

# Caversham Bridge

No 712

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

June 2024



Painted by Dr Ronald Gordon Roberts in 2019 – father to Miss Emma Roberts, teacher at Hemdean House School

## HEMDEAN HOUSE CLOSES ITS DOORS AFTER 165 YEARS

by The Editors

**F**ALLING PUPIL numbers have been blamed for the closure of Hemdean House School – founded to provide education for girls back in 1859.

Current headteacher Helen Chalmers and the school's governing body said in a statement on the school's website, "It is with a very heavy heart that I write to inform you that we will be closing the school on 12th July 2024".

While arrangements are being made for pupils to move to other schools in the area in September, staff are determined that the remainder of the term will carry on as normal, and the usual summer events – den day, sports day, the music concert and prize giving – are going ahead as planned.

Helen Chalmers told us, "There are just not enough pupils coming through for us to be viable. Ninety-four per cent of parents locally are managing to get their first choice primary

school in the state sector, so that is having an effect. Also, with so many families using tutors for their children, they are not looking to small independent schools in the same way as they used to.

"Sadly, there is no prospect for us to reopen in September".

This June the school is celebrating 165 years of education in Caversham. The school was originally founded by Mr Francis Knighton. Having established Caversham House Academy for Boys – the school closed in the 1920s and the school building was demolished to make way for St Martin's Precinct in 1966 - Knighton subsequently founded Hemdean House as a day and boarding school for girls. Recently the girls only senior school closed, while the mixed infant and junior school remained on the site.

For a look at the history of Hemdean House School and memories from pupils, parents and staff, see pages 10 and 11.

## In Tune and on Thyme

by Phil Chatfield

**T**HIS MONTH we reflect on the closure of Hemdean House School, a local institution which has been part of the Caversham scene for 165 years. Our lead article in June 1985 centered on the school's 125th anniversary (right). Our lead this month (above) is complemented by articles on the history of the school (p10) and from teachers, parents and past pupils (p11).

Music plays a big part in this edition. Our Talking Point from Penny Cuthbert starts with a visit to the Hexagon (p2) and, on the same page, we report on the events at Pop Classics for Record Store Day in April. Concerts in Caversham are back in June (p8), and we have details of two forthcoming choral events in the area on the same page. Creative Caversham investigates the making and repair of stringed instruments by local luthier Richard Pilkington (p9) and, finally, we have the return of both

Live and Local, reporting on two recent local gigs, and My Music, which looks back at the local Boys' Brigade band (both p14).

We have the first of a new feature this month, with a look at the local property market with Kate Fox (p17). Our regular Community Connection item this month features local writer, Sir Peter Stothard (p16), and H.K. Stores in Hemdean Road is the subject of our Local Scene article from Janina Maher and Martin Andrews (p15). Les has a run-in with slugs and snails in the garden this time (p12), while Happy Wanderer writes about Wild Thyme (p7).

Sadly, we have two obituaries this month. Both Colin Ferguson (p5) and George Allen (p17) had lived in Caversham for many years and had links with the Caversham Bridge.

We are always pleased to receive your comments or contributions for the paper. You can write to us by email at [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) or by post to Church House, Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX.



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# Creativity



## Talking Point

by  
Penny Cuthbert

**R**ECENTLY MY sister and I took our 95-year-old mum to see Tim Rice at The Hexagon. The show consisted of Tim Rice telling the story of his career, interspersed with some of his best-known and best-loved songs – Joseph's Coat; Any dream will do; Another suitcase in another hall; Don't cry for me Argentina; I don't know how to love him; I know him so well; Circle of life; A whole new world, and lots more. Of course he wrote the lyrics, not the music, but no-one can doubt his creative genius with words, 'All these things you saw in your pajamas are a long-range forecast for your farmers' has to be one of the best lines ever!

As I listened to these old songs, I was transported back to my childhood – remembering Joseph and Evita from my school days (I can still recite ALL the lyrics from start to finish), and Aladin and The Lion King from my own children's school days. Watching Tim Rice sitting on the stage enjoying his work being performed, I was struck by his and others' amazing creativity, and how much joy they have brought to so many people. The world would be a much poorer and sadder place without the creativity of musicians, lyricists, song writers and choreographers. When so often the daily news is full of sorrow and pain, what a blessing to enjoy the work of people who use their creative gifts to bring joy and laughter, and to move people in poignant and profound ways.

