

Caversham Bridge

No 711

www.cavershambridge.org

May 2024



The returned rings

photo Jane

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE resident Jane contacted us through our website in March, distressed at the loss of three rings whilst in Caversham. She thought she had dropped them in St Annes Road, close to The Collective, on 26 February. She had made enquiries in local shops, the café and with the police, without any news.

Jane said, "The rings are of great sentimental value and are the only ones I have. My 90-year-old mother gave me her engagement ring some time ago, when I was seriously ill". The other rings were a gold wedding ring, with her name engraved inside it, and an eternity ring from Hong Kong, given when she was expecting her first baby.

...request for help...

She asked if it would be possible to place a notice in the Caversham Bridge. However, it was past the deadline for printing the April paper, so we suggested posting a request for help on our Facebook page. This was published 17 March, but we had no immediate response. We also put notices on local notice boards with the Caversham Bridge contact details. Jane and her family were all deeply affected by the loss, but did not give up hope.

...we suggested posting a request for help on our Facebook page

by Phil Chatfield

And then, nearly two weeks after the Facebook posting, we received an email from Megan, who lives in St Annes Road. She had recently seen a post shared on Facebook from Caversham Matters 'about three lost rings'. She wrote, "I have three rings that I found on St Annes Road and would like to get them reunited with their owner." On inspection, the rings matched Jane's detailed description, including the engraving. They were collected from Megan and an email sent to Jane, who was able to pick them up the same day. Jane said she had assumed our email would be just to keep in touch, so was delighted with the news. She was particularly pleased to have been able to contact her mother to tell her the engagement ring had been returned.

So a huge 'Thank You' from Jane to Megan, the Caversham Bridge team, and to those who shared our Facebook posting.

A HEART OF ART

by The Editors

OUR LEAD for May is a good news story of loss and recovery, a wonderful reminder of peoples' essential goodness, at a time when we hear so much bad news daily (above).

This month we focus on the arts in our area, with the Caversham Arts Trail literally at the centre of the paper (see the Arts Trail Map, pages 10-11). Our Creative Caversham subject is Shirley Strickland, who is new to the Arts Trail, with her amazing artworks created using felt (p9). We report on a new exhibition at Caversham Picture Framer (p12) and, at one of the Arts Trail venues, Creativ.Spaces in Marsack Street, the launch of a book on 'Forgotten Women of the Wars of the Roses', which has inspired a number of local artists (p8). We also have the latest offering from Janina Maher in our Local Scene series, this time the Farmer and Dyer building in Prospect Street (p15).

We also have several features on wellbeing this month, with Perry Walker writing about skincare and acne, and new contributor Sarah Gilchrist sharing some of her knowledge about the importance of sleep (both p14). Our regular contribution from Ami Roy (p19) considers criticism, and local therapist Wendy Rooke explains reflexology (p16).

Books and writers are also in the spotlight this month, with the advent of Fourbears Fest from 17-19 May, organised by Alex



Grey's Court bluebells

photo P Chatfield

“O THE month of May,
the merry month of May,
So frolic, so gay, and so green,
so green, so green!”

Thomas Dekker, published 1600

Forbes of Fourbears Books in association with Getting Reading Reading (p5). You will find the latest book reviews from Alex on the same page and this month's contribution from Roslyn Weaver on Tennyson (p8).

With the Caversham Arts Trail over the second and third weekends of May, the Henley Arts Trail (featuring many of our

local artists) at the start of May, the Artists and Makers Fair 11 May (see advert p10), and the Fourbears Fest over the third weekend, there is lots to do this month without going far!

To contact us, email editors@cavershambridge.org or write care of Church House, Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX.

INSIDE

Happy Wanderer looks at Bricks from Emmer Green – page 7



Picking up the pieces – Spring Clean in Caversham – page 13



Meet the Maker Lizzie Gilbert – page 17



Disappointment



Talking Point

by
David Steed

ALL OF US will have experienced disappointment at some point in our lives, and we may be in the midst of it now. It can affect us as an individual, in our family, at work. Wanda E Brunstetter said, "Disappointments are like weeds in the garden. You can let them grow and take over your life, or you can root them out and let the flowers sprout."

Disappointment is often closely linked to comparisons with others: "they have that, but you only have that". This can apply to possessions, holidays, relationships, children, and even to churches.

You can quickly feel inferior or not as good as others. Don't pull back because of comparisons, which often result from a disappointment in the past. Social media has exacerbated comparisons, including stories and pictures that can be boastful. Jesus says if your eye offends you pluck it out – you don't have to be on social media! Remove or avoid whatever is causing you to sin or distracting you from looking at Jesus.

The famous American evangelist Billy Graham said, "Repeated disappointment almost always triggers a series of other reactions: discouragement, anger, frustration, bitterness, resentment, even depression. Unless we learn to deal with disappointment, it will rob us of joy and poison our souls. Don't be bound by the past and its failures. But

don't forget its lessons either. The time to prepare for life's disappointments and hurts is in advance. Learn from your disappointments and failures and, with God's help, seek to overcome them. Ask yourself, could I have done anything to prevent this? Were my hopes and dreams unrealistic, or were my motives wrong? Is there a new path God wants me to explore?"

The New Testament says be content with what you have, with food and clothing, friendship and love, the principle of enough – we may not have all the specifics, but we do always have what we need. Keep your lives free from the love of money, Jesus said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things will be added to you."

You may be experiencing disappointment now. Perhaps the best way to deal with it is to set your mind on things above – not on Earth where everything will eventually fade. The antidote to disappointment is to look up and not down.

Look as well to the needs of others and pray, "Please God transform me into your likeness and help me to overcome this potential minefield". God is the business of restoration throughout our lives and, as we continue walking with him, I believe we will increasingly see disappointment in a different light.

David Steed, Elder at Grace Church Caversham

A Feast for the Senses



Nicola Duncan in her studio *photo J Harper*

by Pam Chatfield

IT WAS A lively afternoon in Caversham on Saturday 23 March. Despite the blustery and showery weather, there were plenty of people about enjoying a variety of artwork and the Horticultural Society's first spring show in many years.

In Church House, the Ted Burnell Community Art Group were exhibiting for sale a range of artworks produced by members, accompanied by homemade refreshments. The Caversham Horticultural Society show was held across the road in the Baptist Church, which was brightened up with a selection of spring plants and flowers. And at 5 Priory Avenue, local artist Nicola Duncan was welcoming people to her garden studio with a display of her scenes of Caversham Court Gardens and other river views.

For more information, see:

Ted Burnell Art Group – enquiries to their secretary at gj@grahamjackson.f2s.com

Caversham Horticultural Society
www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk

Nicola Duncan – www.nicoladuncan.com

Photo right:
Nicola
Duncan's
sunshine
on the
corner
cottage



photo J Harper

Above: Caversham Horticultural Society spring show

Below:
Ted Burnell Community Art Group exhibiting in Church House



photo Pam Chatfield

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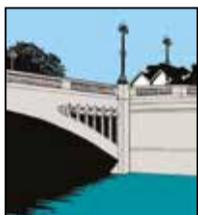
Lucky ol' me!

RIGHT PLACE, right time... "Would you like this bunch of tulips?" asked the Waitrose Caversham assistant, smiling, whilst I was waiting to pay for my groceries. "It's on us." Rather than sending flowers to landfill because they had reached their sell-by date, Waitrose chooses to offer them to their customers. What a lovely gesture, I thought. Will you be that lucky customer one of these days?

Ruth Wright



Waitrose said it with flowers
photo R Wright



Caversham Bridge An update from your editors

A BIG thank you to all our subscribers who have renewed subscriptions for this year. About 100 subscriptions remain to be paid – payment details are at the end of this article.

Can you help?

We have a vacancy for our advertising manager role after the retirement of Alan Wright last year. The role would suit someone who enjoys making connections in our community, possibly someone who has retired recently. IT skills are essential, as much of the work uses emails and simple spreadsheets, but no advertising experience is needed. Currently this takes 8-10 hours a month, mostly at times to suit the volunteer.

For a job description and further information, contact chair@cavershambridge.org

We are also seeking someone who could deliver a small number of papers in Orwell Close area due to the retirement of our current volunteer. Contact subscriptions@cavershambridge.org

Preparing for our Diamond Anniversary

Do you have any special memories of past editions of the Caversham Bridge or articles

which you remember in particular. We would love to hear from you – contact editors@cavershambridge.org

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Please include your postcode and house name or number as a reference! Some payments which did not contain address details have been received, meaning we have been unable to allocate them to the subscriber.

You can also subscribe or renew your subscription in person at the Artists and Makers Fair in Gosbrook Road Methodist Church on 11 May, 10:00 – 16:00.

You can contact subscriptions@cavershambridge.org with any queries or want to check if you have already paid.

ROYAL RECOGNITION by Claire Rhodes



The MCMC team receiving the King's Award

photo the Berkshire Lieutenancy

LOCAL RESIDENT Liz Riddle was part of a team from Charvil based charity, My Cancer My Choices (MCMC), which attended an award ceremony at Windsor in March. The charity was one of two Berkshire based organisations which received The King's Award for Voluntary Service from Andrew Try, the Lord Lieutenant for the Royal County of Berkshire, on behalf of His Majesty the King.

