a life: dump the knife."





BRINGING MUSIC TO OUR EARS

This month Adrienne Black talks to Elestr Lee about her long-running concert series, which has been taking place at St Andrew's Church for more than a decade



Adrienne (above and centre), performing with her daughter Naomi Watts.

IN OUR MAY issue we rightly celebrated the return of the Caversham Arts Trail, whose 10th anniversary had been interrupted due to the pandemic. However, there is another long-running local arts endeavour which is slightly older – and which kept on providing a creative outlet for the music lovers of Caversham, despite the restrictions of lockdown.

Concerts in Caversham will be presenting the final offering of its eleventh season on 25 June at its usual venue, St Andrew's Church. The Summer Concert features the Caversham Ensemble – Morgan Goff -viola, Max Welford - clarinet and Adrienne Black - piano, performing music by Mozart, Bruch, Schumann and Horowitz. Then the twelfth season will kick off in October with an Autumn Festival of Music and Art.

Caversham-based pianist and harpsichordist Adrienne first came up with the idea for the concert series shortly after Nigel Jones became vicar at St Andrew's. Nigel had a vision of using the church for arts initiatives, and a generous bursary meant the church could purchase the grand piano which Adrienne had recently had refurbished. She, her husband and oboist, Timothy Watts, and their cello-playing daughter Naomi put on a concert with the aim of starting up a concert series funded by monies received from the ticket sales. Ever since, live music at St Andrew's has flourished. For Adrienne, who has now put on 50 concerts in Caversham, this has been an ambition achieved.

"It had long been an idea in my head. I realised that orchestral musicians have to be so highly trained, it is so hard for them to get a job in the profession. But then, once in an orchestra - and especially string players - they can get disheartened. I wanted there to be an opportunity for these highly-skilled musicians to play the small-scale chamber music which they love, as an addition to the big orchestral pieces which is their regular work.

And it has been a great success. We have so many



of the top musicians very willing to sacrifice a job playing in the Albert Hall for the chance to come to Caversham, to play for us here!" Adrienne says.

Her mission to bring 'world-class musicians' to our very doorstep has been more than met. Adrienne is herself a highly accomplished pianist and harpsichordist, while Timothy and Naomi are both members of London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. But this is by no means just a family affair, and Adrienne has invited a wide range of top musicians to perform here over the past 11 years – as well as offering varying styles of music to suit different tastes.

Enticing

"The Concerts in Caversham series has definitely evolved since the beginning. Initially I very much wanted to 'befriend' the audience, so I gave themes to the concerts – such as The Voluptuous Viola, or The Romantic Cello, to entice people in, and we didn't necessarily play big-scale works. Nowadays I would say the concerts are generally full-length concerts, with an interval, and include some substantial pieces. Our audience trusts us to put on interesting and enjoyable programmes, and has come with us," she remarks.

She made sure that recorded performances were available during lockdown so that music continued to play an important part for her audience, despite the difficulties posed by Covid-19. "During the pandemic, we put on two Christmas concerts, even though we

were allowed only 40 in the audience," Adrienne recalls. "We lost a lot of money – but we thought it was important to keep music alive and accessible even during these difficult times."

Although Adrienne is ably supported by a team from St Andrew's, notably Regula Adams, Jane Pares and Virginia Cullura, as well as other volunteers and her family, she finds that putting on a concert series involves a lot of hard work. "I have got better at it," she laughs. "But nobody has any idea how much work goes into it!"

However, undaunted, Concerts in Caversham has recently unveiled its Autumn Festival of Music and Art in conjunction with Caversham Picture Framers and Queen Anne's School. There will be four highly varied evenings at St Andrew's Church – beginning on 22 October with a jazz trio and ending with baroque brass players Robert Vanryne and Sue Addison. In addition, a 'Grand Finale' is taking place on 1 November at Queen Anne's School. This special event will feature the Concerts in Caversham Chamber Orchestra, with oboist Ewan Millar (BBC Young Musician of the Year Concerto Finalist) as soloist. "Queen Anne's School have been very generous in their support of this concert," Adrienne adds.

