

Caversham Bridge

No 693

www.cavershambridge.org

November 2022

HIGHDOWN AT 50

by George Grubb

HIGHDOWN SCHOOL and Sixth Form Centre is the largest school in our community, with over 1500 students between the ages of 11 and 18. This year it celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with a special day on 18 June, attended by local MP, Matt Rodda, and the Mayor of Reading, Rachel Eden.

The school grounds are extensive, and include several historic buildings. The main building, Grove House, was built in the 1780s as a small farmhouse, standing in thirty-three acres of arable farmland. It was altered and extended to almost double its original size in the Queen Anne style between 1878-80, by the architect Richard Norman Shaw, known

for his country houses and commercial buildings. The late 17th or early 18th Century Stable Block is also a listed building. The tythe barn, which is now the main music room, was built much earlier, possibly as early as 1600.

For some time before it became a comprehensive school in 1971, it was known as The Grove Secondary School. But during World War II it had a very different role, as a maternity hospital. It was set up to provide a place of safety for new mothers, away from the bombing in London.

Staff and pupils had to adapt quickly with the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, and there was a rapid transition to home schooling, which we reported in our May 2020 edition. Thankfully, the students have now returned to a more normal



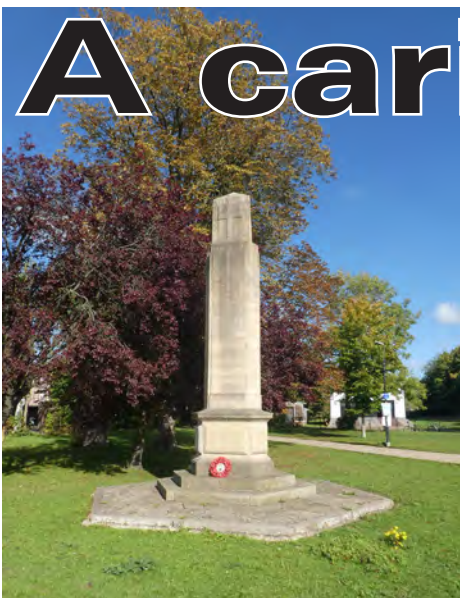
Grove House

educational environment. However, there was one change over the summer break, as Highdown's library has moved to a new location within the school, called The Hive. This is a combined space for library and careers, which is open for students during their mentor period, breaktimes

and lunchtimes.

With the introduction of information technology and a range of new subjects, schools have changed dramatically over the last 50 years. Do you have memories of the early days at Highdown? Do send in those you are happy to share!

A caring and creative community



text and photo Phil Chatfield

NOVEMBER HAS become a time of remembrance, when we think especially about those who have served in our armed forces. Our commemorations this

year will be more poignant following the death of Queen Elizabeth II and with the war in Ukraine, in which civilians have suffered extensively. In this edition, we consider civilian victims of war, with the story of the first ship sunk in the Second World War (p14).

Several articles report on the work of local charities and support from our community. These include fund raising for the Royal Berks Hospital Trust through the Walk for Wards at Mapledurham (p13), and for the Berkshire Historic Churches Trust through their Ride and Stride event (p16). Children with special needs and

their families benefit from the Camp Mohawk Day Centre at Wargrave (p8), and Reading Family Aid have launched their annual toy appeal (p13).

For those with an interest in gardening, we have articles from Les Cooper and Louise Hampden (p10), and a report on the Caversham Horticultural Society Autumn Show (p16). Concern for our environment is reflected in articles on Clayfield Copse and our Eco-Tip on radiators (p9), as well as in the wider world due to climate change (p19).

We have a wide range of creativity in the spotlight this November, from the Reading Bach Choir (p3) to Emmer

Green resident Laura Neighbour, who will be performing at the Kenton Theatre in Henley this month (p12). Our regular Local Scene painting by Janina Maher is the Fox and Hounds pub (p15), and we report on the launch of her *A stroll through Caversham* book on 30 September (p5).

With so much to report on in our community, we have added extra pages this month. We hope you enjoy reading the paper and look forward to receiving your comments and contributions. Email us at editors@cavershambridge.org or leave a message on our answerphone, 0118 328 2754.

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Giant steps are what we take, walking on the moon

I REMEMBER watching the Apollo 11 moon landing with my parents. On 20 July 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first men to walk on the moon and at the time I wondered how the third astronaut, Michael Collins, felt as he circled the moon in the command module on his own. As he orbited above, he was the most solitary human in the universe, out of touch with Ground Control for 48 minutes on each orbit and 240,000 miles from Earth.

How did he feel about getting so close to the moon but not being able to walk on it? Folk remember Armstrong and Aldrin, but do they remember the less famous third member of the crew? These thoughts have often crossed my mind when films or features on the first moon landing have been in the media.

Michael Collins died recently on 28 April 2021 aged 90. In one of his obituaries, I read a quote from him when he said, half-jokingly, he was "the navigator, the guidance and control expert, the owner of the leaky plumbing - all the things I was least interested in doing". Buzz Aldrin also thought he was probably



Talking Point – by Keith Saynor

Nasa's best trained Command Module Pilot. In fact, his role was essential for the successful completion of the mission, as were the roles of Armstrong as Commander and Aldrin as Lunar Module Pilot. All

three had equally important but different roles to play and they worked together as a team.

It is the same for us, in terms of our roles in the church and in the Kingdom of God. God has a unique and important purpose for each one of us. He equips us with different gifts and measures of ministry, faith and grace (Romans Chap 12, verses 3-8) as He calls us to be His ambassadors (2 Corinthians Chap 5, verse 20) to minister His love to others through our words and actions. Each of the Apollo 11 astronauts had responsibility to focus on their unique roles, in order to achieve all they set out to do. It is the same for us.

What we achieve for God as His ambassadors may never be recorded in the history books, but we will leave a legacy of eternal value. So let me encourage you to see and to realise how important you are to God, and how important the purpose He has for your life is – in the life of the church, in the lives of family and friends, and in the wider community. Let me encourage you to focus on that calling (1 Peter Chap 4, verses 10-11) because when you do you will enrich the church (God's people) and minister God's love to people in the wider community.

Keith Saynor, Pastor, Grace Church 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

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/live-stream>

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

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)

www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Revd Dr Garrick Wilson

Tel: 0118 946 3009

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne

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

Tel: 0118 947 1787 www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk

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

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 December 2022 issue should be submitted by 1 November and for the January 2023 edition by 1 December. These should be e-mailed to:

editors@cavershambridge.org

Dates for advertising copy are 1 November for the December 2022 issue and 1 December for the January 2023 issue. These should be e-mailed to:

advertising@cavershambridge.org

Caversham Bridge subscriptions and cover price 2023

by the Editors

ALTHOUGH PRINTING and delivery costs have increased again this year, we have decided to keep the cost of the annual subscription for the Caversham Bridge at £5. However, the cover cost for single copies will increase to £1. Postal subscriptions will rise to £16, to reflect increased postage costs.

Subscriptions are due as from 1 January 2023. The collection of cash or cheques in payment of subscriptions can be a challenge for our volunteer deliverers. We therefore encourage payment by direct bank transfer if possible. Last year around a third of subscribers chose to do so. To identify the payments, a reference made up of your postcode and house number (or name) should be used. For example, 59 Church Street, Caversham, RG4 8AX,

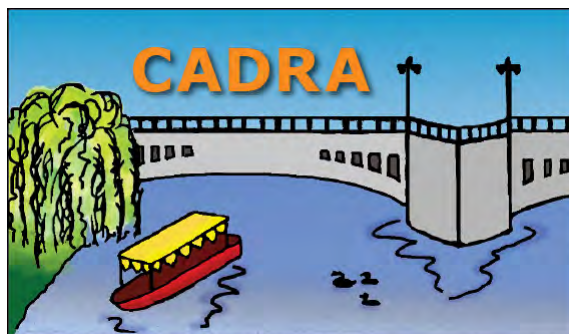
would be RG48AX59. This will enable us to notify your deliverer that payment has been made directly. Our subscription bank account details are:

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Account Number: 72808960

The option of paying your deliverer by cash or cheque on the doorstep continues to be available, as we know not everyone uses online banking.

Many people in our area are still not aware of the Caversham Bridge paper. Increasing the circulation would help us to cope with rising costs. If you enjoy reading the Caversham Bridge, please recommend it to family, friends and neighbours. Your deliverer should be able to provide a complimentary copy if that would be useful. New subscribers should contact subscriptions@cavershambridge.org to arrange payment and delivery.