The charity was registered in 2015 and since then has supported more than 2000 people with cancer. Ten of the charity's current longest-serving volunteers were invited to the ceremony at Windsor Guildhall, where the crystal Award and certificate were presented.

MCMC provides complementary therapies and support to people living with, and beyond, cancer across Berkshire. Its mission is to empower people with cancer, enabling them to make active choices to enhance their well-being as they come to terms with their diagnosis. Specialist therapists volunteer their time to offer a range of one-to-one therapies (acupuncture, scar tissue, aromatherapy and oncology massage, art therapy, reiki and reflexology) and group therapies (mindfulness and yoga), which help manage the side effects of conventional treatment and improve mental and physical health. These choices are offered from

the time of diagnosis, and are not restricted by individuals' finances or cancer stage.

Liz was the nursing sister of the Royal Berkshire Hospital cancer outpatients' department when she was approached by Mandy Barter and Liz Lee, who wanted to set up a complementary therapies service for people with cancer in Berkshire. Having been a urology and bowel cancer nurse specialist for 10 years, she was very aware of the lack of complementary therapies available for her patients, so she was very keen to support this service as much as possible. She has now retired from nursing, but is still involved with the charity, supporting their work by mentoring and carrying out reviews and audits as required.

There are currently around 65 volunteers but, to meet growing demand, MCMC wants to expand the number of appointments on offer to people with cancer. It would welcome enquiries from qualified therapists practising in the therapies they deliver who would like to join the team.

Those wishing to support My Cancer My Choices through donations, or by joining the volunteer team, can find out more at www.mycancermychoices.org.

More information on the King's Award can be found at <https://kavs.dcms.gov.uk>

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Smashing the target

by Evie Porter



ON SATURDAY 9 March, Catholic parishes around Reading joined together to walk 10km on a heritage tour of local churches, raising money for the international development charity, the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD). CAFOD works with Christian, Jewish, Muslim and secular partners in Gaza to help families and works towards peace across the globe. In the current climate, supporting CAFOD felt more important than usual.

The Big Lent walk has been an annual event at Our Lady and St Anne's since 2021. Each year, we've walked during Lent to spend time together, to connect with nature but, more importantly, to build on the important Christian value of giving to those in need. Energised by the success

of previous years, this year we made the walk even bigger, by joining with other parishes and their wider communities and embarking on a tour of five Reading Churches, learning a bit about their history at each one.

We began at the Caversham church of Our Lady and St Anne's, where all ages, nationalities and levels of fitness kicked off the trek with a talk from Fr Joe McLoughlin of the parish. As someone who's grown up with 21st century Christianity, it was especially interesting to learn how the Second Vatican Council (1965-68) had reshaped Catholic life. We then ventured across the river to St James' where, with the stunning backdrop of Reading Abbey, we heard about the past and present of the church. There were stops at St William of York and Our Lady of Peace (with a packed

lunch to keep us going), before we reached the finish line at Christ the King in Whitley. It was a great reward to rest our legs and tuck into the afternoon tea the parish had prepared for us.

The only thing left was to announce the total we'd raised which, with the generosity of so many people, came to £3,184, smashing our £2,000 target!

With 90 people from six parishes and the wider community around Reading, the Big Lent Walk was an inspiring celebration of what a change we can make when we all come together.

In the words of Saint Oscar Romero, 'Aspire not to have more but to be more'.



The Palm Sunday Procession, complete with donkeys, on 24 March **Photo G Bull**

PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION – CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS

by Revd Nigel Jones

THE SUN shone on Palm Sunday this year, as people from St Andrew's and Caversham Heights Methodist Churches took part in the annual walk with a donkey. We were reminded that choosing to ride a humble donkey was a deliberate choice by Jesus on the first Palm Sunday, because he wanted people to see the greatest is the one who serves. "This is our God, the Servant King, he calls us now to follow him."

New tiles for old

words and photo Fred Smith



WORK STARTED in April on refurbishing the roof of St John's Church on Gosbrook Road. The roof had deteriorated to the point of tiles slipping off, posing a danger which had resulted in a safety fence being erected around the building.

After a long wait, the work has started. But it is a very large roof, and it will take around three months to complete. Services are continuing as usual, but the 3C's Café has had to close until the work is complete.

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For your bookshelf...

by Alex Forbes

Welcome to 'Fourbears Reviews' where we briefly review a couple of titles chosen from our book shop 'Fourbears Books' in Caversham.

IT'S MAY, WHICH means Fourbears Fest 24 is happening this month. We are all so excited. It's over the weekend of 17-19 May and there is a full programme of events which are outlined opposite. Do check out our website to see which of the 20 events you'd like to attend. There are plenty of options for children and adults alike.

Now down to books.

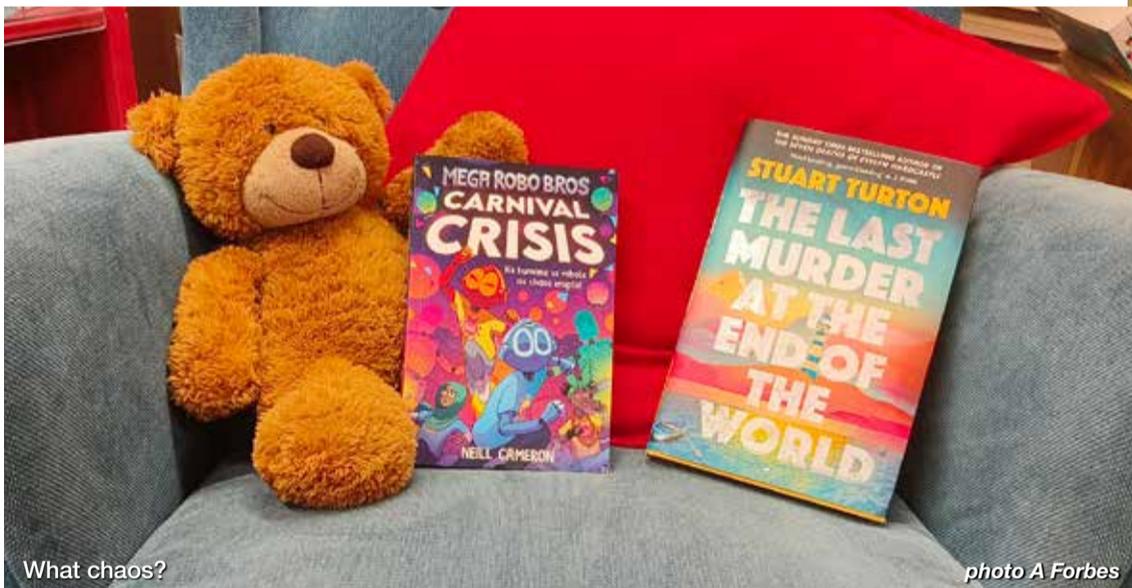
The first pick this month is a book for children by one of the guests at Fourbears Fest, Neill Cameron. The series is called 'Mega Robo Bros'. Alex and Freddy are two normal bickering brothers, but they are robots, and they have to save the world. It's a comic style book and is a lot of fun. The author writes and draws for the Phoenix Comic and hosts plenty of sessions in Oxford. So we are really excited to have Neill hosting a Draw-along workshop. Mega Robo Bros is funny and ideal for reluctant readers who don't enjoy chapter books yet.

Stuart Turton is a fast becoming one of my favourite authors. The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle is a good seller at the shop, and his last

book, The Last Murder at the End of the World, will also do well. A dystopian murder mystery, set on an island. A fog has enveloped the rest of the world, killing all the inhabitants. Three scientists remain, who have built a protection round the island which houses a colony of people who work the land each day and provide for the Islanders. The head scientist is then found dead, and it becomes apparent it was murder. When she died, the barrier preventing the fog taking over the island was lifted, so solving the crime is a race against time. The situation is complicated by an Artificial Intelligence implant in the minds of the Islanders which has wiped all their memories. This makes solving the murder that bit more difficult. The Last Murder at the End of the World is a good read and something slightly different for fans of a murder mystery.

Happy reading, whatever you pick up, and hope to see you in the shop soon.

Follow Fourbears Books at www.facebook.com/fourbearsbooksuk or better still, call in to browse their stock.