Adrienne is determined that music will continue to flourish in Caversham, despite the undoubted difficulties inflicted when venues were closed during the lockdown. She is optimistically looking forward to Concerts in Caversham's twelfth season, and is pleased to have fulfilled yet another ambition - "I have always wanted to put on the Mendelssohn Octet – and indeed, this is going to be performed on 29 October at St Andrew's Church!"

Find out more: www.concertsincaversham.co.uk

Or: 0118 9483220 All photos: Torbjorn Hultmark





180th Anniversary
Reading Amateur Regatta
 1842 - 2022

Thameside Promenade Reading
 11th & 12th June

1947 - 2022
Reading Düsseldorf Association
75th Anniversary



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP

by Vickie Abe
 Chair, Friends of Caversham Court Gardens

IT'S ALL SYSTEMS go this year for the Reading Amateur Regatta, which is set for 11-12 June 2022. Visiting international crews will include crews from Dusseldorf, who will be taking part in special challenge races on both Saturday 11 and Sunday 12, as well as regular races.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Reading-Dusseldorf Association, which was set up after the Second World War by Reading Mayor, Phoebe Cusden. The anniversary celebrations will include an exchange of civic delegations in June, exhibitions in Reading Museum and the Stadtmuseum, Düsseldorf and a special Reading-Düsseldorf 75 years of friendship photo competition. During the Reading Amateur Regatta, there will be a presentation for the Dusseldorf crews in Caversham Court

Gardens on Saturday 11 June.

The Reading Amateur Regatta is this year celebrating its own 180th anniversary. Back in the 19th century, prize-giving ceremonies were often held on the lawns of Caversham Court (then known as The Old Rectory). In 1870, for example, local newspapers reported that silver presentation cups donated by the wealthy industrialists of Reading were filled with champagne from the cellars of the Simonds family of bankers and brewers, who owned the estate at the time

Gifts to the Dusseldorf crews this year will include copies of 'Caversham Court Gardens: A Heritage Guide' as a souvenir of their visit to Caversham and Reading.

For more information about the Reading Amateur Regatta, go to:

www.reading-amateur-regatta.org

The Reading-Dusseldorf Association is at <http://reading-dusseldorf.org.uk>

Return of the Beanpoles

By Phil Chatfield and Tricia Marcouse

THE CURIOUSLY named 'Beanpole Day' returned to its traditional April timing this year. National Beanpole Week, which is in April each year, was started by the Small Woods Association to promote the use of products from coppice management and hence provide an income for this practice to continue. In recent years, gardeners have relied on canes imported from around the

world to support their beans. But this has negative impacts on biodiversity and for climate change.

Coppice woodlands are particularly good at holding on to carbon sequestered from the atmosphere. It is stored in the ground, as the coppice stools maintain their root system to regrow new shoots. The rapid decrease of coppice management in recent years has also led to a decline of the associated woodland species. This year, most of the beanpoles at Caversham came from Rushall Farm, Bradfield, and were harvested by Econet volunteers.

Despite roadworks and a set of traffic lights immediately outside the garden gates, stall holders were able to set up in

plenty of time to welcome their visitors. There were more stalls than in previous years, ranging from beekeepers to a wood turner. Charities such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Econet provided information on their aims and activities and the well-stocked plant stalls, including the Ways and Means Trust 'Greenshoots' nursery, were depleted by the end of the day. Cakes and jams were also popular. Although there was a cold wind, the day was dry and there were plenty of visitors. And all the beanpoles were sold!

Refreshments, including plenty of tempting cakes, were provided at the garden kiosk by Greenshoots volunteers.