CAVERSHAM AND DISTRICT Residents' Association (CADRA) are holding their Autumn Open Meeting on 9 November. It will feature a talk on *Avoiding Scams* by Steve Hambridge, Senior Consumer Protection Officer in Reading Borough Council Trading Standards. The meeting will take place in the large airy hall at Highdown School, where there is plenty of parking. In addition, Margaret Ormonde, author

AVOIDING SCAMS

of *Emmer Green Past and Present*, will be attending the meeting. Her book has been reprinted with a new appendix and will be available for sale, together with CADRA's Caversham greeting cards, which may be useful at Christmas.

The meeting starts at 19:30 in Highdown School Hall. For more information, see their website at:

www.cadra.org.uk/en/News.

P Chatfield



Write to the editors

A Moment of Change

SEVERAL OF our readers responded to our article on the passing of Queen Elizabeth II to remind us she had opened the new Reading Station in 2014. So, although the Queen didn't come to Caversham, she did open our local station. Twice! The first time was in 1989, when she opened the Brunel Arcade on the south (town centre) side of

the station. The building provided new ticket offices, improved access to the platforms (including a bridge linking directly to a new multi-storey car park on the Caversham side), and a retail area. Growth in rail travel resulted in the rebuilding of most of the station, which was officially opened by the Queen in July 2014.

READING
BACH
CHOIR

BACH TO ST ANDREW'S

by Kathy Munns

READING BACH Choir are delighted to return to St Andrew's Church for their next concert, at 17.00 on Remembrance Sunday, November 13. Fittingly, the music will reflect the season with a programme entitled *I believe: Life after death*. We explore three stages of this, beginning with 'the separation of the soul from the body' in a piece by contemporary Ukrainian composer Galina Grigorjeva. We then move to *Requiem* by Herbert Howells, a comfort to those who remain and mourn. Lastly, we present *Credo*, an affirmation of belief following a loss. This is composed by Margaret Bonds, a black American woman, and is a setting of words by civil rights activist WEB Du Bois, and makes a profound statement of harmony and professed belief. We do hope you will join us for what promises to be a moving and uplifting concert!

Full details and tickets (£15, £5 under 18s) available from: www.readingbachchoir.org.uk/dbpage.php?pg=nextconcert, or by phoning 01628 638847, from any choir member, or on the door.

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NOODSkin in Church Street, Fourbears Books in
Prospect Street, the True Food Community Co-Op
in Grove Road, Emmer Green, opposite St Barnabas
Church, the Milestone Café in Caversham Park
Village and now from Sheabutter Cottage,
118 Henley Road.

Changes around the churches

by Fred Smith

Caversham Park Village Church

AFTER MORE than 50 years as a local ecumenical partnership, Caversham Park Village Church has now



Members of the church ordained into service photo F Smith

joined the United Reformed Church (URC). It was originally set up as a parish within the benefice of St Barnabas, Emmer Green with Caversham Park, in the Church of England, with links to the Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Churches. The church meets in the premises of Caversham Park Primary School.

On Saturday 17 September, following a lengthy consultation, it became a formal part of the URC with a special service held at 15:00 at the school. Church members and guests gathered for the service which was conducted by Revd Clare Downing, Moderator of the Wessex Synod of the URC.

The service was followed by an opportunity to chat over tea and cakes, and to purchase fair trade goods from a Traidcraft stall.

For more information on Caversham Park URC see their website, <https://cpurc.org.uk/>

A change for Revd Mike Smith

MIKE SMITH has been Rector at Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish since 2014. He has now been appointed to an additional half-time role as the Area Dean for Reading. Mike will continue in his role as the Rector in the Parish. Following an open competition, he will be assisted by Rachel Ross Smith, who is now half-time Associate Vicar in the parish, looking after St Peter's.



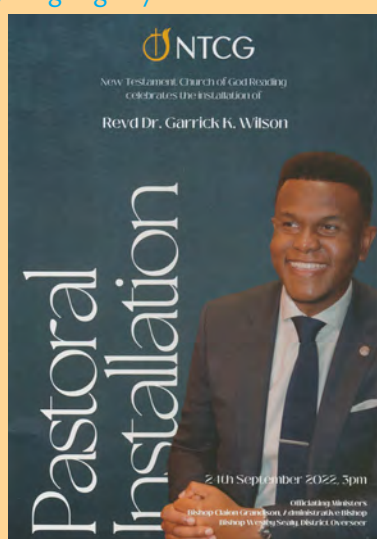
The New Testament Church of God

AS REPORTED last month, the Revd Dr Garrick Wilson has been appointed as the new pastor at the New Testament Church of God in Reading. The Church celebrated his installation with a special service on 24 September. The church was filled for the occasion with representatives from Churches Together England, Christian Aid, Tearfund, and friends from a wide cross-section of the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, including his former congregation at the Chrisma Church in South London.

A joyous service of praise and worship, in the presence of bishops from the church, included participation by many members of the congregation. Statements of Affirmation were given by the Church and Pastor's Council, the Seniors, and the Youth and Children Ministry. The service culminated in prayer and the laying on of hands led by Bishop Claiion Grandison, the National Presiding Bishop of NTCG.

For more information on NTCG see their website:

<https://ntcg.org.uk/>



Pastoral Installation order of service



Zumba Gold

Tuesday 9.30-10.15

St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green.

Please contact Daniela:

Tel: 07900307520

Email: d.capasso67@gmail.com

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photo P Chatfield

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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' in Caversham. We are starting to ramp up to a hopefully busy Christmas period. Caversham Late Night Shopping is due to be 2 December, with Santa visiting Fourbears Books.

by Alex Forbes



Bear between the covers

photo A Forbes

TWO ADULT books this month are both new releases, and are perfect Christmas gifts.

The first book is *Marple*. I'm pretty sure everyone knows of Miss Marple. They may even have a relative or friend that reminds them of Agatha Christie's famous sleuth. Marple is an anthology of short stories written by 12 modern-day bestselling and award-winning writers, who have each written a brand new Miss Marple story. As a huge Christie fan, I was sceptical. I haven't been impressed by previous Christie impersonators, so I was a little apprehensive, but I thoroughly enjoyed these new stories. There were a couple which I didn't enjoy quite as much but, in terms of capturing the essence of Agatha Christie and Miss Marple, I think this new book does a very good job.

The other book is *brother. do. you. love. me.* Reuben is a 38-year-old struggling to

accept that he has Downs syndrome and is not happy in the home where he lives. Struggling with depression, Reuben hasn't spoken for over a year. He sent a text message to his brother simply saying 'brother. do. you. love. me.'. Manni, his brother, left his life in Spain to live with his youngest brother in a cottage. This book describes the journey the two brothers went on to rediscover their love, and is incredibly moving. However, the tone is lightened as Reuben's simple illustrations bring joy to the pages. I think this one will be a surprise hit over Christmas.

We hope you are enjoying whatever you are reading at the moment. Do pop into the shop to see all the lovely books we currently have. Happy reading.

Take a stroll - and learn more about Caversham's history



A stroll through Caversham
An illustrated guide by Janina Maher

by Phil Chatfield

FOURBEARS BOOKS hosted the launch of Janina Maher's new book, *A Stroll through Caversham*, on 30 September. The book features 28 paintings of Caversham, organised in a circular stroll. This starts at Caversham Health Club By iST Fitness in Archway Road, and takes in Bridge Street, Church Road, Church Street and Prospect Street, before ending in Gosbrook Road.

Janina started painting and drawing the buildings in Caversham in 2020 at the height of the Covid-19 lockdowns. Being restricted to the local area, she started to look closely at the buildings in Caversham, and was amazed at the variety of architecture and decoration on our high street buildings. Before long, these paintings became a regular feature in the Caversham Bridge, accompanied by information about the building, looking at its history and current use, written by Martin Andrews.

Early in 2022, Janina thought about collecting these paintings and articles into a book, which would provide a snapshot of Caversham at the time. A small team worked to provide the stories behind each of the buildings to supplement those which had already been published in the paper. A foreword was provided by Helen Lambert, Chair of the Caversham and District Residents Association, and the book was designed by Chris Harper of the Harper Partnership.

The book launch brought together many of the people involved in the writing, design and production of the book, and gave Janina an opportunity to thank her team. Terry Dixon, who leads themed walking tours of Reading which delve into its history, culture, events and people in an entertaining way, gave a short introduction to Janina and her book, and announced that a special walk, based on the book, would take place on 19 November.