I found myself thinking about God as Creator, creating a world for all of us to enjoy. A world stunningly beautiful and astonishing in its diversity of flora and fauna. A night sky that's beautiful and which will fascinate physicists and mathematicians forever. Creating human beings 'in the image of God' themselves with astonishing gifts of creativity – musicians, dancers, writers and poets, artists, comedians. We're told in Genesis chapter 1 that 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good'.

The world we now live in may be a fallen world, broken and marred by our own poor choices. But its spectacular beauty and complexity still point us towards an ingenious, imaginative and powerful creator, who made the world for our enjoyment. He made us in his image, each with our own gifts and abilities, imaginations, and creative streaks. Are we using our creative gifts to bring joy to others? Are we encouraging creativity in those around us? Do we value them?

At the Hexagon I found myself thanking God for Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber and Elton John, and all the other talented people who have enriched my life over the years. Who are the people who have enriched your life? Do you thank God for them?

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

# A PRESSING CROWD

by Fred Smith

**O**N SATURDAY 20th April, Pop Classics Record shop in St Martin's Precinct hosted their first ever Record Store Day, an annual event staged by nearly 300 independent record shops around the UK.

Many exclusive limited edition vinyl records were released and sold exclusively for the event by artists such as Kate Bush, David Bowie, George Harrison and The Rolling Stones.

Excited music fans queued through the night to get their hands on these treasures. The earliest arrived at 2:30. By opening time, the queue snaked around the block. The Vegivore Restaurant opposite the shop opened early to provide welcome refreshments.

## ...thrilled customers...

'It's great to see this finally happening here in Caversham,' remarked one of the thrilled customers, 'I really hope they do it again next year'.

In celebration of the day, the guys at Pop Classics gave away free records and CDs to all customers, and staged live music in store from 13:00 onwards, featuring local lad, Luke Bates, and the legendary Third Lung, who really got the party started.

Shop owner Martina Jones said, 'It's been a brilliant day and hopefully a boost for all businesses in the precinct, we can't wait to do it all again next year'.



Luke Bates also performed

photo M Apar



An orderly queue awaiting opening time

photo M Apar



A large stock awaited fans inside

photo M Apar



Third Lung live in the store

photo M Apar



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Is there a curious tale of the nail?

photo Ruth Barlow

**CAN ANYONE** throw light on the origins of the object in this photo from one of our readers? It was screwed to a tree in Christchurch Meadows, adjacent to Gosbrook Road – Elizabeth House can be seen in the background.



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Write to:  
[editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)

by Phil Chatfield

**J**UST OVER a year ago, Clare and Jodie from NOOD Stores and the Caversham Artisan and Farmers Market came home to find their house on fire. We reported on the impact of the fire in our June 2023 edition, and the kindness of friends and neighbours in providing immediate support.

The damage to their home and the loss of their cat was compounded by a recently expired insurance policy. As Jodie later put it, "Our world was turned upside down."

They set up an on-line funding appeal which has helped them rebuild. Jodie said "To anyone who donated in the past, you're amazing and helped us get to where we are now." There were too many individual acts of kindness for individual acknowledgement here, but they had a special thanks for both their builder, Ollie, and Richard of Hyperrion Electrical, who were not only on site immediately but started on essential repairs (including a complete rewiring) without any assurance of payment.

Claire said the many messages of support and practical actions from friends and strangers had made her "appreciate her community and strengthened her faith in human nature".

And a message for all of us is to check your electrics, check your plugs, check your fire alarms and ensure you do not let your insurance lapse.



Fire damage

photo Jodie

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# And the schools played their part....

by Hilary Smart

LAST MONTH the Caversham Bridge reported on the Big Lent Walk, which was raising money for the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD). In addition to the parish walk which started from Our Lady and St Anne's, two local primary schools took part, St Anne's and St Martin's.