The Stick Smith

photo F Smith

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General view of the stalls

photo F Smith



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ReadiFood in Caversham; No Boundaries in Food Insecurity

by Charlie and Shirl Scola

ReadiFood

Reading's Food Bank

MANY READERS are likely to have heard of ReadiFood, Reading's Foodbank, which operates from a large warehouse in South Reading. All food is donated locally in the Reading area, with collection boxes in local churches, including St Andrew's, and customer donation bins in supermarkets. At the warehouse, the food is packed into individual parcels for singles, couples, and families. Provision is made for those with special dietary needs and, if requested, toiletries, baby food and nappies can also be provided.

People in need of assistance are referred to ReadiFood by a variety of local organisations, such as Reading Borough Council, the Jobcentre, Social Services, Citizens' Advice, Refugee Charities and other support services.

It is not a 'walk-in' food bank; each week, volunteers deliver the parcels directly to the recipient's door where they are welcomed in homes which are often in desperate need of assistance. Currently, the foodbank has seen another surge in requests for help, and deliveries are made to an average of 240 households each week across the Reading area. It may surprise readers to know that there are quite a few recipients in Caversham - hunger and poverty may be out of sight, but certainly exists on this side of the river.

Sorting the donations and packing food parcels, as well as delivering them to people's homes, is all undertaken by volunteers. There is an urgent need for a couple or two individuals to deliver in the Caversham area on a Tuesday. If you

can help, or would like to know more, please ring the office on **0118 987 2672** or email them at admin@readifood.org.uk

There is more information on their website at www.readifood.org.uk/volunteering

With the rise in the cost of living and other social pressures, ReadiFood are bracing themselves for further increases in demand on the service. If you can, please help by donating food; there are collection points at two local supermarkets, Waitrose (Caversham) and Tesco (Kings Meadow). Current needs include:

- Tinned ready meals (hot dogs, curry) and fish
 - Tinned vegetables including potatoes and baked beans
 - Tinned fruit
 - Nappies size 6
 - Cereal bars, Pot Noodles (or equivalent), instant potatoes, dried pulses and lentils
 - Long life milk.
- Please note, all donations must be within their use by date.

They are unable to accept donations of baby milk.

For current food needs, check their website or the ReadiFood Facebook page.



Sorting food in the warehouse

photo Readifood

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The garden warbler has landed at Clayfield Copse

by Jude Oliver

THIS TINY brown bird, 15cms long and weighing about the same as a £2 coin, has travelled from sub Saharan Africa and arrived in the scrub at Clayfield Copse!

He was the star singer at Friends of Clayfield Copse's annual Dawn Chorus walk on 1 May, singing his heart out!

Peter Scudamore led a group through the woodland and identified the 'singers', as well as the difference between a stock dove and a wood pigeon. But it is the amazing variety of tone and 'pattern' of all the birds' songs that impresses.

Finally, after a short tea break, into the regeneration area and the garden warbler was there and gave a very impressive performance. You may find him if you follow the diagonal path across the meadow, and he was just behind the hedge.

Thank you, Peter for all the info, and the friends for tea and cake.

PLEASE keep your dog in close control in the woods and the scrub during the nesting period which is April – July.