The book costs £15 and is available directly from Janina and from Fourbears Books in Prospect Street. For more information see janinamaher.artweb.com/book-of-caversham

For details of Terry's walks, see:

www.facebook.com/terrysreadingwalkabouts



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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 – 19:00 Thursday and 10:00 – 15:00 Saturday. Regular events such as *Rhymetime* are now being held again - see www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/all-libraries/caversham-library

Geo Café - Artists against homelessness, an ongoing and changing exhibition of art by local artists at Geo Café, Prospect Street. For each sale, the artist makes a donation to Launchpad Reading. Open every day except Tuesdays (when the café is closed).

Mondays - *Caversham Park Bridge Club* - at the Milestone Centre, 19:15 for 19:30 start. Phone Lin 0119 947 7820 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 - *Rivarate 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

Saturday 22 October to Tuesday 1 November - *Autumn Festival of Music and Art* - Presented by Concerts in Caversham. For details of performers and ticket prices, see www.concertsincaversham.co.uk
The festival includes concerts on: **Saturday 22 and 29 October** at 19:30 and **Sunday 23 and 30 October** at 18:00 - all at St Andrew's Church, RG4 7PL and the Festival Finale on **Tuesday 1 November** - 19:30 - Queen Anne's School, RG4 6DX

Wednesday 2 November - *Meeting (subject to be advised)* - 20:00 at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. The Caversham Heights Society www.cavershamheights.org

Wednesday 2 November - *Talk on The History of John Lewis and Heelas* - 14:00 Rosehill WI - St Barnabas Church Hall.

Friday 4 November - *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.

Wednesday 9 November - *Walk at Thatcham Discovery Centre*, 6 miles - 10:30 start from Discovery Centre car park - Pang Valley Ramblers. One of several walks on Sat, Sun & Weds in their programme. For details see: www.pvramblers.org.uk

Wednesday 9 November - *Avoiding Scams by Steve Hambridge* - 19:30 at Highdown School - Caversham and District Residents Association autumn open meeting. See their website at www.cadra.org.uk/en/News for details.

Saturday 12 November - *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

Sunday 13 November - *Reading Bach Choir present 'I believe: Life after death'* - 17:00 - St Andrews Church, RG4 7PL Full details and tickets (£15, £5 under 18s) available at www.readingbachchoir.org.uk/dbpage.php?pg=nextconcert, by phoning 01628 638847, from any choir member, or on the door.

Wednesday 16 November - *The Falklands War 40 years on by Dr Linda Parker* - 20:00 at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road. The Caversham Heights Society www.cavershamheights.org

Wednesday 16 November - *Beneficial insects in the garden with Andrew Halstead* - 19:30 Zoom talk - tickets via Eventbrite. Caversham Horticultural Society. Website www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk/events.htm

Thursday 17 November - *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

Saturday 19 November - *A stroll through Caversham, a themed walk led by Terry Dixon* - 8:50 Start at Caversham Health Club by iST fitness reception - Archway Rd, Caversham RG4 8HX

See www.facebook.com/events/1164837341044429

Sunday 20 November - *Artesia Christmas Market* - 10.00-15.30 - Southview Park, Marsack Street, RG4 5AF See www.creativspaces.co.uk for details.

Saturday 26 November - *Reading Haydn Choir concert including Haydn - 'Little Organ Mass' and Faure - 'Requiem'* - 19:30 at St Joseph's College, Upper Redlands Road RG1 5JT. For more details see www.haydnchoir.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

A BUSY month for planning. On **Church Street**, the frontage of Caversham Stir-fry and Nathans is to be altered, with changes behind to create accommodation (221304). **Waitrose** has applied for complete new signage for the store and the car park (221289). A License lasting six years has been granted for **Winter Wonderland**, on Hills Meadow. The accompanying planning permission is delayed, pending further clarification on protection of the edge by the trees (221171). The Construction Method for **Reading Golf Club** also requires further detail. Transport Officers advise there should be no deliveries to the site between 8:00 to 9:30 and 17:00 to 18:00, to avoid congestion at peak times. CADRA is seeking further restrictions. Refusal of the telecom mast at Grove Road has been appealed and the closing date for comments has now passed.

There are three major applications on Caversham Road. **Drews** (220922) retains part of the frontage, but new building rises to six storeys. The **Carters** site (221324) is proposed for demolition, with new dwellings rising to four storeys. **Great Brighams Mead**, which has permission to convert to residential, is seeking to add third and fourth floors (221479).

South Oxfordshire has refused permission for two detached houses at the **Piggery** on Gravel Hill. The application for padel tennis courts at **The Caversham** golf club has been withdrawn. South Oxfordshire has refused planning for **Caversham Lakes** watersports, on grounds of ecology, traffic and safety. The junction to the access road, which lies in Reading Borough Council, has been a hot spot for accidents and near misses. Local residents plan to present a petition to Reading's Traffic Management Sub-Committee on 10 November.



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A FEW DAYS after the death of Queen Elizabeth II, I was asked by the editors of 'The Bridge' whether Her Majesty had ever set foot in Caversham. Maybe she had visited the BBC Monitoring Station at Caversham Park? Unable to find that she was ever here, my mind turned to other possible connections, and the only one I could come up with was Elizabeth House, the three storey block of

flats on Gosbrook Road in my photo (left)..

They were built for Reading Corporation and, at the meeting of the Housing Committee in December 1952, it was resolved that 'the Gosbrook Road flats be known in future as Elizabeth House'. The first tenants were then moving in, in good time for the Coronation.

From the outset, it appears that the flats were intended to be something special. A firm of London architects was called on to design them, and the local builders, Boyd and Murley, of London Street, Reading, built them. Messrs B & M paid for the bronze plaque on the front, which is illustrated here. In the middle of the buildings was the 'quadrangle', which was artificially raised to 'a height above flood level, at a cost not exceeding £900'. It was suggested that there should be a floral clock in the quadrangle, but the councillors thought this an unnecessary expense.



From the outset, the flats had cycle sheds and later, in 1953, it was decided to build nine lock-up garages for the tenants – the first of many. People were beginning to acquire television sets, and it was decided not to allow a forest of aerials around the chimneystacks. Tenants must either pay a connection charge to Rediffusion to use the

communal aerial, or use an indoor aerial.

In January 1953, Leslie Plant, aged 45, was appointed caretaker, and a flat was provided. Later in the year, a motor mower was provided. A friend from my local pub remembers Mr Plant, his meticulous lawns – and his attractive daughter! Any children who ventured onto the grass were brusquely chased off.

Whether or not the planned official 1953 opening ceremony ever took place is something of a mystery. Local legend has it that Queen Elizabeth herself did the honours. The Housing Committee decided that arrangements should be made, and the Rector of Caversham offered to take part. At their July meeting, the Housing Committee even decided to pay for the ceremony, but don't seem to have mentioned it after that.

Rents here were higher than those in similar flats on the Bath Road Estate, which caused a rumpus in the local papers in 1954.

Perhaps we should not be too surprised to find that there was an Elizabeth House Social Club. During the 1950s, they ran coach trips to the Beaconsfield Model Village, annual Christmas parties for the children and, in July 1956, they arranged for the Reading Light Orchestra, 'under Mr. Sidney Price', to play in the quadrangle. Members and friends were invited to sit or promenade on and around the lawn during the performance. The *Reading Standard* newspaper commented; 'No other council estate has embarked on such a scheme, the club claims, and I believe it is right'.

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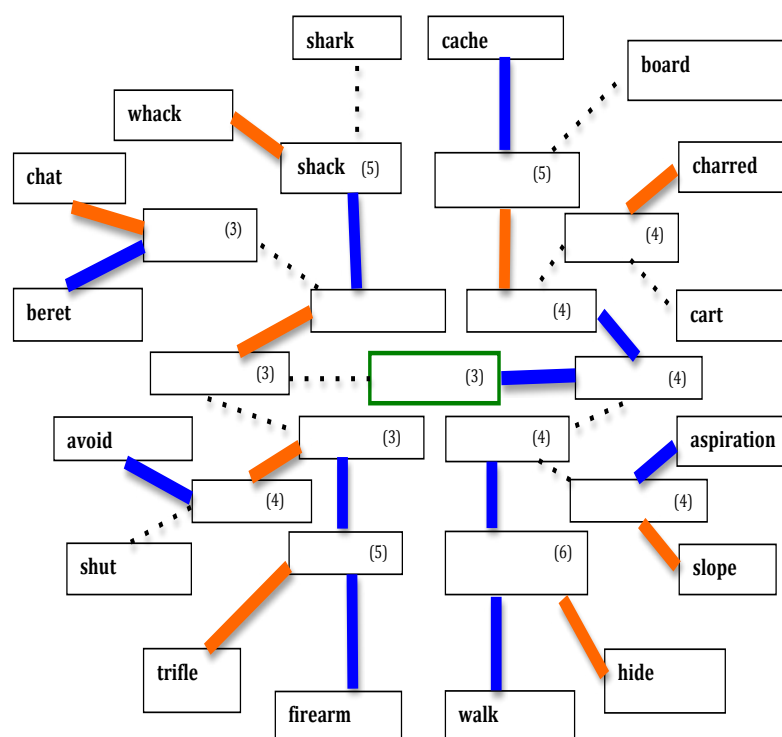
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Puzzle Corner

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: *shack* has 5 letters, rhymes with *whack* and differs by one letter from *shark*.