What chaos?

photo A Forbes



Fourbears Fest 24

17-19 May

in association with
Reading Children's Book Group



FOR YOUNGER READERS:

At Fourbears Books, Prospect Street

Friday programme

16.30 Margaret Bateson – Hill Storytime with traditional style tales for all the family

At Caversham Baptist Church

Saturday programme

10.00 Neill Cameron 9+ – Comic Book Draw-along from author and illustrator of Mega Robo Bros series

11.30 Holly Webb Age 5+ – Animal Stories Series

13.00 A F Harrold Age 7+ – Poetry, laughing, shouting.

14.30 Fiona Barker Age 5+ – Interactive session with best selling picture book author

16.00 E L Norry 9+ - Author of Fablehouse fantasy series discusses the Arthurian legends and basis of her series



At Fourbears Books, Prospect Street

Sunday programme

10.00 James Carter Age 6+ – Poetry and music

11.30 Frances Durkin Age 7+ - Non Fiction, the Who, What, Where and How of Science and Technology

13.00 Michelle Harrison Age 8+ – Magic and Fantasy about Michelle's latest book Twice Upon a Time

14.30 Jo Clarke Age 9+ – Creative Writing Workshop from author of Libby series

ADULT EVENTS:

At the Progress Theatre – Reading

Saturday programme

14.00 Robin Ince – Podcaster, comedian, author and presenter.

16.00 T M Logan – Author of Sunday Times Best Selling thrillers discusses his latest release, The Dream House.

18.00 Laura Shepherd-Robinson – Sunday Times Best Selling Author discusses her Historical Fiction hit, *The Square of Sevens*.

20.00 Live Podcast Recording of Let's Get Lit. S J Watson and Will Carver record their podcast in front of an audience discussing books, writing, the publishing industry and what wine they are drinking.

Sunday programme

10.00 Maxine Nwaneri – The Future is Great. Interviewed by Claire Dyer Maxine discusses her book about getting the right work/life balance for women

12.00 Peter Stothard – Palatine An Alternative History of the Caesars. Interviewed by Caversham Writer's Adrian Raffill. Peter discusses the Ancient Roman history (circa 500 CE)

14.00 Sci Fi and Fantasy Panel – Join four incredible authors to discuss all the brilliant things about Sci Fi and Fantasy. The Authors are Natasha Pulley (The Mars House), Grace Curtis (Floating House), Georgia Summers (City of Stardust) and Esmie Jikiemi-Pearson (The Principle of Moments)

16.00 Two Rivers Poets, Claire Dyer, Susan Utting and John Froy, read from their latest poetry publications.

www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk/fourbears-fest

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What's On

IF YOU have an event planned, please send details to whatson@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/archives/category/around-caversham

Caversham Library – 09:00-17:00 Tuesday and Friday, 13:00-19:00 Thursday and 10:00 - 15:00 Saturday. Regular events include:
Rhymetimes for the little ones – popular, so please book first! Every Tuesday at 10:15 and 11:15.
Games Club, Friday mornings 10:30-12:00. All adults welcome – refreshments!
Sit and Stitch, 17:30-19:45, on 2nd and 4th Thursdays every month. Refreshments – come and be inspired. Tel. 0118 9375103 or see reading.gov.uk/leisure/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.
Mondays – **Caversham Park Bridge Club** – at the Milestone Centre, 19:15 for 19:30 start. Phone Lin 0118 334 8195 for further information. bridgewebs.com/cavershampark
Tuesdays – **Babies and Toddlers** – Gosbrook Road Methodist Church. 10:00-11:30 in term time. All welcome.
Tuesdays – **St. John's Baby and Toddler Group** – Caversham Hall, St. John's Road. 09:30 -11:00 in term time. All welcome.
Tuesdays – **Rivarate Choir** – Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. 19:30 in term time. Enjoy singing together. For details see rivarate.com
Wednesdays – **Caversham Writers** – Welcoming enthusiastic hobbyists and aspiring authors alike. Meeting weekly in person or via Zoom. Free to all. For details: meetup.com/CavershamWriters or [@CavershamWriter](https://twitter.com/CavershamWriter) on Twitter (X)
Wednesdays – **Light on the Hill Café** – 19:30-21:30 at Grace Church, 119 Peppard Road, RG4 8TR. A wellbeing café for adults 18+. Come as you are for tea and a chat. Please see: www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk
Thursdays – **Friendly Over-60s Social Club** – 10:00-13:00 at Milestone Centre, Caversham Park Village. Hot lunch, quizzes and the chance to chat. Contact Cheryl at 07964 750182 or Trina at 07477 570541
Thursdays – **Baby Massage with midwife Katie** – 12:15-12:55 at the Weller Centre during term times only. Suitable for babies from 6 weeks to crawling. 50p donation towards costs. Refreshments available.
Thursdays – **Weller Centre Craft Group** – 13:00-15:00. Be creative with friends. For details contact Pam Chatfield at pamch32@gmail.com Mobile 07986 905784 or Weller Centre 0118 947 5828
Thursdays – **New Caversham Heights Bridge Club** – 14:00 at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. For details contact Duncan Knight on 0118 947 5544 or email duncan.knight@googlemail.com
Fridays – **Toddler Group at Hemdean House** – 09:45-10:45 at Hemdean School Hall. Ideal for children 6 months+. £2 donation per child, coffee and tea included.
Fridays – **Tiddlers for Babies and Toddlers** – 9:30-11:00 St Andrew's Church, Albert Road. Caversham Heights, RG4 7PL. All are welcome, refreshments available
Fridays – **Warm Welcome Space** – 10:00-13:30 at Caversham Baptist Church, South Street, RG4 8HY. All welcome, just drop in for free refreshments, including hot soup from 12:00. Tel 0118 954 5353 www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk
Saturdays – **Keep Caversham Tidy** – See article on page 13 for details.
Sundays – **Caversham Artisan & Farmers Market** – Caversham Precinct. 10:00-15:00. See www.facebook.com/CAFMarket

Sundays – **Nordic Walk (or just walking)**. Free to all. Tel. 07931 754096 or email Pat at Wirralbird@hotmail.com
Sundays – **Redifolk Song and Music Club** – 20:00-22:30 in the Community Hall, Watlington House, RG1 4RA. £8 admission for performances, £3 on singing nights. See www.redifolk.co.uk
Wednesday 1 May – **Talk on the True Food Cooperative**, Rosehill Ladies – 14:00 at St Barnabas Hall, Emmer Green. Tel Sue 0118 947 7570 or email suegreen@hotmail.com
Tuesday 2 April to 16 May – **Exhibition of the work of Mary Louise Coulouris** – Caversham Picture Framers, 5A Church Road, RG4 7AA. Tues - Saturday 10:00-16:00 Email: galler@cavershampictureframer.co.uk Website: <https://cavershampictureframer.co.uk>
Friday 3 May – **Bereavement Café** – 14:00-15:30 at St. Barnabas, Emmer Green. The café is a safe place to find others who have had their own loss and can appreciate something of your experience. For further info Tel. Gill at 0118 947 8772
Friday 3 May – **Chazey Women's Institute** – 14:30 at St. Andrew's Church Hall, Albert Road, RG4 7AW. Art, craft and book groups, plus coffees and lunches. Email: chazeywi@berkshirewi.co.uk or FB: **Chazey Women's Institute**
Saturday 4 May – **Spring Plant Sale**, Caversham Horticultural Society – 10:00 at the Oakley Road allotments. Bring your spare seedlings and buy some other varieties. Proceeds towards running the society. See www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk
Monday 6 May – **Island Bohemian Bowls Club Open Day** – 14:00-19:00 Ferry from Brigham Road (south bank) or Wolsley Road (north bank) see www.islandbohemianbowls.club
Tuesday 7 May – **Caversham Women's Institute** – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. www.thewi.org.uk or Tel. 0118 947 5176
Saturday 11 May – **Artists & Makers Fair** – 10:00-16:00 at Caversham Methodist Hall, Gosbrook Road. See advert on page 10 for details.
Tuesday 14 May – **Environmental Film Night – The Oil Machine** - 19:00 - 21:00 St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green. Book at www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/880225386827?aff=oddtcreator
Wednesday 15 May – **A talk by Ray Broughton – Propagation and the garden tour** – Caversham Horticultural Society – 19:30, Caversham Baptist Church. See www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk
Thursday 16 - Saturday 18 – **Plant Sale to support Water Aid and the Red Cross** – 10:00 -17:00 daily, 97 South View Avenue, RG4 5BB. See advert on page 10 for details.
Thursday 16 - Saturday 18 – **BASKERVILLE!** – a play by Roger Utting and Bob Sturgess, inspired by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – 20:00 Thursday/Friday, 19:00 Saturday Caversham Park Theatre at the Milestone Centre. Details and tickets from www.cavparkthetare.org
Monday 20 May – **CADRA's AGM and Open Meeting, with guest speakers** addressing 'Our Response to Climate Change' – 19:30. Caversham and District Residents Association, Caversham Baptist Church, 1 Prospect Street. www.cadra.org.uk
Sunday 26 May – **Island Bohemian Bowls Club Open Day** – 14:00 -19:00. For details see 6 May.
Friday 31 May – **Le Cercle Français** – 19:30-21:30 at Church House, 59 Church Street, RG4 8AX. For those who are learning French, love France and for French nationals. Admission £5 welcome drink included. Email readingcerclefrançais@gmail.com

Building our community

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

THE BIG NEWS at the end of March, was the decision by the Secretary of State to grant outline planning permission for a mixed development, with up to 1000 units of accommodation on land owned by Aviva, which now includes **TGI Fridays through to The Range**. The application (200328) was first submitted over four years ago. There is an important relationship between this site called Vastern Court, the adjacent Royal Mail sorting office site and the SSE site between Vastern Road and the Thames. The Aviva application was refused by the Council and the appeal was dismissed by the Planning Inspector, but this decision was finally overturned. The loss of the retail units when the leases expire will be felt by many people in Caversham. But the principle of development on this site was established many years ago in planning policies and successive Local Plans.