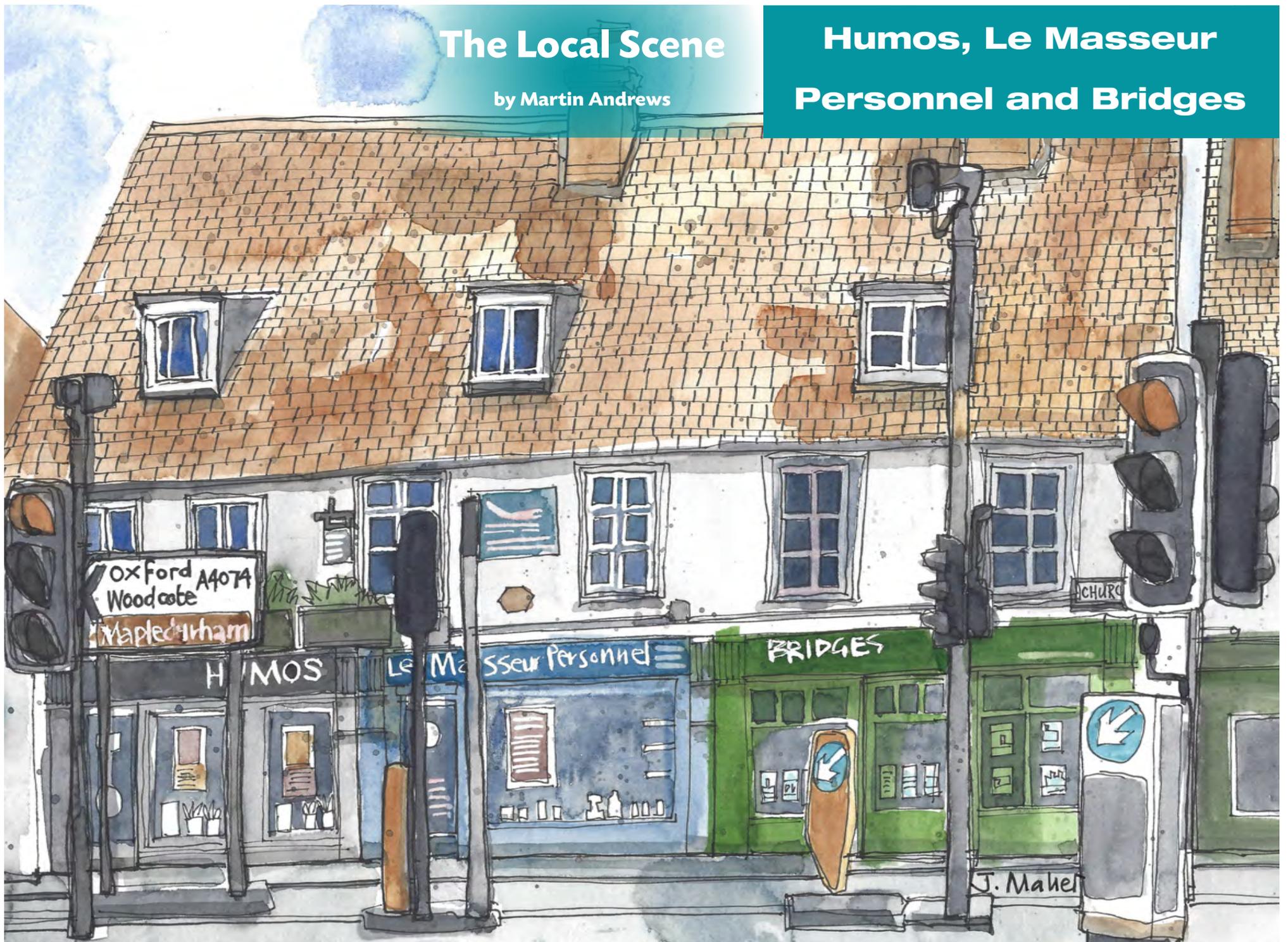
Garden Warbler

photo Fausto Riccioni

The Local Scene

by Martin Andrews

Humos, Le Masseur Personnel and Bridges



Drawing by Janina Maher

www.janinamaher.artweb.com

THE JUNCTION of Church Road, Church Street and Bridge Street has been the centre of chaos over recent weeks – roadworks, three-way traffic lights, long tailbacks and terrible congestion. Thank goodness it seems to be over now. All this is in contrast to two of the businesses illustrated in Janina Maher's drawing that appeal to the less stressful side of life. Humos provides individual perfumes, scented candles and aromatherapy, and Le Masseur

Personnel relieves tension, aches and pains. As well as capturing the charm of these old buildings, Janina has included the forest of street signing and traffic lights that are such a feature of the modern townscape. This block of buildings, numbers 1,3 and 5 Church Road, date back to quieter times and have undergone many changes. I spoke to Gabriel De Carvalho, master perfumer, who owns both Humos and Le Masseur Personnel, and he showed me an

interior wall with exposed brickwork and large structural timbers that are clear evidence of the early date of the original buildings. The appealing Victorian or Edwardian façades to the three properties have been added to what were probably seventeenth century buildings, and are now listed as of historical significance.