Rhyme ———
Letter change
Meaning ———



Answers on page 19

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A SPECIAL DAY OUT

As part of our charitable giving this year, the Board of the Caversham Bridge agreed to support the work of Camp Mohawk at Wargrave. The following article outlines their mission.

CAMP MOHAWK is run by The Woodland Centre Trust, a registered charity established in 1980. It is a multi-functional Day Centre for children with special needs and their families, set in five acres of beautiful countryside in Highfield Lane, Wargrave. Each year we welcome over 1,000 children with a wide range of cognitive and physical disabilities from Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and across the Southeast.

The specific aims of the centre are:

- To provide facilities which stimulate coordination, communication, socialisation and imagination
- To provide educational and recreational projects that help equip young people with special needs for eventual independent living
- To encourage, include and provide a support network for young carers whose siblings have special needs
- To support whole families affected by special needs in order to reduce stress and isolation, and improve quality of life for the family
- To provide a superb venue for local voluntary disability support groups, special schools, and care centres.

by Samantha Rosier

Our outdoor spaces include a wild meadow, a wildlife pond, nature information panels, areas of lawn with picnic facilities, a sensory garden which includes outdoor instruments, mirrors, and play panels, and an amphitheatre-style seating area used for campfires, group music sessions and storytelling.

Our heated, outdoor pool (open May to September), adventure playgrounds and covered games area, including a pool table and table tennis, provide facilities for sports and active play.

Indoors, we have a multi-purpose hall, soft playroom, a suite of sensory rooms with a variety of interactive equipment, and a music room. Our comfortable play lounge has a huge range of toys, games, and dressing-up clothes, and we also have an art/crafts room.

So we can offer young people opportunities for fun and learning, whatever the weather. We also have a fully accessible bathroom, shower and changing facilities.

To learn more, or make a donation to their work, see their website at: www.campmohawk.org.uk.



But, alas, we never found fame

IN 1956 A NEW sound assailed our ears - skiffle. It was Lonnie Donegan singing about *The Rock Island Line*. Lonnie wasn't alone with this new phenomenon because soon there were other 'skiffle' groups crowding on to our television sets. There was the Vipers Skiffle Group singing about *The Cumberland Gap* (apparently a place somewhere in the USA, not England) and The Charles McDevitt Skiffle Group singing about a *Freight Train* and a *Greenback Dollar*.

A skiffle group consisted mainly of the singer, a guitarist, a bass player and some form of percussion. Simple. Quite a few young viewers watched and thought, 'Yes... we can do that!'

Metal thimbles from Timothy Whites

I was one of these, although my knowledge of music was nil. So, a group of friends got together to astound the music world. Luckily, one of us, Ann, had a guitar and could just about play a few chords. I bought an old-fashioned washboard and some metal thimbles from the Timothy Whites shop in Reading. Then we managed to scrounge from somewhere a plywood tea chest, which together with a length of string and broom handle, we converted into a bass. Sheila 'played' this, while my girlfriend, June, and her mate, Sarah, did the singing for us.

When we began 'playing' it was certainly not perfection. I rattled away on the washboard, Sheila 'plucked' the string of the tea chest bass, and Ann played a couple of chords on her guitar, while the girls warbled away. Somehow, we managed *Freight Train* and *Greenback Dollar*, but our repertoire was small, and we would have been in trouble if ever we had to play an encore. Regrettably, we were never asked.

We did improve and played to a couple of audiences but, alas, we never found fame.

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Are your radiators working as well as they should? *by Trish Marcouse*

IF YOU HAVE fairly modern radiators, made up of two heated panels with a set of fins between them, they act a bit like a convector heater, heating the air moving up through the fins. Dust, pet hairs etc are drawn up as well and can coat the insides of the panels, reducing the efficiency of heat transfer. Knock along the base of the radiator and see what falls out, peer down through the fins to check there is nothing large stuck in one of them. If there is, then take the cover off the radiator and use a long stick to push it down and out. Use the open end of the vacuum cleaner hose along the base to suck fine stuff out from between the fins.

Next thing is to bleed all the radiators every

year to release any accumulated air. I can never remember where I've put the radiator key, but it is very quick to do once you either have the key or a suitable screwdriver bit. Remember a towel to catch any leaks!

Then check all the thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) to make sure that they turn up and down. If you have more than one radiator in a room, check the TRVs are set to the same temperature, and decide which rooms you can set to a lower temperature for the winter months. Consider putting TRVs onto the radiators if you don't already have them.

And make sure you have your boiler regularly serviced!



Changing seasons at Clayfield Copse *by Friends of Clayfield Copse*

THE LAST FEW months have been a busy time at Clayfield Copse. During the summer, volunteers watered the young trees planted in the spring by Reading Borough Council along the bank by the car park. Without their efforts, the trees would not have survived the summer weather.

Meadows Day on 2 July went well, with fine weather and plenty to see and do. The wildflowers planted on the bank by the car park finally came into their own for the day. On 22 August, Friends of Clayfield Copse (FoCC) hosted a *Fantastic Trees* walk as part of a *Wild about Reading* summer holiday event, led by a conservation volunteer with FoCC. Dave Kenny, Reading Tree Warden, and FoCC are planning a self-guided Tree Trail along the Ride in November.

As the summer progressed and the drought started to impact the vegetation, it was strange to walk through the woods which were dry and brown before their time. Even the elderberries and blackberries were shrunken.

In the autumn, on a rather grey and chilly evening of 17 September, the Friends held a bats and moths meeting. Pipistrelle and long eared bats were glimpsed and were heard through radio handsets. Some of the children could hear them without the handsets. Rose Anne Mosovic, of the South Bucks and

Berks Bat Group, told us of many of the fascinating characteristics of these little creatures. For example, they can hear a ladybird walking on a leaf! Peter Cuss of the local butterfly and moth group brought his moth trap. Although it was rather cold for the moths, we did see a selection, including a beautiful light emerald moth. We also found a hornet.

There are always plenty of housekeeping jobs to do around the site, such as cutting back brambles



Hunting the bats

both photos R Patton

and rooting out golden rod. If you can spare some time to help, join us for our regular work parties at 10:00 on the first Sunday or third Monday of the month. See details on the site notice board, or check the Econet website www.econetreading.org.uk or our Facebook page.

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WHAT NEXT?

by Les Cooper



IT WAS probably not a very good idea but, when I started to write this article, I decided to look back at what I had previously written to check which tasks I had suggested for the month of November. After all, I would not want to repeat myself. In 2020 I had waffled on about growing Monarda and, in 2021, about my new compost bin. In a way both subjects have also featured in this year's gardening effort. Perhaps 'effort' is the wrong word because there hasn't been a great deal on my part.

This year I grew a small group of Monarda, and they looked quite good, but only because I watered them each day, due to the fact that, quite clearly, they did not enjoy the hot, dry weather. My new compost bin has worked well, and appears to have produced some really good garden compost. However, an arthritic wrist, and the old man's problem of inability to work in very hot weather, has meant I have not done anything with the lovely compost.

This makes me think about how hard it is to plan for the future. What will next summer be like? Who knows? Drought again? I have taken cuttings of my Penstemon and Erysimum (perennial wallflowers), but if they do as badly next year as this summer's bedraggled plants which loathed the drought, then I am not sure why I have bothered.

The garden magazine 'experts' suggest we adopt a Mediterranean style garden, but I will have to find out exactly what this entails? Do lavender and sedum qualify (they have managed the heat quite well)? Is it going to cost a lot of money to plant the right trees?

On a more upbeat note, although the summer garden has been a near disaster, our spring garden was good. Tulips, Spanish Irises, Daffodils, Leucojum (Snowflake) and my little blue favourite, Anemone Blanda, all flowered beautifully. Another number one was favourite

Erythronium Dens-Canis (Dog's Tooth Violet) 'Pagoda' that has drooping pale yellow bell-shaped flowers. It was delightful and is spreading too. According to my bulb expert book, I should not disturb established clumps unless it is really necessary, now that really does suit me well.