Further modifications have been submitted by Beechcroft for the scheme at **Caversham Park (220409)**. Changes include removal of two blocks from the northeast area, fewer mezzanines in the main rooms in the house, and a new pedestrian footpath to Lowfield Road. Following concerns from Sports England, it is proposed to reinstate the cricket pitch used when BBC Monitoring were still active.

In **Caversham centre** there is a new application for a tattoo parlour on the first floor between Church House and Waitrose which raises concerns for internal security and noise disturbance. An application from the Spanish Delicatessen at 8 Prospect Street seeks permission to sell hot food and eat on the premises. A **telecom mast** on the north of Woodcote Road was erected without planning application and planning Officers are pursuing enquiries.

A hidden oasis of creative calm based at Creativ.Spaces whimsical art & event spaces in the heart of Caversham...

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DO YOU, like me, live in an old brick house in Caversham? And if you do, have you ever wondered where the bricks might have come from? Maybe it was from the kiln in the picture.

I started wondering that the other day, after reading an old book in the reference collection of Reading Central Library, which I'd been intending to read for some years. It was Dr Robert Plot's 'Natural History of Oxfordshire', published in 1677.

The book isn't what might be expected from its title. It has chapters on air, water, rocks, formed stones (i.e. fossils), plants, brutes (i.e. animals), and arts, which are what we'd call science, technology and manufacturing. I wanted see what it said about Caversham, and was sufficiently entertained to read all its 300 or so pages, finishing just before the seven o'clock closing time.

There I read about the brick works which were probably on the same site between 1480 and 1947 – the Central Library also has the 1947 sale catalogue. I read, 'At Caversham, near the Right Worshipful Sir Anthony Craven's [Caversham Park] and other places, they make a sort of brick, 22 inches long, and above six inches broad, which some call lath-bricks, by reason they are put in the place of laths, or spars (supported by pillars) in oasts for drying mault'.

...on barges down the Thames...

At that time, the production of malt would have been a major industry in Reading, and the word "oast" was used for a malt-house, and not just a kiln for drying hops. Much of the malt was exported, on barges down the Thames, to the London brewers.

Brick-making in Caversham was first recorded in a document from 1480 in The National Archives, with the mention of a kiln or 'brick-house' at 'the clay field'. This sounds very much like the Emmer Green works, with Clayfield Copse over the road. In 1488, we find John Goldrey of Caversham producing bricks for Sir Thomas Englefield, in 1501 Thomas Hendry supplied bricks to St. Laurence's Church in Reading and, later in the century, William Moore was doing the same.



The Emmer Green brick works around 1910

from a private collection

The first mention of a brick-maker who was definitely on the Emmer Green site comes in 1841, when Francis Dormer was in charge but, by the time of the 1851 census, it was John Leach, employing 41 men and 2 boys. In the time of A. C. Brewerton, around 1890, the local paper records that, from Monday to Thursday, they produced the bricks but, on Friday and Saturday, half of the men were burning chalk in the kilns to produce

quiklime to make mortar, and the other half were digging chalk out of the adjacent mines. The nearby woods, including Clayfield Copse, were coppiced, to produce fuel for the kilns. When operations ended, in or before 1947, the owners were the Caversham Brick and Tile Works. The chalk mines were sealed, but are occasionally visited (by enthusiasts) via a ventilation shaft. Their history might make the subject of a future article.

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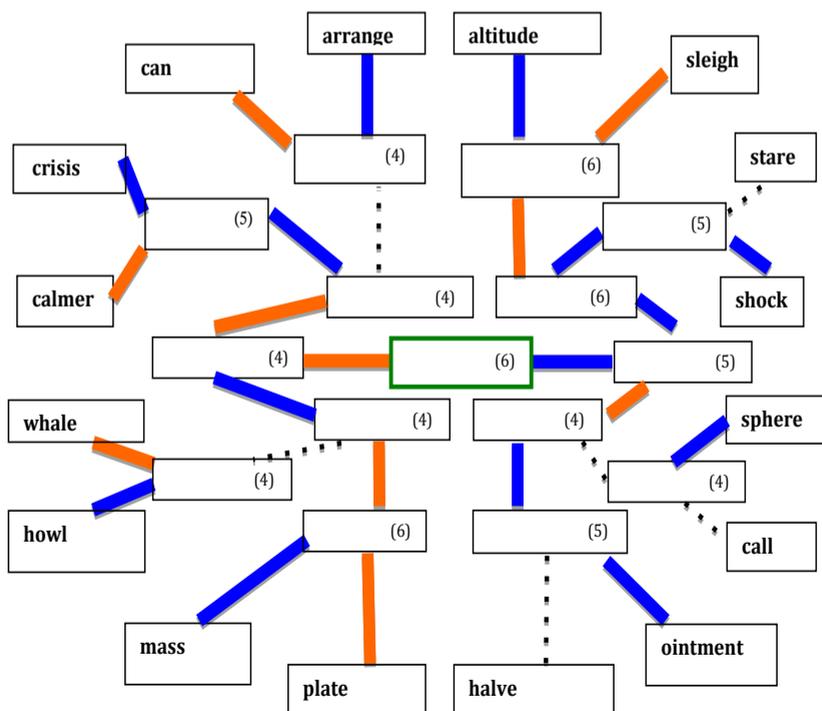
Puzzle Corner

The Challenge by Rachel

WORD PUZZLE

Find the word that has the same meaning as the clue; or rhymes with; or has one letter that is different. For example: *tingle* has 6 letters, rhymes with *shingle* and means *thrill*.

Rhyme ———
Letter change
Meaning ———



Answers on page 18

WEEDS!

Can you find the names of 21 garden weeds in the grid?

```

C B B Y S I A D S O R R E L
D O I L F D E E W P A N K T
A F U N A L H O G W E E D R
N P K C D C L E A V E R S A
D K U E H W K L B I K E U V
E N F C N G E B I V B V E E
L O N L R A R E E Y E O L L
I T E Y E E B A D R Z L T L
O W T C D A T I S P R C S E
N E T P O V B T S S G Y I R
J E L X C D V A U T F R H S
G D E P K R G N N B O P T J
T R O W G A R L S E G R V O
O R E D L E D N U O R G T Y
    
```

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Bindweed | Ground Elder |
| Bistort | Hogweed |
| Blackberry | Ivy |
| Buttercup | Knapweed |
| Cleavers | Knotweed |
| Clover | Nettle |
| Couchgrass | Ragwort |
| Daisy | Sorrel |
| Dandelion | Thistle |
| Dock | Traveller's Joy |
| Fleabane | |

Where Art and History Meet

by Elestr Lee

AS USUAL, CreativSpaces in Marsack Street is playing host during the Caversham Arts Trail in May. Featured artists this year will be Sue Reeves, Alina Luchianov, Karen Tomalin, Deborah Pryn, and Jo Romero, who is best known locally as a member of the Urban Sketchers group.

However, Jo is also an historian, with a degree in Medieval and Modern History from the University of Hull, and her passion for medieval history has resulted in the publication of her first book, 'Forgotten Women of the Wars of the Roses: The untold story behind the battle for the crown'.

"The book was launched at CreativSpaces in March, and artist friends provided their own response to some of the women in my book specially for the occasion – for example, Debbie Page made a moon jar! All the artwork created for the launch will be displayed during the trail.

"My book was written to explore the lives of women, including those not part of the nobility, and to find out what contribution they made.

"It was quite a task finding out about these

women – but both patent rolls and calendar rolls were all transcribed some time ago and are now available online. I also did some of my research in Reading Library," Jo explained.

There are some quite astonishing revelations in Jo's book, such as Ellen Gethin, a Welsh female archer, who killed the man who murdered her brother, and Elizabeth Venour who for many years ran the Fleet Prison in London.

"For a local link, I have also researched Anne Beauchamp, the Countess of Warwick, who was born at Caversham Castle (nobody these days is sure where this was!). She married Richard Neville – popularly known as 'The Kingmaker', and their daughter, Anne Neville, married Richard III."