The classes at St Anne's school undertook their own walks during school time, each aiming to cover at least a kilometre over the term. St Martin's completed their walk shortly after Easter, as the rain before Easter turned Clayfield Copse (which is adjacent to the school) into something of a bog. All the children participated enthusiastically, despite the remnants of mud underfoot!

Although the two schools have a Catholic ethos, their community includes members of all faiths and none. The walks were a chance for the schools to focus on what it means to be part of a global community, and to reflect on the words of Mother Teresa – "Small acts of love and kindness become very powerful life changing acts when we do them together".



St Anne's School playground walks (left) St Martin's pupils at Clayfield Copse (above)  
 photos St Anne's School and St Martin's School respectively

**Saturday 8 June 10 am - 4 pm**  
 Methodist Church, Ardler Road, RG4 8EB  
 Quality Crafts, Kids Activities Lobby Cafe  
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## A Farewell to Keith Saynor

by David Steed

KEITH SAYNOR departed as pastor from Grace Church Caversham at the end of April, following five and a half years with us. A presentation and farewell lunch took place on Sunday 8 April, when we said a sad goodbye to Keith, Vinolia and Abigail. They are

moving to Jubilee Church, Shepperton, where Keith will be pastor. Jubilee church, like Grace church, is part of the Commission sphere of the New Frontiers family of churches.

During his time with us Keith developed a missional strategy for building bridges between the church and the surrounding community in Caversham. As a result of this strategy, several new initiatives have been set up, including a Welcome Café on a Wednesday evening for those who are feeling lonely, and an outreach on Saturday mornings. In addition, Keith ran 3 Alpha courses and concluded his time with us by heading up a preaching series entitled Overcoming Minefields. This was aimed at addressing various issues in our lives as Christians, including disappointment, fear, anxiety, jealousy, and doubt, and helping us address these, principally by focussing on Jesus.

The remaining Elders, Nick King and I, will now lead the church into the next season, including the search for a new pastor.

*Keith was an enthusiastic contributor to our Talking Point feature during his time in Caversham, and we will miss his lively contributions. The Editors*

You can find out more about New Frontiers and Commission on the Grace Church website,  
[www.gracechurchuk.org/newfrontiers-and-commission](http://www.gracechurchuk.org/newfrontiers-and-commission)

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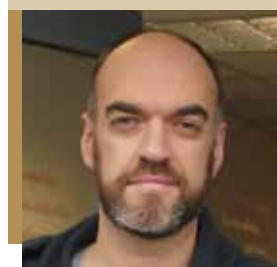
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## For your bookshelf....

by Alex Forbes

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

**W**E HAVE Henry Hemming coming to the shop in July to discuss his latest book 'Four Shots in the Night', so I thought I would include it here. A non-fiction narrative delving into the IRA, undercover British agents and more. On 26 May 1986, the body of an undercover British agent was found by the side of a muddy lane. Years later, it was reported that this murder might have been carried out by another undercover British agent, known as 'Stakeknife'. In 2016, a detective began to investigate this case, and would soon find himself running the largest murder investigation in British history.

Four Shots in the Night is an unflinching, compelling page turner of a book. Despite huge amounts of research going into the matter, Henry Hemming keeps the pace fast and the text light, which helps add to the pace of the writing. It is a fascinating insight into recent history which is still raw for so many, and there is more to learn.

Something a lot lighter for the children's book

this month, which is Black Hole Cinema Club by Christopher Edge. Lucas meets his friends at the Black Hole cinema and they are all very excited but, when a jet-black tidal wave comes crashing out of the screen, they find themselves swept into the adventure of a lifetime. I'm a fan of Christopher Edge's previous book, The Escape Room, and this has the same sense of adventure and humour to it – ideal for kids age 9+. Christopher Edge manages the perfect level of perilous cliff hangers without being too scary or too real for the kids to read. I'm really looking forward to whatever he has next.

We have a host of events in the shop over the coming weeks, including Shirley Ballas from Strictly, Elly Griffiths, Henry Hemming, Laura Coffey (travel memoir), and Lousie Candlish. It's a really exciting time for the shop.