Isn't it a joy to thumb through the bulb catalogues and visualise the beauties in our garden next year and to try to forget the dry, yellow lawns of this year?



Erythronium Dens-Canis (Dog's Tooth Violet) 'Pagoda'



Plant of the Month

text and photos Louise Hampden

THE WEEKS of November are often a race against time spent watching out for frost forecasts. I'm usually sorting out containers which, for the most part, are now looking pretty bedraggled, and bringing tender plants under cover before the cold kills them off.

It's normally a ruthless decision about which plants to protect and which to leave outside. The decision depends largely on how fond I have become of them over the summer. In my garden, fuchsias fall into several camps; the tender, the hardy and the 'take your chances outside' variety. In July, I fell in love with a tender spider fuchsia and spent time sourcing it. Planted out as late as July in pots, it took its time flowering, coming into its full glory in September. By November, however, it will be the first to come under cover, along with a couple of very unusual and rare fuchsias which have spent the summer in pots. The rest fall into the 'take your chances' camp, remaining in their pots and placed by a south-facing house wall for the winter.

The dahlias I grew from seed a couple of years ago have flowered prolifically this year, and it may be a bit of a gamble to leave them outside this winter. You are supposed to wait until the frost blackens the top growth, and then deal with the tubers by storing them dry over winter in a greenhouse, shed or garage – which I did last year. I may take my chances this winter and cover them with a thick mulch of spent compost and hope that they come through, but I will hedge my bets and select the best to bring in. Cannas are definitely on the protection list, and are cut back, brought under cover, and barely watered over the winter.

Winters are so variable these days, and can be mild one year and viciously cold another, so investment in a roll of horticultural fleece can pay dividends. A double layer over outdoor containers can protect the plants, and increase their chances of survival, both outdoors and in a cold greenhouse, where use it to cover almost everything.



Dahlias



Spider Fuchsia

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Community Connections



by Caroline Gratrix

This month we meet Amanda Adlem of Hilton Skin and Body Clinic



Amanda Adlem photo C Gratrix

THIS MONTH I had the pleasure of meeting Amanda Adlem, owner of the newly renovated Hilton Skin and Body

Clinic on Church Road.

Amanda is a qualified personal trainer and therapist and owns the Fitness Loft on Church Road. When the opportunity came up to acquire the Hilton Skin and Body Clinic she jumped at it, giving it a makeover and some seriously chic appeal. The clinic came with a great set of male and female clients, and she is getting lots of walk-in enquiries now the clinic is visible. For anyone shy about visiting a skin clinic, there is a private side

entrance.

Amanda is hugely passionate about helping people to be more confident. A self-confessed lover of The Collective's coffees and pastries, she understands the daily dilemmas we all face in the quest to look our best. The clinic has incredibly high standards, there is a team of four therapists, a nurse, and a doctor. You can opt for a range of treatments for Acne – Anti Aging – Dermatology – Fat Freezing – Wrinkles &

Fine Line – Rejuvenation and more.

I would highly recommend you pop in to say hi, and learn more about the extensive treatments on offer. I can guarantee, you will be met with a very warm welcome.

Let's find out a little more about Amanda ...

How long have you lived in Caversham?

For about 14 years.

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

The Collective (of course), and The Lebanese Village is our new favourite for meals.

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

Being more mindful in general of waste and recycling and switching the lights off.

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

More social events locally for people who might not have a good social network. Isolation is a horrible thing.

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

Regular social events for people to meet others and increase their social circle.



A Crafty Cuppa

– with Louise Spiers

by Ruth Martin

"I'VE BEEN upcycling since pre the word upcycling," Louise Spiers from Kitsch-en-sync told me when we caught up over a crafty cuppa recently. "I have always enjoyed making things and creating something from nothing," she explained.

Louise's ethos is to save vintage items from landfill, reinventing them to become heirlooms for the future. And seeing some of the beautiful pieces of furniture transformed by Louise, I can see what she means; cabinets updated with eye-catching wallpaper, treasured photos as decoupage on coffee tables, and old sheet music festooning antique violins. One of her favourite pieces was the vintage standard lamp she refurbished with fabric from an old pinstripe suit, purchased by a Reading menswear store to adorn its window.

Beginning her creative career as a decorative artist, Louise mastered the art of marbling furniture with paint when it was de rigueur in the 1980s and taught herself traditional paint finish techniques to add colour and shape. Cocktail cabinets have been a favourite upcycle. She loves being given a commission, working with the client to discover their tastes, and helping them visualise finished pieces, which she then brings to life. Louise also finds a use for all sorts of upcycled

vintage vessels, repurposing them as unique plant pots for her home-propagated plants.

Asked what words of encouragement she might offer to others, Louise was quick to respond "I love helping people to look at things afresh in their homes – could a chair be used as a bedside table perhaps? Just try to look at things from a new perspective and take a waste-not-want-not attitude to create unique and meaningful pieces."

Keep an eye out for Louise, as she can often be spotted in Caversham, driving Bluebell – her pale blue Citroën Acadiane van. "I can never travel incognito in my tin can on wheels! 600cc's of raw power, left-hand drive – she's over forty years old and beautiful," Louise tells me and, as she drove off at the end of our cuppa, I can confirm that her eye-catching van is as distinctive as the furniture she upcycles!

To find out more about Louise's creations, see her Etsy shop at [etsy.com/uk/shop/kitschensyncstudio](https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/kitschensyncstudio) or pop into Fanny's Antiques in Reading.

You can contact her by email:

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Louise Spiers photo R Martin

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CURTAIN UP FOR LAURA AS SHE TAKES THE STAGE



EMMER GREEN resident, Laura Neighbour, has a busy working schedule as a beautician with Aphrodite's Beauty Salon in Kidmore End Road, as well as being mother of three lively daughters, aged 9, 12 and 13. A year ago, she decided she needed a bit of 'me' time, and wanted to take up a new hobby. So, she somewhat nervously approached Henley Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society (HAODS) to do an audition – it is amazing to think that she now regularly sings, dances and acts with the company.

"I last did some acting when I was at Chiltern Edge School – I got involved, being quite an outgoing person. It was my best subject at school," Laura recalls. Having grown up in Sonning Common, she now lives in Emmer Green. A friend recommended she should audition for HAODS before the pandemic, and when she finally made the decision to give it a

With no theatrical background since her schooldays, Laura Neighbour has appeared in a series of exciting productions over the past year. She tells Elestr Lee how she found her place in the spotlight

go last year Covid rules were still applying to the audition process. "I wasn't too worried about dancing or acting, but I was worried about singing in front of people," Laura remembers. She was very nervous, and finally turned up for her audition at the same time as those auditioning for leading roles. She says, "I burst into tears after singing my song. Then they asked if I wanted to do it again. They were auditioning for *Shrek the Musical*, and I was offered a small part as the White Rabbit – but I ended up playing six different characters!"

Apart from her drama performances



The *Shrek* cast (top). Laura next appeared in a new play by Piers Burnell (above)



All photos: HAODS

Laura in her first role in *Shrek* (above)

at school, Laura had no previous theatre experience or training in acting, singing or dancing, although she is now taking tap-dancing classes. However, since her initial performance in *Shrek*, she has acted in a new play written and directed by Piers Burnell, *The Devil and the Dove*, which has been performed at several drama festivals and was nominated for the National Drama Festival competition in Coventry

this summer – the ultimate accolade for amateur theatre.

Laura is thrilled to belong to HAODS. "It is so inclusive – there are young people who have just been to university, the youngest member is a child around six, while others are in their 60s. Some people have acted before, while others just want to give it a try. Everyone is lovely!" she enthuses.

Laura is very excited about her latest role, which presents another new challenge for her. This year the theatre group has been celebrating its centenary; having opened in 1922 with a production of Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Mikado*, HAODS director Julie Huntingdon is revisiting the show with an alternative version retitled *Hot Mikado*, adapted by David H Bell and Rob Bowman. The show is based on the 1939 Broadway version of the operetta, incorporating gospel, blues, rock and swing, all set to Gilbert & Sullivan's satirical storyline. Laura has clearly got over her reluctance to sing, and was keen to be involved – although she wasn't sure she was ready for a main part in the production. "But I said, do you mind if I give it a go? At the audition, I sang one of the main part songs. And they offered me the part of Pitti-Sing!"