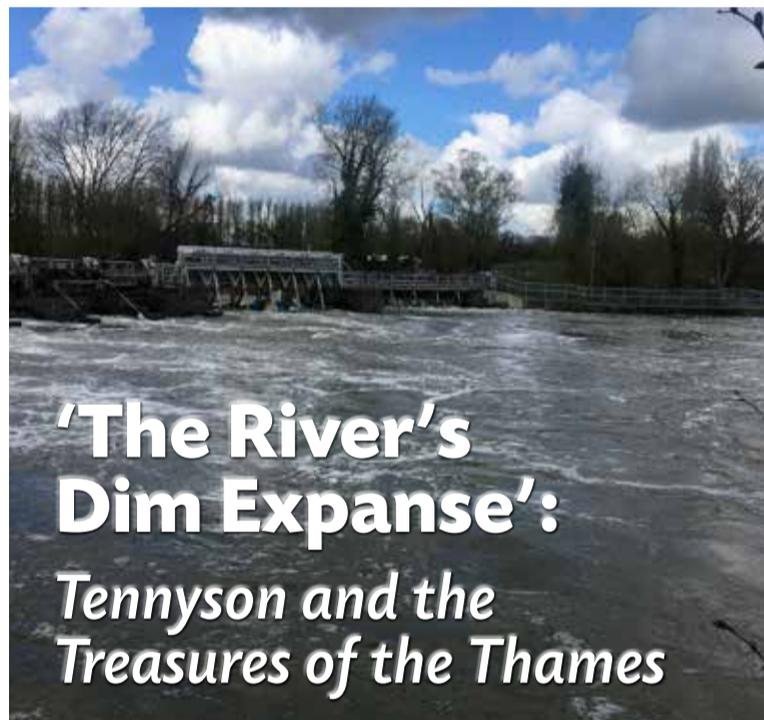
Jo herself has drawn some of the women featured in her book, and her own illustrations as well as copies of the book will be found at CreativSpaces during the Caversham Arts Trail. Jo is looking forward to meeting people who share her love of medieval history during the Trail!

Find out more: 'Forgotten Women of the Wars of the Roses', published by Pen and Sword Books.
See Jo's website at www.lovebritishhistory.co.uk



Jo with her book at the launch

photo A Barton



'The River's Dim Expanse': Tennyson and the Treasures of the Thames

text and photo Roslyn Weaver

WHILE MANY riverside walks might involve bird spotting and boat watching, a stranger sight recently has been a half-broken blue and white boat wedged into the weir framework beside Caversham Lock. That sunken boat is not the oddest river sight I have seen – that honour goes to a heavily rusted motorcycle that appeared one day between Caversham and Reading Bridges, pulled from the water. Others have doubtless seen even more startling objects.

Wondering what lies beneath has prompted many a search for treasures along and within the Thames. Scavenging the riverbanks for treasure – also known as mudlarking – is nothing new, and the river itself is an archaeological site, hiding countless layers of history dating back to Georgian and Roman times and beyond.

That broken boat made me think of another famous river vessel, although this time fictional. Just down the river lies Shiplake church, where Alfred

Tennyson married Emily Sellwood. Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" poem draws on Arthurian legends and tells the story of its cursed Lady and her death as she floats along a river in a boat. I am probably not the only one who first came to know and love Tennyson's poem through an entirely different literary work, Anne of Green Gables. Fellow fans will know well the scene in which Anne re-enacts the Lady of Shalott's final moments with comical results, as Anne discovers her boat is leaky, abandons ship, and must accept help from arch enemy Gilbert Blythe to escape the river.

Tennyson's work is referenced in many other literary works too – fans of Agatha Christie might recognize his line in her novel's title The Mirror Crack'd from Side to Side. Even Tennyson himself couldn't leave it alone, with the 1842 version that most of us know actually a reworking of his poem released a decade earlier, and a subject to which he later returned. Yet, as influential as his poem remains, most of us are no doubt quite pleased not to see the cursed Lady on the river, and stick to the ordinary birds and boats of day-to-day life.

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PAINTING IN WOOL

FELT FOR MOST of us means sheets of slightly unpleasant-feeling fabric cut into shapes and stuck together with PVA glue. But, in Shirley Strickland's hands, she manages to create faithful images of domestic and wild animals from washed and dyed fleece, mainly using just a specialist felting needle to tease and condense the wool into the desired shapes. Amazingly, needle felting is a skill she has learnt quite recently.

As with so many people, Shirley had to re-evaluate her life during the pandemic. "I was a Bowen therapist, and I had also been teaching swing dancing along with Jean Harper for 25 years when Covid struck, and it all came to a halt. Jean had started making face masks, initially for her husband to use, but she soon got requests to make them for other people. Jean asked me to help, and we took a stall in the Caversham market – they were so popular we were overrun!

"We became known as Nimble Thimble

A newcomer to Caversham Arts Trail this May is Shirley Strickland, who brings a different craft form to our attention – needle felting. Elestr Lee finds out more...

and, when the need for face masks died down, we went on to sew other items. However, we soon discovered that an outdoor market wasn't the best venue for selling lightweight fabrics – so then we started running the Artists and Makers Fairs, which were based indoors, and where people



Initial sketch; creating eyes and nose, to adding coloured felt – three stages which went into Shirley's portrait of a border collie. *Bottom right:* Completed sculpture of an African wild dog **photos S Strickland**



Shirley at work in her Caversham studio

photo J Harper

could find the work of lots of local artists and crafters."

It was around this time that Shirley's Norfolk-based sister mentioned to her the craft of needle felting, which intrigued her. "I knew nothing about it, but I bought a kit – and got hooked!"

While Jean remains the sewing and quilting wizard, Shirley nowadays concentrates on needle felting, and she makes both 3D animals and portraits, either on spec to sell at craft fairs, or as commissions, as well as offering courses, teaching the skill to others.

"We run workshops, and I would say anyone over the age of 10 can learn how to needle felt," she explained. "You will be able to make a brooch or a keyring in an afternoon course or create a badger, sheep, fox, rabbit or mole, which also come in kit form, when we are offering our one-day workshops."

...tool of the trade...

It was fascinating to see the various finished portraits and 3D animals in Shirley's studio, as well as the boxes of various coloured fleece from which the finished items are made. "I buy the fleece from reputable UK stockists, as it needs to be washed, combed and dyed. I store it carefully in boxes to protect the fleece against clothes moths. Luckily, the fleece is not expensive to buy."

The other important 'tool of the trade' is the felting needle. "They come in different sizes and styles – however you usually end up with one favourite type of needle," she said. For making larger 3D animals, Shirley also uses wire or pipe cleaners to make the 'armature' or framework of the body, which she can wrap the felt around.

"You can buy the fleece in a range of colours. But, if you haven't got the colour you need, you can also use carders to blend fleece in the colours you already have to make a new colour – just like mixing paint!"

As well as making portraits of people's pets, Shirley has recently been working on a lifelike model of an African wild dog as a commission for someone who used to own a game reserve in South Africa.

"He spent hours in his Land Rover watching the wild dogs, but now he has left the country and lives in Australia. As with

all my work, I had to research the animal carefully, as I wanted to get the correct dimensions. With felt, you can go back and keep improving what you have done, so I have replaced the head of the wild dog three times, and its eyes five to six times. I like the fact you can keep adjusting things until you have got them exactly right!" Shirley said.

To create the solid fabric from a hank of fleece, Shirley showed me how you scrunch a portion together, then use the barbed felting needle to stab into the wool, which has the effect of compressing it, until it forms a smooth clump which can then be used to form a shape. "It's very easy to learn, and I find it very therapeutic. As well as the African wild dog, I am working on a Highland cow, and to complete these more complicated pieces will take me a lot of time, but it is so rewarding. I regard my work as painting with wool!"

Find out more: needlefeltartist.co.uk

Shirley will be taking part in the **Henley Arts Trail, where she can be found based in Shiplake College, venue 21, 4-6 May.** Then later in May she is opening her studio during the **Caversham Arts Trail, venue 7.**

The Artists' & Makers' Fair – Second Saturday every month (except January and February, July and August). Caversham Methodist Church, Ardler Road. Watch Shirley working on her latest projects!



Caversham arts trail

MAY 2024

Sat 11th & Sun 12th
 Sat 18th & Sun 19th May
 11am-5pm

43 artists
 20 venues
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 & Emmer Green
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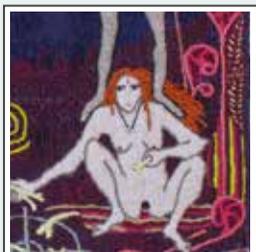


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Footpaths



CAN I GROW CANNAS?

by Les Cooper



They were meant to be big, bold and colourful, whereas mine were small, cowardly and dull

LIKE MANY things in our lives, gardening is a hit and miss affair. It is a success when very occasionally we hit the target, failure when now and again we miss out completely. But mostly we achieve something in between, something not quite wonderful but not that bad. A lot depends on the weather – at least this is my usual excuse when things go wrong!

This year I intend to grow a few cannas as a showpiece in the garden. Cannas are tender perennials, and I am hoping to do better than when I grew them once before. Last time they were only a partial success. They were meant to be big, bold and colourful, whereas mine were small, cowardly and dull. Admittedly it was a long time ago and I suspect I did not grow them very well. I probably didn't pay much for them and perhaps positioned them in the wrong place anyway.

Way back then, I grew them in the open ground, which might not have helped. This year I will plant them in large containers, which I can look after in the greenhouse. They will be brought out later this month or perhaps in June. I am adopting the usual practice and setting out three plants for each container, but as I write this (in February) and because it is cheaper, I intend to start in March with rhizomes. However, I am sure Garden Centres will have well grown plants should I need to buy a few.