A hundred years ago, number 1 was a confectionery run by a Mrs Alice Davey, number 3 was owned by James Angell who was a tailor, and number 5 was C&G Ayres, coal merchants and Great Western Railway Agents. In more recent times, number 5 was a haberdasher – my wife remembers it when we moved to Caversham in the 1970s, and shared her custom between this shop and a branch of Jacksons in Prospect Street who supplied similar goods. About 29 years ago, Bridges Estate Agents took over the premises and continue to be a valued service as an independent family business specialising in local properties in Caversham and the surrounding area (they also have a branch in Sonning Common).

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Looking forward at Caversham Park

PROPOSALS FOR the future of the former home of the BBC Monitoring Service at Caversham Park were submitted by Beechcroft Developments to Reading Borough Council on 17 March. The public consultation period started on the 19 April, with a formal closing date for comments of the end of April (although later comments were accepted).

The application covers 93 acres of land (shown within the red line on the map). Grade II listing of the house, parkland and other structures was first approved in 1978. The classical house is perhaps best seen from the A329M as you drive into Reading! The application follows a public exhibition, held at the former BBC offices in October 2021.

by Phil Chatfield

The proposals include:

- The Grade II listed house to be converted into 64 assisted living units for the over 55s.
- A 64-bed care home to be built on previously developed land, adjacent to the main house.
- Sixty-one age restricted retirement properties built on land previously used as a car park and for satellite dishes and communications equipment.
- Twenty-eight affordable and 5 family homes near the entrance of the site.

Overall, the built area, including the existing mansion house, will extend to 7 acres - 7.5% of the site.

Following comments from the public during the exhibition, Beechcroft amended their original proposals to:

- Create a walking trail around the perimeter

of Caversham Park which will be accessible both to residents and the general public.

- Redesign the eastern housing to retain more of the existing trees.
- Remove the previously proposed second access onto Peppard Road.
- Provide a third croquet lawn.

With development at the Reading Golf Course site recently approved, Emmer Green residents are concerned about development generally. Although many recognise the need to develop the site and give it new purpose, concerns have been raised, including:

- Additional pressure on health care
- Three storey flats on the Peppard Road frontage
- The impact on both the interior features of the building and also its setting within formal grounds and landscaped gardens
- The important historical and heritage significance of Caversham Park and its many owners
- A lack of detail regarding public access to the parkland
- And the impact on traffic, especially given the proximity of The Hill School, despite a transportation study submitted with the planning application indicating traffic levels from the site being reduced compared with the existing permitted office use.

Local MP Matt Rodda has lodged a letter of objection to the application which covers these points. It also highlights the importance of the work carried out by the BBC Monitoring unit. Many local residents worked at Caversham



Park, and he suggests the creation of a small museum at the site to commemorate their work.

To view the full details of the application, see:

<http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb>.

Application numbers 220409 and 224010.

Some key documents have been posted on the Caversham and District Residents' Association website – www.cadra.org.uk.

With thanks to Vic Angell (on behalf of Beechcroft), CADRA, and the office of Matt Rodda MP who provided the information for this article.

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Sing together in HARMONY

by Ray and Sheila Noble

HARMONY is a community choir which started in August 2021 in Peppard War Memorial Hall. We meet every Thursday afternoon during term time, and each member pays £5 per week. We are an all-inclusive choir, and there are no auditions. Members were invited to form a committee, which duly happened. Some of our members knew each other from a previous choir in Sonning Common.