Rehearsing for the show, which will take place at Henley's Kenton Theatre in November, is quite a commitment. "Once rehearsals start, we meet twice a week. This week, we have worked on choreography. Next week we will rehearse with the music director. Then, as the first night nears, we move to three rehearsals a week," she explains. "But I love it! I have met so many people and have got to know people who belong to other drama groups. Being busy with work and my three children, it is great to have something else to be involved in.

"When my friend first mentioned the idea of me joining HAODS, I really wasn't sure. And around the time I approached them, I told my dad, and he was really glad I gave it a go. Sadly, he died very suddenly, so he didn't get to see my first show. But knowing he was pleased I was doing it has really helped me after losing him."

Laura is very keen for her three daughters to see her on stage – they haven't yet caught the stage 'bug' from mum, preferring cheerleading and football. But they will be there to cheer her on in *Hot Mikado*. And Laura has no fears about facing the crowds from the Kenton's stage. "I think I must have performed there with my primary school, when I was very young," she remembers. "And as lots of my family live in Henley, going to the Kenton is something I am very used to.

"I do recommend it – if anyone out there is a bit nervous, like I was about joining a local drama group – do give it a go!"

Find out more:

<https://www.haods.org/home>

<https://kentontheatre.co.uk/event/hot-mikado/>

Hot Mikado is at the Kenton Theatre 16-19 November.



TIME FOR TOYS AND TEENS

by Anna Waite of Reading Family Aid

THE READING FAMILY AID Christmas Toys and Teens Appeal for 2022 launched on 20 October with donation points around the Reading area.

We support many schools, places of worship and charities who work with disadvantaged families, as well as social workers and health visitors. We invite

staff at these organisations to give us details of the numbers, ages and genders of the children they work with who would typically get very little, if anything, for Christmas.

Last year, once gifts had been purchased (from the money raised in our online appeal) and present sacks distributed (from donated toys), we had provided toys and gifts to a record-breaking 2,558 children! Thanks to our fantastic supporters and sponsors, we raised over £30,000 and received thousands of toys, which allowed us to give Christmas gifts to children across

the Reading area.

It is evident the effects of the cost-of-living crisis this year will be far reaching, and the organisations and charities we work with tell us how families are struggling to cope. We understand the problems many are facing, and every penny we raise will go towards putting a smile on children's faces and helping them have a happy end to a difficult year.

Please visit our Toy Donations page for details of how to donate toys and to find out what we can (and can't) use. We are also running a GoFundMe appeal again.

The money raised buys new presents for age groups that aren't provided for, typically teenagers, and batteries for toys. This is an easier way to donate for those that can't access our donation points or don't know what to buy.

Please consider donating this year. Anything you can give, no matter how small, will make a huge difference to Reading's families at Christmas time.

See Reading Family Aid's website www.readingfamilyaid.org/donate-toys.html

GoFundMe appeal link: <https://gofund.me/5038d766>



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Rachel Eden
photo C Gratrix

Walk for Wards with Royal Berks Charity
photo Royal Berks Charity

by Caroline Gratrix

IN PARTNERSHIP with Chancellors Reading, the Royal Berks Charity held its Walk for Wards 2022 at the stunning Mapledurham Estate on Sunday 25 September.

Over 200 people pulled on their walking boots to get active and help support our local NHS by taking part in the Walk. It was a fantastic route through the beautiful British countryside, starting and finishing in front of Mapledurham House. There were 5km and 10km routes to choose between, with over £7,000 raised and going straight to our local NHS.

The walk was officially opened by the Mayor of Reading, Rachel Eden, who went on the 5km walking route. The sun shone and conditions were perfect for the walk.

As a registered charity, Royal Berks Charity are here to help our local NHS. They raise funds to support the excellent care you and your family receive locally, which is why they have created this

special fundraising walk to support the wards and departments within the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust.

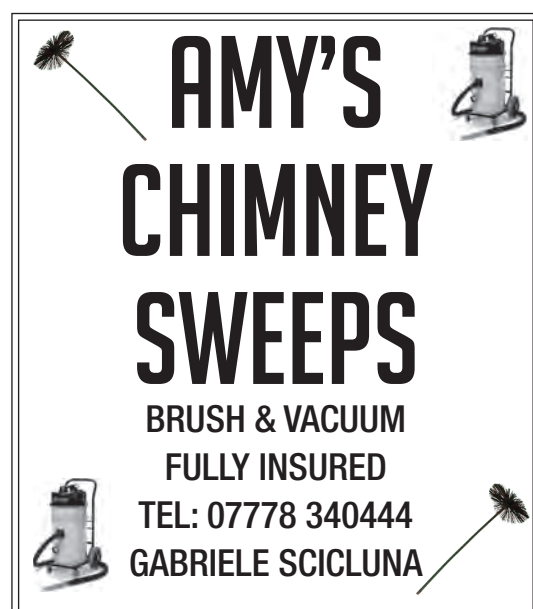
Their next fundraiser, Christmas at the Minster on Thursday 1 December, is to support the refurbishment of the bereavement suites in the Maternity wards. As an NHS Trust, they know how important it is to provide patients with the best care possible. Their target is set at £40,000 and every penny raised will help reach this goal.

With your help, the Royal Berks Charity can make sure that mothers who experience the untimely death of their baby get the support they need at this difficult time. You can purchase your tickets via this link:

<https://register.enthouse.com/ps/event/ChristmasatReadingMinster>

You can also follow the Royal Berks Charity via Facebook and Instagram.

Facebook www.facebook.com/royalberkscharity and Instagram www.instagram.com/royalberkscharity



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REMEMBERING THE CIVILIAN VICTIMS OF WAR



THE STORY highlights the suffering of civilians caught up in war, sadly mirroring what is currently happening in the Ukraine, where it seems innocent civilians are often deliberately targeted. At this time of Remembrance, we thought we would retell the story, as a reminder of the fate of so many victims of war who were not serving in the Armed Forces.

Norma was born in Glasgow, the home port of the Atlantic liner *Athenia*, which her father, Kenneth (known as Ken) served on as Second Officer. In the period just before the outbreak of the War in September 1939, Norma and her mother left Glasgow for the safety of Arran, leaving her father amidst preparation for a trip to America. The ship was prepared for possible enemy attack with windows blacked out, brass covered, and electric lights removed.

They sailed from Liverpool on Friday 1 September, the day before war was declared, with 1,100 passengers and 300 crew. Many of the passengers were American, desperate to get back home, and 800 were women and children. The next day, at 11:00, a wireless message warning of the declaration of war was received. Lifeboats were prepared for immediate use and extra lookouts were stationed around the ship.

Just as Ken was about to leave the dinner

by Fred Smith

Earlier this year, one of our deliverers introduced us to local resident and regular reader Norma Crockett and the extraordinary story of the sinking of the SS Athenia at the start of the Second World War.

table at 19:35, a terrific thud shook the *Athenia*. Lights went out and the ship lurched over. All were thrown to the floor with a terrifying crash of cutlery and crockery. He later wrote, 'There was no doubt in my mind as to the cause'. With the help of light from matches, he made his way to his room and grabbed his pipe and tobacco, lifebelt and boat list. It was still daylight, which improved the chances of turning disastrous confusion into order.

He was in charge of four lifeboats and 250 people. The usefulness of frequent boat drills became apparent and, despite the challenges, the lifeboats were lowered in an orderly manner and soon he saw they were clear of the ship. Within an hour, all but the captain and a few officers were safely sent off. Around 50 people were killed or drowned as a direct result of the explosion, but the rest were saved from the sinking liner.

At 22:00 the captain decided to abandon ship, and the officers were distributed around the lifeboats. The wireless operator had managed to raise the alarm and several ships raced to the rescue. *The Knut Nelson*, a Norwegian vessel took 600 survivors to Galway.

The *Athenia* was the first victim of the war, a liner with no guns, troops or ammunition, loaded with harmless people, torpedoed without warning, eight hours after war was declared.

Norma knew nothing of this story until an aunt sent it to her in later life. Her father had written his account for a school journal published in September 1939. She does remember not being able to see her mother for some time on Arran, probably at the time between her learning



Norma's Father

photo Family archive

of the loss of the ship and of the survival of her husband.

Ken spent the remainder of the war with the RAF, teaching navigation to aircrew, many Polish, at West Freugh near Stranraer. After the war, he was seconded to British Overseas Airways Corporation training navigators at Filton, Bristol. Later he took a flying post and was part of the aircrew which flew Princess Elizabeth to Kenya and brought her back as Queen. He particularly remembered how she made a special point of turning to shake the hand and thank each member of the crew – possibly the highlight of his flying career.