I will plant the rhizomes two inches (five cm) deep and twelve inches (thirty cm) apart in peat-free compost. The three varieties I am trying all grow to about 5 feet (1.6m) tall. The first, Wyoming, is a robust clump-forming plant, with bronze-purple leaves and vivid orange flowers. The next is Tropicanna, a vigorous grower, with dark green striped leaves and orange flowers. The third is Durban,



Canna Wyoming

another bold, clump-forming plant with large, striped, green, yellow and pink leaves and mandarin-orange flowers.

As an enthusiastic 'flower grower', I must remind myself I am growing these as much for the foliage as for the flowers!

With luck my Cannas will flower until October. In autumn I can lift the plants and store the dried rhizomes in sand for use in 2025.



Canna Tropicanna

Step Inside the Gallery

IF YOU happen to be passing Caversham Picture Framers, do pop in to see the latest in their series of special exhibitions. The first half of May sees a remarkable collection of the work of the late Mary Louise Coulouris, who would have been celebrating her 85th birthday this year.

Curated by her daughter, Saro Wallace, who now lives in Caversham, the exhibition presents an astonishing cross-section of Coulouris's work, which Saro introduced at the launch. While her mother had enjoyed a privileged upbringing, as daughter of Hollywood actor George Coulouris, the family moved to the UK and, following her training as an artist (at the Slade, then the École des Beaux Arts in Paris), Coulouris immersed herself in capturing

the lives of working communities in the north of England during the 70s.

"She was a different type of artist compared to what was fashionable at that time," Saro commented. "She didn't do pop art or conceptual art. She recorded the Durham miners, as well as the fishers in Hull, at work, as well as ordinary people having fun – for example, miners performing a circle dance."

The exhibition also includes Coulouris' depictions of Linlithgow, where she lived with her Scottish husband Gordon Wallace, as well as works inspired by their second home in Hydra, Greece – full of vibrant colour.

"As a woman artist, she worked with quiet determination, and her work was recognised in her lifetime," Saro explained. "She is included in major public collections, including in the House of Lords, as well as the Ashmolean. As her children, she treated us as her critics – as well as stealing our ideas! She was proud of her career.

"The focus of her work was to capture life as it was, so I have called the exhibition Human Ecologies."

by Elestr Lee



Saro Wallace speaking at the exhibition launch

photo E Lee

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PICKING UP



by Marian, Keep Caversham Tidy

View Island litter

photo Keep Caversham Tidy

THE PIECES



Kings Meadow litter

photo Keep Caversham Tidy

OUR AREA has some beautiful public spaces which we can all enjoy. But, like most towns, it needs help to keep them clean and green.

Keep Caversham Tidy is a local charity committed to doing just that. On Saturday mornings the team don high visibility vests and protective gloves before setting out with litter pickers and bin bags to clear litter and fly-tipped waste. On 16 March, twenty-nine volunteers, including members of Caversham Globe and Duke of Edinburgh Award participants, joined in with the Great British Spring Clean. They collected more than 120 bags of litter from roads, parks, and along the Thames.

Chairperson Kim Hurd said, "It's inspiring to see all these people who strive to make a difference. In March alone we completed over 100 hours of litter picking. It's very satisfying at the end of a pick to see the pile of rubbish we've removed.

"Much of the litter is food and drink packaging, but

we've also worked with local residents to remove fly tipped waste and abandoned encampments - tents, sleeping bags - from View Island which had been there for months. The litter is quite varied, it included toys, vapes, car parts, and a surprising number of pregnancy tests!"

Litter is not only unsightly, it attracts vermin and can harm birds, including our swans and geese. Broken glass is a hazard. Even small items, such as sweet wrappers and cigarette butts, take years to break down and leave microplastics and

toxins behind. Litter and fly tipping also blocks drains and waterways, increasing flood risk.

The good news is that you can help by:

- Looking after your road or local park, with support from Reading's Adopt Your Street (RAYS) scheme
- Reporting waste to the Council by phone or on the LoveCleanStreets app
- Joining a Keep Caversham Tidy litter pick on a Saturday morning

To find out where Keep Caversham Tidy will be meeting and to sign up, visit their Facebook page or email keepcavershamtidy@gmail.com. Come when you can spare the time – there is no ongoing commitment. Equipment is provided. You just need suitable clothes and strong footwear. Families are welcome. Regular litter picks take place on Saturday mornings (from 10:00 to 12:00). Under 18s must be accompanied by an adult. Details and sign-up forms are available on Facebook.

www.facebook.com/p/Keep-Caversham-Tidy-100082821120459



Useful tips from the BBC by Tricia Marcouse

THE RADIO 4 programme Sliced Bread investigates the truth behind different products. You may not be interested in the health benefits (or not) of mushroom coffee, but we all have to do washing-

up regularly, and all of us think that our methodology is the best, whether we use a dishwasher or wash by hand. Sliced Bread looked at the best way to do this in order to clean the dishes with the minimum of water and the least electricity. Key tips are to scrape waste food off the dishes and into the bin, do not pre-rinse before using the dishwasher, use the eco-programme on the dishwasher (it washes for longer at a lower temperature and maximises the use of enzymes), and add the

detergent to the bowl after running the water to reduce bubbles when handwashing. In general, using a dishwasher may have lower environmental impact than handwashing. Listen to the whole programme on www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001xdbx

On BBC One Morning Live a few weeks ago, Nancy Birtwhistle gave a masterclass on how to clean and refresh garden furniture (removing bird droppings, algae, moss, general dirt) after the winter, using cheap home-made

cleaning products from the kitchen cupboard. She covers wooden and plastic furniture and mouldy cushions. Her warning is to wear your oldest clothes, do it in the garden, and leave any polish to soak in before sitting down on your beautifully restored garden furniture.

Her programme can be seen on

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/profiles/4X4fMMVC6WC2IV9KFwFKF5n/nancy-birtwhistle

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Understanding Acne; for adults and teens alike

Image by freepik



by **Perry Walker**
Owner of Perry's Beauty, Caversham
@perrys_beautyroom

AS AN ACNE sufferer myself, I have a passion for helping others with this frustrating skin condition. I have struggled with acne and breakouts for as long as I can remember. My first breakouts began when I was around 14 years old, and at 36 they still persist! As awful as acne is for teens and young adults, I personally feel it is demoralising to suffer from it as an adult. I hope this article will be useful to some of you and bring some comfort to know you are not alone.

I have finally found, after years of searching within my industry, a prescriptive, salon brand that has completely changed my skin and brought me clear, rejuvenated skin for the first time since I was 14. If you are interested in specific salon treatments and homecare products I offer, feel free to get in touch.

Firstly, I feel it is important to try to understand what acne is. Acne occurs when hair follicles become clogged with oil, dead skin cells and bacteria. The blockage can result in various types of blemishes. Skincare concerns can be a source of frustration and can lead to self-consciousness.

...often triggered by stress...

Acne is linked with hormones and diet, along with other factors, for both women and men. Hormone irregularities (which are often triggered by stress) irritate the skin, creating breakouts and skin blockages. Hormones trigger the skin to produce more sebum (oil) and this in turn blocks the follicles. To treat acne, you need to treat the blockage as well as the bacteria present on the surface of the skin.

Try to get enough sleep and practice mindful exercises to reduce stress. Remember to keep skin clean by cleansing every morning and evening. Be sure to select your products carefully, as incorrect skincare can make things worse.

Many people also find diet to be a trigger to acne, in particular dairy products. You can try eliminating dairy from your diet for six weeks and track if any change occurs with this. Try to also stay away from simple carbohydrates and sugars, as foods with a high glycemic index can also irritate acne. And don't forget to drink plenty of water!



How to get good sleep – the headlines

by **Dr Sarah Gilchrist**

SLEEP IS A universal occurrence, as all healthy humans will experience a bout of nighttime sleep every day. Indeed, sleep is fundamental to life. We all sleep, in the same way that we all breathe. Without doing so would be fatal.

Unfortunately, poor sleep is a global problem, with loss of sleep time at an unprecedented high. As a species we now sleep less than ever before. Given the individual nature of sleep, the increasing evidence of poor sleep quantity and quality throughout the world, and the link between sleep, cognitive processes and metabolic function, governments are being called on to recognise poor sleep as a major health risk (Samuels¹, Johnston²). In short, sleep is imperative to our physical and mental health, as it has a significant effect on both.

Guidance around sleep quantity should be taken with caution. Typically, a healthy adult is advised to sleep between seven to nine hours a night. However, sleep is highly individualised, so some people may need less, some more. The bottom line is, if a person is achieving a regular routine around their sleep, have sufficient opportunity to sleep, wake in the morning and generally feel alert, refreshed and fully productive during the working day, then chances are they are getting enough sleep and of good quality. If they are suffering from excessive daytime sleepiness, then maybe they need to address their sleep health. Below are some tips on how to sleep well.