Our objective was to bring people together, particularly after the pandemic. But, importantly, to enjoy singing and get out and about again, especially for those who are lonely and in need of company.

We have recruited a musical director, Anne Fairbrother, who has been exceptional in understanding our aims as a group. Currently we have around 70 members, with an average attendance of 40 each week.

HARMONY has exceeded all our expectations, and we enjoy being part of it. We have raised funds by selling handmade Christmas cards, and plan to make a donation to the local community in the future.

Recently we held a session specifically to raise money for the DEC Ukrainian Refugee Humanitarian Appeal. We set up a Just Giving page online, put out a collection bucket, and donated our subscriptions to the appeal. Members dressed in Ukrainian colours, waved flags, and enjoyed cakes decorated in yellow and blue. The final total raised was an amazing £1,280.

We welcome new members to join us to sing and have fun. If you are interested, please ring Ray Noble on 07793 214385.



Stuffed cabbage leaves (Holubsty)

Last month, we asked Keti from Geocafé if she could recommend a typical Ukrainian recipe. She suggested stuffed cabbage leaves. The recipe was taken from Olia Hercules' book 'Mamushka, Recipes from Ukraine & beyond'.

TRADITIONALLY FIRM white cabbage leaves are used, so if you want more of a traditional taste, please use those. They just may need to be blanched for three minutes instead of two. My grandmother Lusya also used to make a version using wheat berries or buckwheat instead of rice and whole fermented cabbage leaves instead of fresh cabbage. The combination of sharp cabbage and luscious pork is incredible. I add barberries to my golubtsy to achieve that sour note. But you don't have to use those if they are hard to find.

Ingredients:

Serves 6 (makes 12 parcels)
 2 tbsp sunflower oil
 1 large onion, finely diced
 1 carrot, grated
 1 tsp caster sugar
 1 tbsp tomato paste
 1 fresh bay leaf
 1 tin chopped tomatoes
 1 head Savoy cabbage, 12 leaves separated
 sea salt flakes
 freshly ground black pepper
 250g beef mince
 250g pork mince
 160g rice, parboiled and drained
 40g barberries (optional)

To serve:

100ml sour cream
 ½ small bunch dill, finely chopped

Method:

Make the sauce first. Heat the oil in a heavy-based casserole. Fry half of the onion and the grated carrot over a medium heat for 5-10 minutes until soft. Add the sugar and the tomato paste and cook for 1 minute.

Add the bay leaf, tomatoes and 400ml water and season well.

Blanch the cabbage leaves for 2 minutes in boiling water. Then refresh them in cold water and drain well on kitchen paper.

Mix the minces, parboiled rice, barberries, seasoning and the remaining diced onion. Place 50g of the filling on to each cabbage leaf and fold into parcels.

Place the parcels on top of the sauce, folded side down, tucking them next to each other snugly so they do not unravel.

Cook over a low heat for about 45 minutes or until cooked through.

Serve with lots of chopped dill, sourdough bread and a dollop of sour cream on the side.

To learn more about Olia and her cooking see

<https://oliahercules.com/books/mamushka>



Taking the long way home

CAVERSHAM ARTIST Lucy Gilmore has been raising money for the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine appeal by selling prints of her watercolour painting. She has given prints of her work for every donation to her fundraiser, with a view to their display in windows across the area.

Of the message behind the painting, she said: "It's really about the refugee crisis at a human level. It's just heart-breaking to see people fleeing with their whole life in a carrier bag, walking miles, often with children, elderly people, and with pets. And it's even worse when you feel like there's no way to help. That's why I created the piece."

Hobbs Reprographics in Reading printed 200 copies of the watercolour free of charge to allow

Lucy to run the fundraiser and she has raised over £2,000.