The full account of the loss of the *Athenia*, entitled *I was there*, is available on our website and makes fascinating reading. I would like to thank Norma for sharing this story, talking about her father, and allowing us to use the precious photo of him in uniform.

REMEMBRANCE IN CAVERSHAM

THIS YEAR marks the 40th anniversary of the Falklands conflict. Special services around the country will mark the occasion and the memory of those who served in the campaign. One such service will be at Caversham Park Church, starting at 10:45.

Most church services will include an act of remembrance on 13 November. An open-air service is usually held at Caversham War Memorial on the Promenade. Details are not available at the time of writing, but the service usually starts at 10:45 and includes a one-minute silence at 11:00.

Dr A Johnson



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The Local Scene

by Martin Andrews

The Fox and Hounds



Drawing by Janina Maher

www.janinamaher.artweb.com

WHENEVER I pass the Fox and Hounds, my attention is inevitably drawn to the blue plaque on the wall. This commemorates two exciting evenings, when a certain Paul McCartney and John Lennon, then teenagers, entertained the patrons with their music. How I would have loved to have been there! Bett Robbins and her husband Mike ran the pub in the sixties and Bett was a cousin of Paul's. Well before the formation of the Beatles, the boys were allowed to perform, as payment for helping behind the bar.

According to *Abbot Cook to Zero Degrees, an A to Z of Reading's Pubs and Breweries*, published by The History of Reading Society, the earliest mention of a pub's existence on the site is in a deed of 1858. It was situated very close to Elliott's joinery works, a company famed for the quality of their workmanship and the development of the revolving door. It was a convenient and favourite watering hole for the workers, and at the time was an outlet for the local Simonds ale. Today it is an award-winning pub, run by Kev and Kerri, well known for its extensive range of craft beers.

During the summer months of Covid-19 lock-down, the Fox and Hounds remained open, adapting and complying to rigorous restrictions, serving beer to be consumed on the grass of Westfield Park over the road. I spent a number of warm and peaceful evenings, sitting on picnic blankets with friends, surrounded by groups of other isolating 'bubbles' enjoying a leisurely pint in the open air – it was one of the happier memories of that time.

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Three take to the road by Rodney Oliver



Ride and stride: The three riders

photo J Oliver

EACH YEAR the Berkshire Historic Churches Trust holds a *Ride & Stride* fundraising event to support the repair and restoration of churches in the county. Participants can walk, cycle (pedal power or e-bike), drive, use a mobility scooter or even ride a horse, to raise funds through sponsorship. Half the money raised by each participant goes to the Trust, with the rest allocated to their own church. Thousands of pounds are distributed every year to churches of every type and denomination.

Riders and Striders visit as many participating churches as they can. This year, the event was on Saturday 10 September, so almost all churches were open for the public to record their condolences on the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

A team of three cyclists set off from St Andrew's Church in Caversham - Erkan Hasanaj (an Albanian student who was visiting the UK), Andus Leung (recently arrived from Hong Kong) and myself, Rodney Oliver, (an 85-year-old retired immigration solicitor who has participated in Ride & Stride for at least the last twenty-five years). Collectively we were sponsored for more than £300. We aimed to visit at least twenty-five churches around Reading. Actually, we only managed fifteen, as we were

given such wonderful welcomes at each, with refreshments and a chance to view the churches.

After visiting six churches in Caversham, we went to St James' Catholic Church in the Forbury, where a Christening was about to begin. After taking in several Reading churches, our final visit was to Holy Trinity Church in Oxford Road. It was built in 1826 and has the distinction of catacombs beneath. Here we were treated to a history of the church and viewed furnishings which included a screen from St Chads Catholic Cathedral in Birmingham.

The three of us agreed it had been an enjoyable day, with good cycling weather. We encourage everyone, young or old, to take part in *Ride & Stride* in the future.

If you would like to provide any sponsorship or donations, see the Trust's Just Giving page at:

www.justgiving.com/berkshirechurchestrust

More information is available on the Berkshire Historic Churches Trust's website at:

www.berkshirechurchestrust.org.uk/ride-and-stride2

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The Chairman's Nightmare

text and photo
by Francis Serjeant

THE ANNUAL Caversham Horticultural Society Autumn Show was held at Emmer Green Primary School on 10 September.

In the run-up to the show, the society's chairman had 'sleepless nights' envisaging acres of empty trestle tables on display as, thanks to this year's prolonged drought, potential ornamental plant, fruit and vegetable exhibits could be thin on the ground (most parched lawn category for next year's show?). Just to make matters worse, two days before the show, monsoon rain struck, smashing plants to the ground and spoiling late-flowering roses and other blooms. Thus, it was wonderful to see the quantity and quality of exhibits displayed on the day. It was equally welcome to receive a record number of entries from children; so, amongst the pots of jam and artistic flower arrangements, there lurked sinister vegetable monsters.

My other fear was, 'Would anybody come?' Again, my fears were groundless, and we had a large footfall on the day.

Next year's booking for Emmer Green Primary School hall has already been finalised, so here is a date for your 2023 diary; the show will be held in the afternoon of Saturday 2 September. Whilst the main fruit and vegetable classes are limited to members, we welcome entries from all RG4 residents for classes within the categories of domestic (cooking), handicrafts and floral art, in addition to several miscellaneous categories open to children under 12. So please consider entering categories in one or more of these classes. Details of the 2023 show schedule will be released on the society's website next May.

www.cavershamhorticultural.org.uk/show.htm

And how did I fare with my entries? Well, this year my prize-winning skills deserted me. I must do better in presentation next year. However, I did leave the show with £2 in prize money.



A full table of entries

COVID-19 – memories of a blessing in disguise

Streaming St Peter's services

by Nigel Smith - former churchwarden, St Peter Caversham



ST PETER'S CHURCH now provides high-quality streaming of its services to online worshippers using new technology, recently installed after a long journey!

When Covid-19 struck in early 2020, St Peter's Church quickly converted to online worship, with the congregation at home on Zoom participating in a service conducted by Rev Mike Smith from the Rectory. Most of us would stay on the Zoom session afterwards for coffee and chat.

During this time, we attracted some people we hadn't seen in church for a long time, and even some new faces. So it was clear that a significant number of our congregation were experiencing something worthwhile and would be disadvantaged when finally we went back to in-church worship. We were obviously serving a need for those who were housebound, too far away, or sheltering for health reasons. So, early in 2021, we started to think how we might continue to live stream our services once we moved back into church.

After acquiring broadband and a new digital phone line, we tendered for a streaming service to ensure good quality audio and to enable remote users to participate in the service, for

example by doing readings.

In July 2021 we held our first Sunday service in church since March 2020. Although the new system was still a long way off, we knew we had to continue streaming. The participation of about 20 people online every week encouraged us to iron out the technical problems and we finally installed a new system in July 2022.

As was our dream, we have a congregation of remote worshippers, who can now participate online. Regulars have copies of the church hymn books and the words of the hymns are broadcast on Zoom chat, so everyone can sing along; service booklets are sent out by email in advance; and 'Zoomers' still have the opportunity to 'stay behind' for coffee after the service.

For details of how to join us every Sunday at 9:30, either live or on Zoom, see our website; www.ctmparish.org.uk/services.

A detailed background to our journey to streaming also appears on the website at

www.ctmparish.org.uk/latest-news



Dr Charles Martin-Bates 1947 - 2022 by Dr Ian Kemp

DR CHARLIE MARTIN-BATES, a much loved and respected GP in Emmer Green, who devoted himself to looking after his patients, died on 19 August 2022.

'Charlie', as he was known to his patients, was a GP at the Emmer Green Surgery for over 30 years. Born in Witney, Oxfordshire, he went to Haileybury Junior School and then to Glenalmond College in Scotland. After Kent University, where he graduated with a degree in sociology, Charlie decided to study medicine, and attended St Thomas's Hospital Medical School. After medical

school he did his postgraduate training at The Royal Berkshire Hospital, and finally settled at the Emmer Green Surgery.

Charlie was a remarkable man, a talented sportsman, linguist, musician and amazing doctor.

He was always modest, self-effacing, and generous, invariably trying to see the best in people, avoiding confrontation. He had this amazing knack, if situations were getting heated, of calming things down, always looking for compromise.