All tickets can be booked with the shop or via our website [www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk](http://www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk)

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



Things are looking dark for the bear this month

photo A Forbes



## Colin Drummond Ferguson

21 June 1937-  
21 March 2024

### A Celebration

**A**SERVICE OF thanksgiving celebrating the life of Colin was held at St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Reading on April 26, 2024.

Colin was born to Robert and Mabel Ferguson in Perthshire. After a troubled beginning, the family settled in Richmond, London, and Colin attended Tiffin Grammar School, Kingston upon Thames. National Service with the Royal Air Force followed. This was when at the suggestion of the RAF Padre and aged just 19, he first started preaching. The Padre said he had a 'loud voice and a Bible'. He continued as a lay preacher well into his eighties, and had only recently retired.

After National Service, Colin worked for the Bank of England. In June 1960 he married Janet and they bought their first house in Battersea. In October 1964 he contracted TB, and nearly died. After a prolonged recovery, Colin felt he wanted to support others through a career change and applied to become a Probation Officer. In this role, he found himself in various parts of south London, and spent two and a half years in Holloway prison!

In 1979, Colin became a Senior Probation Officer and the family moved to Caversham. During this period, lay preaching became a greater feature of his church life. As a nationally accredited preacher, he preached widely across Berkshire and Oxfordshire. He was instrumental in forming a committee to keep the Church's Annual Holiday Forum going when the United Reformed Church decided it was no longer viable. It's still going strong today! By 1986, Colin had completed a master's degree in criminology and learnt to drive!

### ...passion for creative writing...

Following early retirement in 1994, he spent twelve years as a Family Mediator with Berkshire Family Mediation service. Colin had a passion for creative writing, producing poetry, many hymns, short stories, and books. He was also heavily involved with various local organisations such as the Thames Valley Writers' group and the Fir Tree Club. He was the Chairman of the Caversham Bridge paper for many years until the beginning of 2020. In recent years, he was a regular preacher in several local churches, including the Methodist churches.

Colin and Janet enjoyed the later period of their lives, with worldwide travel and the arrival of grandchildren. After 63 years of marriage, Colin's final words in his book 'Aunt Aggie and the Snowman' are addressed to Janet, where he says, "No one could ever have had such a loving wife and mother to our children. I love her as much today as I did when we got married. Whatever I have been it is because Janet was with me all the way and I thank God for all of it."

Colin is survived by Janet, his children Jill, Chris, David and Andrew, their spouses and six grandchildren.



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# What's On

IF YOU have an event planned, please send details to [whatson@cavershambridge.org](mailto: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](http://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 937 5103  
or see [reading.gov.uk/leisure/all-libraries/caversham-library](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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 cafe for adults 18+. Come as you are for tea and a chat. Please see: [www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

**Wednesdays** – **The Waltham St Lawrence Silver Band** – Neville Hall in Waltham St Lawrence RG10 0JJ. 20:00-22:00. Free and friendly club for brass instrumentalists. Email: [waltham.band@gmail.com](mailto:waltham.band@gmail.com)

**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](mailto: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](mailto: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. 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](http://www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)

**Saturdays** – **Keep Caversham Tidy** – A local charity dedicated to eliminating litter and improving public spaces in Caversham. Free to join and no ongoing commitment. Families welcome! Email [Keepcavershamtidy@gmail.com](mailto:Keepcavershamtidy@gmail.com), FB [Keep Caversham Tidy](https://www.facebook.com/KeepCavershamTidy)

**Sundays** – **Caversham Artisan & Farmers Market** – Caversham Precinct. 10:00-15:00. See [www.facebook.com/CAFMarket](http://www.facebook.com/CAFMarket)

**Sundays** – **Nordic Walk (or just walking)**. Free to all. Tel. 07931 754096 or email Pat at [Wiralbird@hotmail.com](mailto:Wiralbird@hotmail.com)