If you would like to donate and get a print for yourself, see Lucy's JustGiving fundraising page at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lucy-gilmoreukr

Fred Smith



Poets' Corner

How it is, or was?

The scratch of sirens
 The bang of a gun
 We are just waiting
 A new peace to come

Some may remember
 The sounds of the past
 And pray to the Heavens
 That this will not last

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 With love between friends
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by David Robinson

David Robinson is Director of Templar Estate Planning; a specialist Will Writing and Estate Planning Provider based in the heart of Caversham within Church House

Changes or events in your life can impact your Will and Estate Planning

IT IS CLEAR we all should have a Will and planning in place. But changes in your life could mean your Will needs updating or your overall estate planning may need a rethink.

You should ensure that you and your loved ones are still fully protected. Here are a few life changes which should prompt you to check that all is still in order:

Marriage/civil partnership

You have pledged to that special person, so make sure that your Will clearly states how you both want things to go should one of you die. Be aware - marriage voids an existing Will.

Spouse passed away

An awful time in your life but, when you are ready, ensure any changes needed to your Will or your estate planning are completed.

A new partner to whom you are not married nor do you have a civil partnership

Unless you specifically name that special person in your Will, they will not automatically be a beneficiary to your estate.

A child comes into your life

The most wonderful thing to happen comes with big worries, not least 'who will look after him/her if something happens to us?' Through your Will you can name trusted Guardians for your child/children.

Children reached adulthood

Are your beneficiaries ready for the responsibility of their inheritance and could they cope? Through specific planning and Trusts, they can be protected.

Bought a new property

Your home is your castle, you will want to ensure that it is protected, either for you or your beneficiaries.

Deteriorating health

If you are worried about your or a loved one's health or mental faculty, ensure a trusted person can act on your behalf for both health and financial matters and decisions. Lasting Power of Attorney documents can make this happen. Without them, it can be extremely difficult, time consuming and costly to act in the way you would want.

Not sure about previously appointed people

Have you previously named or appointed someone in your planning; an executor, attorney or beneficiary? What if they have moved, died or you have changed your mind? Update your Will to reflect this.

If any of these or other scenarios have got you thinking, then a competent estate planner will put your mind at rest. Most are happy to discuss options or answer immediate questions in a free, no-obligation consultation and Will evaluation service.



Rachael with her book

New kids on the block

by George Grubb

'THE TWO PENDANTS', the first of a series of books aimed at young adult readers, was published by South Oxfordshire writer Rachael Lewin in March. And the 'new kids' who feature in the book are 'The Children of Pisces', half human/half alien, who give the book series its title.

Rachael, who has worked in the IT business throughout her career, started writing the books when she was expecting twins, and continued as she cared for them in their early years. But pressure of work meant the books were forgotten – until Covid-19 struck. By this time, her children, now aged 11, were of an age to appreciate them. With a real need to wean her son from screens and her daughter having run out of books to read, they started together to discover Rachael's lost book world. The twins loved the stories and, with their help, Rachael refined the characters and completed the books during the lockdown years. The series of five books take readers to a future, post-pandemic, world where aliens covet the Earth. They feature a set of quadruplets of mixed human and alien parentage who have special powers. She describes the books as

being a blend of science fiction and martial arts, with a bit of a 'Star Wars' feel. She said, "I wrote these with passion a decade ago, but only during lockdown did I realise the books were for the kids now - to help them with this pandemic".

Rachael was both shocked and delighted when her daughter told her, "I can't believe you are better than my favourite author!" Rachael was determined to write books which would appeal to girls and boys, and has been thrilled with the response from her son and his friends. One went as far as to tell her he wanted a first edition, as it would be "valuable one day when you are famous!".

Rachael is now working on balancing her wellbeing business with the promotion of her books, with the second in the series due for publication by Christmas. And, with any luck, she will be publishing the remaining books in the series before too long.