- Start with a comfortable, cool (18-20°C), dimly lit room
- Be in a relaxed state (try reading, mindfulness, meditation etc.)
- Have a regular routine around bedtime and get up time (be pragmatic, life gets in the way sometimes, but aim for a regular routine)
- Protect, personalise and prioritise the sleep window as much as possible and trust that sleep will come

There is a lot more information about getting good sleep than can be squeezed into this article, so below are some links to resources which may be helpful if someone is experiencing poor sleep. If there is a suspicion of a sleep disorder, it is important people go to their GP for additional support.

For more information on sleep, see thesleepcharity.org.uk or call their Helpline 03303 530 541. For teenagers (and parents!), see teensleephub.org.uk

Information on sleep apnoea is available from the NHS, see www.nhs.uk/conditions/sleep-apnoea

1. Samuels, C., H. (2008). Sleep, recovery, and performance: the new frontier in high-performance athletics. *Neurologic Clinics*. 26. 169-180
2. Johnston, I. (2017), www.independent.co.uk/news/sleep-deprivation-epidemic-health-effects-tired-heart-disease-stroke-dementia-cancer-a7964156.html

Sarah is a Caversham resident who runs a consultancy which specialises in topics relating to performance, particularly sleep and recovery. See www.gilchristperformance.co.uk

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The Local Scene by Martin Andrews

Farmer & Dyer and Harrison's Solicitors



Drawing by Janina Maher

www.janinamaher.artweb.com

FARMER & DYER took over their premises at no 1 Prospect Street in 2001 - at that time occupying the office on the left, in the more modern extension. When I visited them to glean information to accompany Janina Maher's drawing, I was welcomed by Damian Farmer, a Partner in the business, who has been working in Caversham since 1988. I was delighted to discover he has a passion for local history and was just the man to help me. The history of the building began in the nineteenth century, when it was the 'manse' (the Minister's residence) attached to the Baptist Church at the corner of Prospect Street and South Street, which was designed by the famous Victorian architect Alfred Waterhouse in the 1870s.

...bunch of grapes...

The main part of the building on the right has a decorative gable with a 'half-timbered' effect and a St George's shield and relief frieze of what look like bunches of grapes, but the significance of the motifs escapes me. In more recent times the

ground floor was occupied by a photographic studio until 2011, when Farmer and Dyer took over the premises on the retirement of the photographer. This became their renting and letting department. Originally there was a single-storey annexe attached to the left of the main house which, for many years, was used by the Ministry of Transport as a Driving Test Centre. In the 1950s or 60s upper floors were added, and today it is the house sales department.

Between the two offices there is a front door that leads to stairs and the premises of Harrison's Solicitors, who occupy the top floors. Ashley Harrison first came to Reading in 2003 and, in 2013, he was joined by a Partner, David Woodward. In the same year they opened the branch in Caversham, specialising in conveyancing, wills and probate.

A selection of Janina's original paintings is displayed for sale at Fourbears Books on Prospect Street, where you can also find greetings cards featuring many of her local paintings.

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WHEN 'ELVIS' CAME TO TOWN...



by Rowena Waddington

ON THURSDAY 27 February, Bina Tandoori on Prospect Street, Caversham, played host to a tribute 'Elvis'. "It was a very successful evening", said Yeabin, the owner of this Bengali/Indian restaurant since February 2023. It was so well-received that 'Elvis' is due to return on 4 June! So, if you don't want to miss out on an evening of good food and entertainment, contact the Bina on 0118 946 2115 for details.

First-time diners will see the pride taken in the presentation of Yeabin's restaurant. The decor is modern and tasteful, the lighting and background music ambient. With tables boasting crisp, white table linen and fresh flowers, this really makes the dining experience feel that bit more special. And it is good to know Bina has been awarded a five-star food hygiene rating.

...tailoring the chilli...

Bina's bar is well-stocked, and the chefs deliver generous servings of flavourful dishes. They will 'tailor' the chilli intensity of any dish to suit your palate - just ask. Vegetarians have not been forgotten. You will be happy to know any dish on the menu can be adapted for you.

One regular diner said, "I can honestly say this restaurant serves delicious food, and the staff are polite and attentive. It's a real find and so convenient for us, as we live within walking distance. And it's not unusual for us to leave with the proverbial doggy-bag."

Open seven-days a week (including lunchtimes with a set menu option) and an All-day Sunday Buffet, your table at Bina is just a phone call or 'click' away. If there's a party of you, that definitely won't be a problem for the Bina.

See Bina's advert on page 14 for contact details.

Understanding Reflexology

by Wendy Rooke



You may have heard of reflexology but know nothing about it. Wendy offered to provide an introduction to this alternative therapy for our readers.

REFLEXOLOGY IS a theory and therapy that uses the feet, hands or face as a map or mirror of the whole body, with the aim of optimising physical and emotional wellbeing. It has become one of the most popular complementary therapies today. So what is it exactly?

Reflexology has its roots in ancient Egypt, India and China. In the nineteenth century, an American Ear, Nose and Throat physician, Dr William Fitzgerald, discovered the application of pressure to one part of the body, could cause another part to be anaesthetised. This led him to map the body into ten longitudinal zones, which forms the basis of Western reflexology today.

The Principles of Reflexology

In the 1930s Eunice Ingham devised Western reflexology from Fitzgerald's foundational work on zone theory. She found that treating the feet was the best way to access the rest of the body, as each of the ten zones ends in the feet (one per toe). Ingham also devised three transverse zones on the base of the feet to help map the body, with the base of the toes representing the shoulder line, the narrowest part of the foot representing the waistline and the heel representing the pelvic line.

As the name suggests, reflexology uses reflex points. A reflex is when stimulation of one point on the body brings about a response in another point or area. Reflexology uses thumb, finger and knuckle pressure to stimulate specific points on the feet, hands or face and the corresponding part of the body.

Reflexology takes a holistic approach to health

and wellbeing, considering the body, mind, and spirit as interconnected. It seeks to promote balance and harmony within the body's systems.

Relaxation and Stress Reduction

The techniques used in reflexology stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system, which counters the stress response. It can induce a sense of deep relaxation, which allows the body to go into rest and repair mode.

Chronic stress is at the root of many chronic health problems, so relaxation can help prevent ill health. It may also ease the symptoms of existing health problems.

Overall, reflexology aims to promote balance and harmony within the body, support its natural healing abilities, and enhance health and well-being. If you would like to find out more about reflexology, you can visit the Association of Reflexologists website at www.aor.org.uk

Wendy lives in Caversham and runs Rooke Holistic Therapies, which offers a range of therapies – see www.rookeholistic.co.uk for details



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Oops – a correction

LAST MONTH we carried an article and advert for the Craft Group which meets at the Weller Centre on page 5.

Unfortunately, both had the wrong day of the week for the meetings. Please note, the group meets on Thursdays, between 13:00 and 15:00. See the advert below for details.

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Lizzie Gilbert

BRINGING LIGHT and happiness to your home: 'Candles are a perfect gift for any occasion', says Lizzy Gilbert, the inspiration behind Eftihia Candles. Greek scholars may know that Eftihia means happiness in Greek. Lizzy's family used to have a villa in Greece called Eftihia and Lizzy likes to think of her candles bringing happiness into our homes.

Lizzy was born and still lives in Emmer Green. A part time administrator and Mum to her 10-month son, Oliver, Lizzy began her journey into candle-making during lockdown when she bought a candle that was substandard. She felt she could do better herself, so bought some wax and moulds and began experimenting on the stove in her kitchen. Moving from the kitchen into her utility room, Lizzy has expanded her small business, juggling her candle making and social media between her son's naps, while listening to Abba or catching up with some viewing on her iPad.

...long burn time...

Eftihia Candles make a range of scented candles, wax melts using a premium blend of Kerasoy wax, which is environmentally friendly with a long burn time, and her tins can be recycled or, even better, be returned to Lizzy to get a refund off your next purchase. Lizzy also produces designs for unscented pillar candles.

Lizzy credits the enthusiasm and support of her parents and family for launching her new venture, and the reward of having happy customers spurs her on. She is happy to try to source scents for special requests. To try one of Lizzy's candles for yourself, find her at the Weller Centre market and fair on the 5 May – Lizzy is organising this event in appreciation of the support she has received from the Weller Centre.

Or you can visit her website or follow her on social media.

<https://eftihiacandles.company.site>
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A helping hand

by Rick Lay of Launchpad



SINCE 1 APRIL, Reading's homelessness prevention charity, Launchpad, has been managing two of Reading Borough Council's (RBC) homelessness projects. These providing 24-hour support for those with a rough sleeping history at The Caversham Road Pods and The Nova Project.

Both projects aim to help entrenched, long-term rough sleepers (including those with severe and multiple needs) with short-term accommodation and support to help them gain stability and achieve their goals.

Launchpad is providing support with a specific focus on mental ill-health, substance misuse, and preventing re-offending and a return to the streets.