**Sundays** – **Readifolk 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](http://www.redifolk.co.uk)

**Tuesday 18 May to 29 June** – **Exhibition of the work of local photographer Matt Emmett** – Caversham Picture Framers, 5A Church Road, RG4 7AA. Tues-Saturday 10:00-16:00 Email: [gallery@cavershampictureframer.co.uk](mailto:gallery@cavershampictureframer.co.uk)  
Website: [cavershampictureframer.co.uk](http://cavershampictureframer.co.uk)

**Tuesday 4 June** – **Caversham Women's Institute** – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. [www.thewi.org.uk](http://www.thewi.org.uk) or Tel. 0118 947 5176

**Wednesday 5 June** – **Rosehill Ladies** – 14:00 at St Barnabas Hall, Emmer Green. Tel Sue 0118 947 7570 or email [suegreen@hotmail.com](mailto:suegreen@hotmail.com)

**Friday 7 June** – **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 7 June** – **Book launch event** – Glenn Bryant: Darkness Does Not Come At Once – 19:00-20:30 Fourbears Books, Prospect Street, Caversham. For details see [www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxEoVf7y740&ab\\_channel=GlennBryant](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxEoVf7y740&ab_channel=GlennBryant)

**Saturday 8 June** – **Artists & Makers Fair** – 10:00-16:00 at Caversham Methodist Hall, Gosbrook Road. Local artists and craftspeople display their work for sale. Free entry. For further information phone Jean at 07808 966928 or visit [www.cavershamcrafts.co.uk](http://www.cavershamcrafts.co.uk)

**Saturday 8 June** – **Reading's Water Fest** – 11:00-17:00 – Forbury Gardens, Reading Abbey Ruins, Chestnut Walk and Riverside Walk. Free entry. See [www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/things-to-do/events/water-fest](http://www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/things-to-do/events/water-fest)

**Friday 14 June** – **Cello of the Heart, Naomi Watts, cello, Alison Rhind, piano** – Concerts in Caversham Summer Concerts. Caversham Baptist Church, Gosbrook Road. See page 8 for details.

**Saturday 15 June** – **BBC Young Musicians of the Year Ewan Miller, oboe and Benjamin Hudson, bassoon** – Concerts in Caversham Summer Concerts. St Andrews Church, Albert Road, Caversham Heights, RG4 7PL See page 8 for details. Website [www.concertsincaversham.co.uk](http://www.concertsincaversham.co.uk)

**Wednesday 19 June** – **A talk by Gillian Taylor – My Greenhouse Year** – Caversham Horticultural Society – 19:30, Caversham Baptist Church. See [www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk](http://www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk)

**Friday 28 June** – **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 [readingcerclefrancais@gmail.com](mailto:readingcerclefrancais@gmail.com)

**Saturday 29 June** – **Hemdean House School Celebration Fayre and BBQ** – 14:00-17:00

**Saturday 29 June** – **Songs of Stage and Screen** – Performed by South Chiltern Choral Society, at Abbey School, Reading RG1 5DZ For more information visit [www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk)

**Saturday July 6** – **Music of the Americas** – Reading Bach Choir – St Andrews Church, Albert Road, Caversham Heights, RG4 7PL. See page 8 for details

## 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**

Following our update last month about the Aviva scheme from TGI through to The Range, the Council has decided to challenge the decision by the Secretary of State, and we await a decision at the High Court. The development on the **SSE site** is due to start later this year with demolition expected imminently. Historic England remains opposed to the plans at **Caversham Park**, despite the latest modifications and the potential overspill parking on Peppard Road continues to cause concern.

In **Caversham centre**, the application for a tattoo parlour on the first floor between Church House and Waitrose has been approved, as has the development under way at **3 Prospect Street**. The former **Barclays Bank** has an application for two retail premises with residential above. On **Bridge Street**, there is an application to create a seven-bed house of multiple occupation. Construction access for both of these would have to be very carefully managed. We hope for news on the planning application for the **Spice Oven**, which is showing increasing signs of decay. In addition to the application at **Archway House** for change of use to provide four apartments, there is a further application to provide three apartments on the ground floor.

The **telecom mast** on the north of Woodcote Road which was erected without a planning application has now been deemed not to be Permitted Development and we await further news. An application for nine new houses at **Brindles, Kidmore End Road** accessed through Lyefield Court is causing a lot of concern for the safety of older residents at Lyefield Court. Permission to demolish the large house at **92 Albert Road** was refused and there is now an application to convert the property, including an extension to add a further apartment.