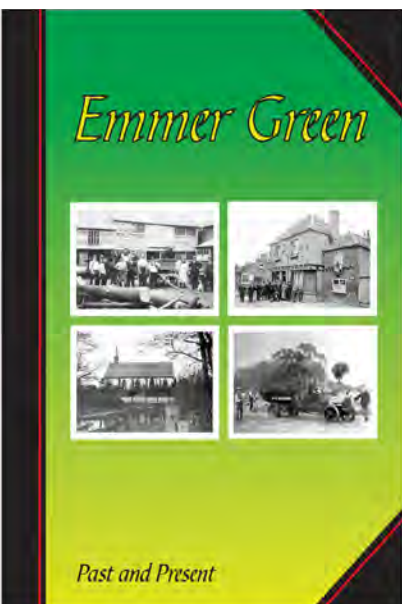
Charlie's patients adored him. He always made himself available to them, working incredibly long hours. His encyclopaedic knowledge of medicine, his empathy, patience, and wisdom attracted many patients who struggled to cope with the complexities of life. Charlie provided a safe haven for them, offering social care and guidance, as well as meeting their medical needs.

On retirement in 2012, he continued to study. He did a post graduate diploma in Tropical medicine at the same time as his son Alexi - a great father son achievement! Following this, along with his wife Jane, he had several spells working in resource-poor hospitals in Uganda. His love of Scotland persisted throughout his life, and he had many visits there in retirement.

Charlie was a traditional family doctor who looked after the whole person and their family - he will be sorely missed.

Donations in memory of Charlie can be made to Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice via:

www.justgiving.com/fundraising/CharlieMartin-Bates.



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CAREER COACHES

by Laura Harmsworth

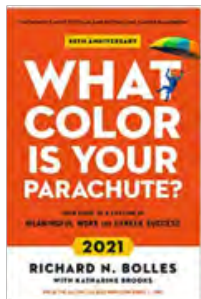


MANY PEOPLE come to me seeking help with their CVs, but they don't know what role they want next.

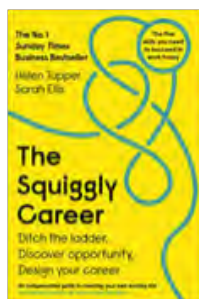
I always refer them to a career coach first as having a targeted CV will improve their chances of success. I'm a firm believer in accessing the support of coaches - they can work with you to identify the right role for you and help with the transition, amongst many other things.

There are many career coaches out there, and it's important you take the time to find one that is a good fit. Ask for recommendations, check coaches out on LinkedIn, look at their websites, and speak to a few before deciding. It is an investment in terms of time and money, so you need to ensure you'll have a good relationship and that your requirements will be met.

There are some great local career coaches, so get in touch and I'll send you their details. For those prefer the DIY route, I also suggest the following books:



What color is your parachute?
by Richard N Bolles



The squiggly career
by Helen Tupper and Sarah Ellis



Career Coach:
How to plan your career and land your perfect job
by Corinne Mills



She's back:
your guide to returning to work
by Lisa Unwin and Deb Khan

Next time, I'll be looking at whether you should use the services of a CV writer and if so, what to look out for.

You can follow Laura on:

www.facebook.com/CavershamCVWriting

or on LinkedIn, where she posts tips and articles:

www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth

Her website is: www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk

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Unique hand-crafted gifts in the heart of Caversham

text and photos Jean Harper

TIMES ARE HARD. We are all watching the pennies and thinking carefully about any purchases we make. And this current situation is having a knock-on effect on local businesses who are all feeling the pinch. Not least of these are our local artists and craftspeople, whose highly skilled and time-consuming work produces the unique and attractive items and gift ideas you often can't find elsewhere.

Caversham's Artists & Makers Fair aims to help these talented people to reach a wider audience. It takes place on the second Saturday of the month in Caversham Methodist Church and Hall on Gosbrook Road from 10:00 to 16:00. Between 20 and 30 stalls fill this lovely, spacious venue with items ranging from artwork and ceramics to jewellery and wood turned gifts.

The Fair has become increasingly a community event. We now run activities to entertain our younger visitors, like the free storytelling sessions at the October Fair, and there are opportunities for them to try their hand at crafting themselves, with local artists and craftspeople running regular 'Make and Take' sessions. There are some tasty home-made cakes to sample, and the proceeds for all the drinks sales are sent to the Red Cross Ukraine Appeal.

So why not drop in this month on Saturday 12 November, even if just to have a coffee and a chat with the artists and craftspeople there? Your support will be greatly appreciated. And you can help in other ways too, by sharing and commenting on the Fair on social media, giving them a positive review and recommending it to friends. It costs nothing but a little time, but could have a large impact on these artists and craftspeople.



Make and take bookmarks session



New stallholder Freya Lines

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Wellbeing *with Ami Roy*

A Calmer Way

MEDITATION dates back thousands of years, at least to ancient India and China. It is essentially a mind-training technique which is shown to benefit psychological wellbeing. Meditation can help us feel calm, relaxed and mentally balanced.

It can also help us to cope with illness and boost our general health. Some studies suggest that meditation may lower blood pressure and reduce the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome. It may also help with insomnia and ease anxiety and depression.

How do you meditate?

A quiet setting, away from distractions such as televisions, radio and mobile phones, is a key element of meditation. Sit comfortably and focus your attention.

You might focus on your breathing, or on an object or image, or a mantra – a repeated word or sound. It's this focusing of attention that helps free your mind from the things that cause stress and worry. Slow and deepen your breathing. Relax your neck, shoulders and chest. Let thoughts pass through your mind without judgement.

What else does meditation research say?

A 2019 study from Michigan State University suggests meditation can help people make fewer errors. The study, published in the journal *Brain Sciences*, took 200 people who had never meditated and made them try it for 20 minutes. The results suggest meditation can 'enhance the brain's ability to detect and pay attention to mistakes'.

Meditation can also help stop problematic habits. Because habits are

hard to break, the things we do automatically can hold us back if our environment changes. This can lead to us making more mistakes. A study of 73 adults, led by the University of Innsbruck in Austria, found those who meditate are more able to overcome automatic responses to certain trigger events, such as checking their phone as soon as it receives a notification.

Although it can be challenging to find the time, one of the best ways to rebalance is through meditation. This ancient practice combines breathing exercises, visualisation techniques, and focusing on mindfulness to achieve a state of peaceful calm. Meditation is an inexpensive (even free!) way to benefit mental health.

Regular meditation courses can alter the way we cope with stimuli, leading to healthier default choices. Scientific studies have shown meditation sessions can produce structural changes that may underpin seemingly ethereal benefits: calm, focus, and contentment. In another Harvard study, researchers found a few weeks of meditation benefitted areas of the brain responsible for memory, learning, self-referential processing, and emotional regulation. There were also decreases in the cell volume of the amygdala, the part of the brain responsible for anxiety, stress, and fear.

There are many different types of meditation practices and, by trying a few, we can find the practice which best suits our needs.

From just a few minutes of meditation every day, we may be able to extend the calm into all areas of our lives.

Time to pay up

by Jenny Gordon

AS PART OF national *Great Big Green Week*, the *Great Big Green Fair* took place in Henley Market Place on Saturday 24 September. There were 27 stalls, all with the theme of sustainability. The objective was to get people talking about the environment and to provide them with information. Alongside fun activities and tasty food and drink, there were opportunities to engage with the serious issue of climate change, to get involved, and to see the different ways we can help.

Henley Quakers focused on Climate Justice, calling for an international loss and damage fund. Wealthy countries are failing communities on the front line of the climate emergency. Despite their promises on a loss and damage fund at the Paris Agreement (the landmark conference for climate change), we have witnessed nothing but years of inaction.

Imagine your house disappearing under water due to rising sea levels; or being forced to flee your home due to an extended drought. You have no money to repair your home, no means to support your family - what do you do?

Burning coal, oil and gas is by far the biggest cause of this destruction. Fossil fuel corporations knew their actions would have disastrous consequences for people and the planet decades ago. But



Quakers Stall at Henley

photo M McLeod

instead of taking positive action, they funded disinformation, covered up the science and spread doubt, causing a deadly delay in action.

Communities on the frontline of environmental breakdown are calling for compensation to be paid by the fossil fuel polluters, and a good way to do this would be through an international Climate Damages Tax on fossil fuel extraction.

On our stall, we asked people to guess the names of seeds and grain, and we explained how climate change was affecting the growth of different plants and the communities dependent on them for their livelihoods. We believe there should be no more delay, and the UK government should actively support the call for an International Loss and Damage Fund, paid for by the polluters.

To find out more, see www.MakePollutersPay.co.uk

THE CHALLENGE SOLUTIONS:

shack, hoard, hat, card, hut, cord, gut, **guy**, rope, gun, lope, shun, hope, rifle, stride

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