The Caversham Road Pods are self-contained modular homes, set up in 2021. They provide care for 40 people who have been found sleeping rough and have complex needs. Clients can be housed for 2-3 years in the accommodation to give them the opportunity to rebuild their lives through longer-term housing stability, paired with the essential support they need to take the next step to break the cycle of rough sleeping.

The less well-known Nova project is a specialist service for women, established by RBC in 2021. It provides a home for 10 disadvantaged women in a gender and trauma-informed supported environment. The home is a safe space for female residents to help them begin to recover from the experience of homelessness and to help them rebuild their lives until they are ready to move on.

As women experience homelessness differently from men, there is a need for specialised, individual, gender-informed support to work through severe traumas, such as domestic abuse, which Launchpad staff provide alongside partner agencies.

Last year, Launchpad helped over 1,400 people in housing crisis. For more information about Launchpad, or to donate, visit: launchpadreading.org.uk



First Impressions Matter



What type of CV should you use?

by Laura Harmsworth

DID YOU know there's more than one type of CV format? All showcase your skills, experience, and achievements, but in different ways. Here I provide a summary of four types of CV and why you might choose one or another.

Reverse chronological

This is the CV you're probably most used to seeing or using. Everything is written in reverse chronological order with your most recent experience and qualifications showing first. This CV is logical and makes it easy for recruiters to see your experience and progression.

This format is for you if you've been following a natural career path.

Functional (also known as skills-based)

This format focuses the reader's mind on what you can offer in terms of skills, abilities, and professional expertise, rather than in which role you acquired them.

By putting your achievements and contributions under a 'Skills and Achievements' heading you can highlight your transferable skills so employment gaps and irrelevant experience are less obvious.

Under the 'Career History' section, list each job with little or no detail underneath.

For example, you have managed projects in several of your roles. Put all your project management experience and achievements under the heading of 'Project Management' in the 'Skills and Achievements' section, rather than under each role.

This format is for you if you're changing career direction or have a career gap. Just be aware that recruiters are often wary of this type of CV.

Hybrid

A functional CV isn't favoured by all recruiters and hiring managers, so a hybrid of functional and chronological works well.

The 'Skills' section can be more informative, to include examples and achievements but not to the extent of a functional CV. You will keep a lot of that information under reach role.

An advantage of a hybrid CV is that all key information is on page 1.

This format is for most job seekers and particularly suits those just starting out, changing careers, or returning after a career break.

One page

One page CVs are quick and easy to read but it can be tricky deciding what to include, and they lack the detail required when applying to an advertised role.

They do have their place though, eg your employer might ask you for inclusion with tender documents: you're self-employed and need to show what you can offer in terms of experience and skills; you have limited work experience.

If you're a student, I'll talk about the best CV structure in a future article.

You can follow Laura on:

www.facebook.com/CavershamCVWriting

on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth

website: www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk

Email: contact@cavershamcvwriting.co.uk

Glimpse into the world of an Artist by Elestr Lee

CAVERSHAM ARTS trail regulars will be aware of the work of Nina O'Connell, whose studio has long been a fixture on the annual trail.

As well as visiting the studio, you can now get further insight into Nina's life as an artist and, for many years, an art therapist – by watching two YouTube videos.

"Last Autumn, I was contacted by a YouTube storyboard maker, Ziba Zarei-Jones, who was interested in my story as an art therapist and now fulltime artist. Ziba interviewed me in my studio over several very interesting hours, and made two short YouTube videos of my story.



"These came out at the beginning of the year, and coincided with my entry into my octogenarian year with more drive, purpose and delight in my creativity than ever before."

Find out more: [YouTube Nina O'Connell](#)



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Every Time.
Each win I grow,
Gaining wealth and mates.
Everyone shares my glory.
And success breeds more success.
All singing when I am winning!
Reached the top, the only way is down.
Alone, crying coz I'm losing.
And failure breeds more failure.
No one shares my defeat.
Lost all cash and chums.
Each loss I shrink.
Every time,
I lose.
NO!

Richard Stephenson



AND LOSER

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(From left to right from the top)

plan, height, drama, scare, play, fright, stay, **mayday**, alarm, wait, balm, wail, ball, weight, salve

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

Future editions:

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

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



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Wellbeing with Ami Roy

Reframing criticism

NO-ONE LIKES to be criticised. Even if the comments are made with the best intentions, it can really affect our feelings, as if we have lost control of how we are perceived. And not just in the moment: unprocessed emotions can have a negative impact on our work, our focus, and our relationships, and criticism is no different.

We also often have a very sharp inner critic, and bringing our awareness to how we internally criticise ourselves is vital to our overall wellbeing.

There are three main types of criticism: **destructive, constructive, and instructive.** Destructive criticism tears down; constructive criticism builds together, identifies a problem and offers solutions; instructive criticism adds to what someone knows.

One way to think about criticism that does not invoke negative emotions is as information that can help me

improve. Viewed this way, receiving criticism can be both beneficial and positive. Similarly, giving criticism is intended to improve and strengthen the recipient, not tear them down.

Researchers and therapists offer the following strategies to reflect on how we feel:

- First of all, we could ask ourselves what emotions the criticism is bringing up? By identifying where these emotions are stored in our body, gently breathing into that part can help the emotion dissipate or ease up.
- The next step is asking ourselves why this criticism is causing such a bother, and being honest when we answer, with calm contemplation of what was said. Was there any truth to this critique? If there was, is there anything we can do to prevent such criticism in the future?
- If we don't feel there's any truth to it, we could try to look at the situation from the other side. Why did that person



Image by wirestock on Freepik

choose to criticise us unfairly? Of course, we may never know for sure, but simply trying to understand it can take the sting out of the situation, as will finding some compassion for our critic – if we were them, we may well have acted in the same way. This can be an excellent tool to turn towards our inner critic.

- Finally, by reflecting on the emotion all this may have brought up and realising how we feel is down to us, nobody else can actually make us feel a thing. We can make that choice. And we can take it further, by also noticing when we are critical of others, making sure we base our words on facts, and delivering them kindly.

It is an exchange with others we cannot avoid, but we can use these approaches to make it constructive as often as possible, and enhance our relationships all around.

Local Clergy and Church Services

ANGLICAN

Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Ministry

St Margaret, St Peter, 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
penny@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Rachel Ross Smith Tel: 07884 371688
rachel@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Dr Catherine Radcliffe Tel: 07740 475697
catherine@ctmparish.org.uk

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

Current services

St Margaret's Church

Mapledurham – 11:15. 1st, 2nd, 4th Sunday Holy Communion, 3rd Sunday Service of the Word.

St Peter's Church

1st Sunday of the month: 9.30 All Age Service of the Word, with music group and choir
18.30 Holy Communion with prayers for healing, with choir
2nd and 4th Sundays: 8.00 said BCP Holy Communion
9.30 Holy Communion with choir and activities for young people, primary and secondary age
3rd Sunday: 9.30 All Age Holy Communion in a shorter format, with choir – 18.30 Choral Evensong
Wednesday: 9.30 said Holy Communion
All services live streamed on Zoom. For Zoom details go to www.ctmparish.org.uk/services/online/

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 Andrew's

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
Compline: 8.30 on Mondays during BST (in church)

St Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park

Rev'd Kevin Lovell, vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk
Church Office Tel: 0118 947 8239

Current Services

Sundays: 8:00 BCP Holy Communion (1st Sunday only)
9:30 Parish Communion (Service of the Word on 2nd Sunday)
11:30 All Age Worship (Café Church or Family Communion)
Wednesdays: 10:30 Midweek Communion
Morning Prayer: Tuesdays 8:30 in church; Mon/Weds/Thurs 8:00. online at
www.facebook.com/StBarnabasEmmerGreen/live_videos
Full details at www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on

METHODIST CHURCH

The Methodist Church Caversham

Rev'd Jeongsook Kim Tel: 0118 947 2223
Rev'd David Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592
www.cavershammethodist.org.uk

Current services

Caversham Heights Methodist Church

Highmoor Road
Sunday – 10.30 – Also available on YouTube.

Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

Current services: Sunday – 10:30

New Testament Church of God

Rev'd Dr Garrick Wilson
Tel: 0118 946 3009

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

United Reformed Church, Caversham Park

Contact: Dr Alison Johnston
Tel: 0118 947 5152 www.cavershamparkurc.com

Current services

Sunday – 11:00 – Livestreaming on YouTube
Details on their web site at:
<https://cpurc.org.uk/live-stream>

BAPTIST CHURCH

Caversham Baptist Church

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

Current services

Sunday worship 10:30 each week, including groups for children and youth
Sermons are recorded and uploaded to www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk
Hymn Café 15:00-16:00 on the last Sunday of each month

Grace Church (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Pastor Keith Saynor
Tel: 0118 947 4529 www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk
See their web site for details:
www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk

Riverside Church (Reading)

www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne

Fr Joe McLoughlin, 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

(including Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village)
Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michael's, Sonning Common
Tel: 0118 972 3418

<http://saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk>

For details of the services being held at each of our churches, please visit their respective websites (on this page) or the Churches Together in Caversham website www.cavershamchurch.org



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