'The Two Pendants' is available from bookshops, including Fourbears Bookshop in Caversham. To learn more about Rachael and her work, see <https://rachaelruthholistic.co.uk/my-writing>.

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Get Jamming with the Jam Lady

Sarah Roy



ONE OF the first tastes of summer for me is that of gooseberries. These plump, hairy little fellas are a devil to pick because of the vicious thorns that grow to defend them whilst on the bush. Then, once you've gone through the hazards of picking them, you've got the chore of topping and tailing them all! It's a good job they taste so wonderful - either in a crumble, a fool, or for flavouring a bottle of gin, they are amazing. The way they change colour from a pale green to a deep amber through the cooking process just adds to their beauty and, whether you call them gooseberries or goosegogs, you are onto a winner with this simple jam recipe.

Gooseberry Jam

Ingredients:

1kg gooseberries, topped and tailed
1kg granulated sugar

Method

1. Wash the jars and lids in hot water. Put into a warm oven (175°C) for 15min to sterilise them. Put a saucer into the freezer.
2. Cook the gooseberries until they are soft. You'll need to add water to fresh berries but if defrosted they should already be soft enough not to need water.
3. Stew down the berries, using a masher to break down to a pulp. Add a little more water if necessary. You want to avoid letting it burn on the bottom of the pan.
4. Stir in the sugar until it dissolves. Bring to a rolling boil.
5. You know that it has reached setting point when the mixture is bubbling and spitting. Take care as the jam will be scalding hot at this stage and can be quite dangerous.
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.



Enjoy this amber delight on warm scones or freshly made bread. Only the best for this summertime stunner!



Wellbeing with Ami Roy

Aching but not breaking!

HAVE YOU EVER noticed how soon after you first felt an ache in a joint, or pain down one leg, you reached for a painkiller?

Everyone has different pain tolerance levels. But if we are experiencing mild musculoskeletal pain, we can try practising natural techniques to improve how our body copes, without painkillers.

Many of us reach for the painkillers as soon as we feel pain creeping in. While medication is an effective way of reducing mild pain, taking too many painkillers can cause further complications in the long term, such as increased tolerance levels and liver damage. Luckily, there are more natural ways to manage mild musculoskeletal pain, which can affect the joints, bones, muscles and tendons.

Gentle exercise

A common misconception with musculoskeletal pain is to think we should move as little as possible. But exercise has been shown to improve pain and promote psychological wellbeing. In almost all circumstances, some form of exercise is appropriate, and will help reduce pain, improve tissue healing and support recovery; ideally, light exercise until the pain is resolved, and then a resumption of all activities and heavy exercise. Motion is lotion, so never stop moving entirely!

Reduce stress levels with relaxation techniques

Experiencing pain can itself cause added stress, but learning how to relax and decrease stress levels is proven to help reduce pain. When we're stressed, we clench up and tense our body, which puts pressure on the nerves around the source of the pain making it even more painful. It can become a frustrating cycle, as the added stress brings more pain, which in turn brings more stress.

Practising relaxation techniques such as meditation and breathing exercises can be helpful. Taking slow, deep breaths and trying to relax your muscles. Feedback from the body to the brain slowly makes pain sensors adapt to new signals of calm.

Anti-inflammatory diet

Making small changes to our diet can make a big difference to pain levels. Certain foods can reduce inflammation, help to maintain a healthy immune system, and build stronger bones to support joints, whereas others can cause inflammation and acute joint pain.

Ingredients with anti-inflammatory properties include ginger, turmeric, garlic, cherries, strawberries, blueberries, fish, oils and seeds.

If we can wait before we revert to painkillers, and work with the body more intuitively, we can improve pain outcomes and help prevent further stress on the body, setting it on a healing path!

THE CHALLENGE SOLUTIONS:

(From left to right) mangle, lean, curious, nasty, strange, mean, queer, **queen**, bean (or another 4 letter word ending 'ean'), beer, clean, pier, wash, stout, clear

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