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# Happy Wanderer seeks out **WILD THYME**

**T**YPICALLY IN this area you'll find it growing on chalk grassland where soils are thin, where it flowers about now, and where it seems particularly fond of growing on ant-hills. You may well recognise it first when you tread on it and release its scent. The thyme you grow in your garden or buy in the supermarket is likely to be a different species, which is native in southern Europe, while native wild thyme is said to be equally good as a food flavouring but doesn't taste as strong.

Geoffrey Grigson, in his 'Englishman's Flora', tells us that the old name for it in Berkshire was 'bank thyme'. The only different name recorded for it seems to be 'tae grise' in the Scottish Highlands – 'tea grass' because it was used to make tea.

Regular readers will know that I'm interested in words, where they came from and what they meant originally. It seems that the plant has been called 'thyme' across the country since records began, though with slightly different spellings. The initial th- has persisted since ancient times: the Ancient Greeks burned thyme in their sacrificial fires.

## ...masking bad smells...

In old England, thyme was widely used to mask bad smells. In the days before we knew about the causes of disease, it was widely thought miasmas were the cause. The idea of taking regular baths was not general and, whereas the wealthy might do so, poor people inevitably were likely to smell bad. Judges and medical men habitually carried posies of strong-smelling herbs, including thyme, and even today, the monarch traditionally carries such a posy on Maundy Thursday when going to distribute the Maundy Money.

Sprigs of thyme were traditionally placed in coffins at a time when it was usual after a death for the body to lie at home in its open coffin for three days before the funeral. Family and friends would arrive to view the body – and now we sometimes go to the undertaker's to do the same thing. In some places, it was customary to have sprigs tied with white ribbon on the hall table,



Native wild thyme, flowering about now on chalk grassland

photo Happy Wanderer

to be picked up by the mourners as they left for the graveyard, and thrown into the grave at the appropriate time. In other parts of the country, it was sprigs of rosemary that were used.

It was presumably this association with death and corpses which led to the belief that it was unlucky to bring thyme into the house, unless you were using it medicinally or for flavouring food.

An infusion of the leaves could, when drunk, cure whooping-cough and stomach problems, and when rubbed into the scalp,

could prevent hair loss. I wish someone had told me this years ago!

As for thyme in cooking, I have fond memories of a French restaurant in Reading where the French proprietor used his mother's recipes. One of my favourites was moules mariniere, which had thyme in the liquor. Unfortunately, the restaurant did not last long. The proprietor always seemed rather high-handed when speaking to his staff, and to the customers too. Unbidden, he would correct your French pronunciation!

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## Puzzle Corner

### The Challenge by Rachel

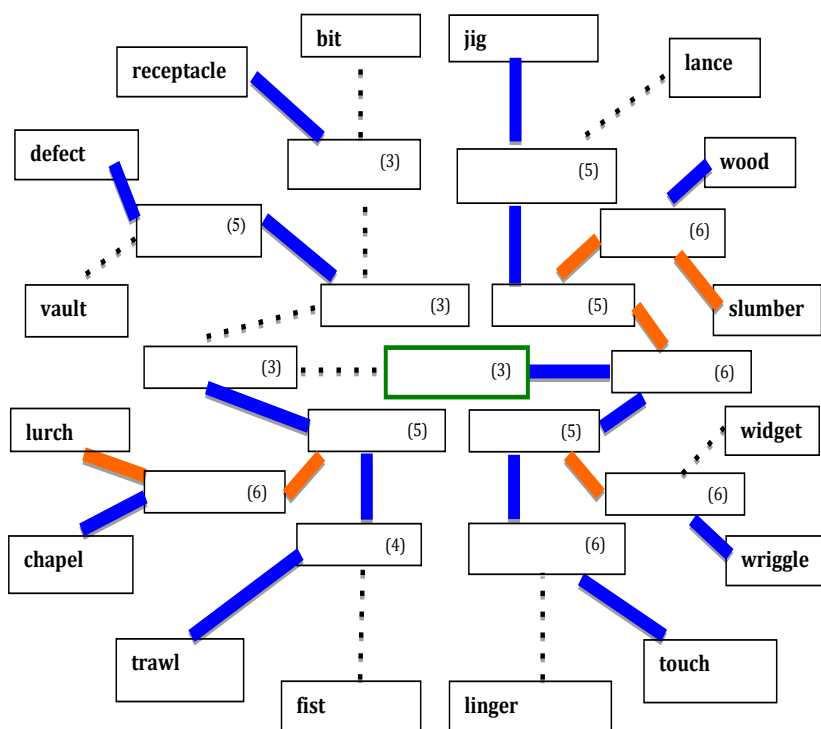
#### WORD PUZZLE

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

### SCHOOLS

Can you find the names of 17 local schools and nurseries in the grid?

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

Caversham Park  
Chiltern Edge  
Emmer Green  
EP Collier  
Hemdean House  
Highdown  
Micklands  
New Bridge  
Orchard

Preparatory  
Queen Anne's  
River Academy  
St Anne's  
St Martins  
Thameside  
The Heights  
The Hill



# NEW VENUE FOR MUSIC SERIES

by Elestr Lee

THE CONCERTS in Caversham series will be offering an opportunity to hear the Caversham Baptist Church's recently acquired Boston grand piano with an evening concert on Friday 14 June. Cellist Naomi Watts will be accompanied by pianist Alison Rhind in a programme the pair have entitled Cello of the Heart.

"I am really excited to be performing at the Caversham Baptist Church this June," Naomi told us. "People often say to me, 'Oh, the cello is my favourite instrument,' and I believe this is because the sonority of the cello evokes the tone of the human voice, which makes us feel more connected to the music we are hearing."

"For this reason, I thought it would

be fun to explore different aspects of love through music written for the cello and its sound world. We'll be looking at many forms, from the tragic, the pure, the downright bonkers – and maybe even a love triangle? Expect Debussy, Schumann, Brahms, and even some electronic music."

The church is an open, very light and intimate space, the perfect place for a summer's evening ...and a romantic start to your weekend!

Caversham Baptist Church (opposite Waitrose) Friday 14 June at 19:30.

Please note: the second concert in the series featuring bassoonist Ben Hudson and oboist Ewan Millar on Saturday 15 June will be at the usual venue, St Andrews Church.

Tickets: [concertsincaversham.co.uk](http://concertsincaversham.co.uk) or from Caversham Picture Framers.



Alison Rhind

## Come and Sing

THE SOUTH Chiltern Choral Society has organised a Come and Sing day with Bob Chilcott on Saturday 22 June. They invite you to join them for a day of singing, with an impromptu concert at the end for family and friends. The singing will be directed by Bob Chilcott and accompanied by Ian Westley. The music will include the Little Jazz Mass.

- Tea and coffee will be provided, but you will need to bring your own lunch.
  - The venue is Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road, Caversham RG4 7BG
  - Tickets are £20 per person.
- For more information visit [www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk)



Naomi Watts

photos courtesy Concerts in Caversham

## Reading Bach Choir

Music of the Americas by Kathy Munns

READING BACH Choir is back at St Andrew's in Caversham for the final concert of the season and greatly looking forward to it! This time we have something a little different for you, as we will be travelling all around the continent of America to bring music from a variety of places, periods and cultures. We explore Canada, the United States, Haiti, Argentina and Brazil, among others, introducing new music and re-discovering older pieces. The programme will be conducted by Daniel Mahoney, our Musical Director, who said, 'The choir have been on top form recently and are enjoying the challenges I've set this term! It's an exciting and varied programme, and a joy to be returning to our base at St Andrew's for this summer's concert.'

Come and join us on our journey on Saturday 6 July at 19:30.

Tickets are available from the choir website [www.readingbachchoir.org.uk](http://www.readingbachchoir.org.uk) price £15 (£5 under 18s).



The Reading Bach Choir

photo L Appleton

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# Creative CAVERSHAM



## NO QUICK FIXES...



photo M Ainsworth

**When a beloved guitar gets broken, it takes a highly skilled specialist to put things right. Richard Pilkington invited Elestr Lee into his luthier workshop where he both mends and makes guitars**

**L**ONGTIME CAVERSHAM resident Richard Pilkington runs an established lutherie business, making, repairing and restoring all different types of guitar – as well as running workshops in which he teaches complete beginners to make their own guitars.

“Hopefully, my business is one that will be immune from the impact of AI!” he joked, as he took me on a tour of his fascinating workshop at Rotherfield Peppard, and explained what it is a luthier (maker or repairer of string instruments) does.

“Many of the repair jobs I see are unique, and I enjoy the problem-solving aspect of these projects,” he said. “In some cases, there may not be a tool in existence which works for the repair you need, so first you start out by making the tool.

“I like that there’s no politics to the work. Guitar repairs are there for all to see. The job is either good or it’s not – the buck stops with me”.

Richard’s current workshop is based at Manor Farm; previously he learned his craft alongside a master luthier making guitars as well as taking on the warranty repair

work for Martin, Santa Cruz and National Resophonic guitars.

His love for the guitar began when he started classical guitar lessons at the age of nine. On buying his first electric guitar in his mid-teens, he immediately pulled it apart to see how it worked. “Even at that age, I was more interested in understanding how the instrument actually worked, rather than how to play,” he commented.

### ...many challenges...

“There is a seemingly bottomless history of innovation in guitar making. Some of the somewhat wacky innovations can be a bit more challenging to fix, as replacement parts are rarely available. But the core ideas and principles are based on simple maths, so that, even if I haven’t seen a specific model or type of instrument, a good guess can be made as to how to make it work.”

There is a close connection between all types of stringed instrument, from violins to guitars, and Richard finds he can learn a lot by studying the work of contemporary violin luthiers. “For example, Iris Carr does incredible retouching work on violins. A lot of these ideas can be ‘pinched’ for guitar

work, so it is great to study what other luthiers are doing in the face of the many challenges that come up!”

Richard showed me a well-worn 1950s German-made archtop guitar. “It belonged to my client’s dad. His dad had changed it from a normal six-string to a twelve-string guitar by boring new peg-holes into the headstock. His son would now like to play it as a six-string guitar - it has a lot of sentimental attachments, so I’m taking my time!

“I have managed to save the original headstock and, once this is made good, I can fit new tuners, and eventually the guitar will be playable again.”

As well as repairing beloved instruments, Richard also hand-makes new guitars. “At the moment I am focusing on making small-size acoustic guitars – I think the compactness of these instruments is a real selling point. The small size means customers can take their guitar with them wherever they go and are more likely to pick the instrument up and play,” he enthused. “There’s a nice challenge in getting a smaller guitar to make a big sound.

“My guitar-making courses are increasingly popular,” he added. “Students make either acoustic or electric guitars from scratch, which can take from a year to eighteen months. I find that my students find the experience very satisfying – they usually play guitar, but most of them have had no previous woodworking experience.

“Making a guitar is a long-term process. Nowadays, much of our enjoyment comes from ever quicker fixes. But building an instrument is much more like going on an epic journey with many highs and lows along the way. It is so different to many of my students’ typical goal-oriented working lives - when they come to my workshop, they feel they can slow down and switch off some of the pressures of their day job. I’m sure it is very good for mental health.

“The moment a student strings up the guitar they’ve made gives me just as much pleasure as making one of my own. There’s often a sense that they can’t quite believe what they’ve done – it makes me quite proud!”



A small-sized acoustic guitar, hand-made by Richard

Find out more:  
[www.readingguitarrepairs.com](http://www.readingguitarrepairs.com)



Richard congratulates Dr Anthony Mee on the completion of his L-00 acoustic guitar. Top panel: Richard's students also include Mark Ainsworth, Russ Gale and Mark Wickstead **photos R. Pilkington**





# Hemdean House School

## CAVERSHAM – 1859-2024



**For 165 years Hemdean House School has been a place of education in the heart of Caversham. We pay tribute to its long and fascinating history**

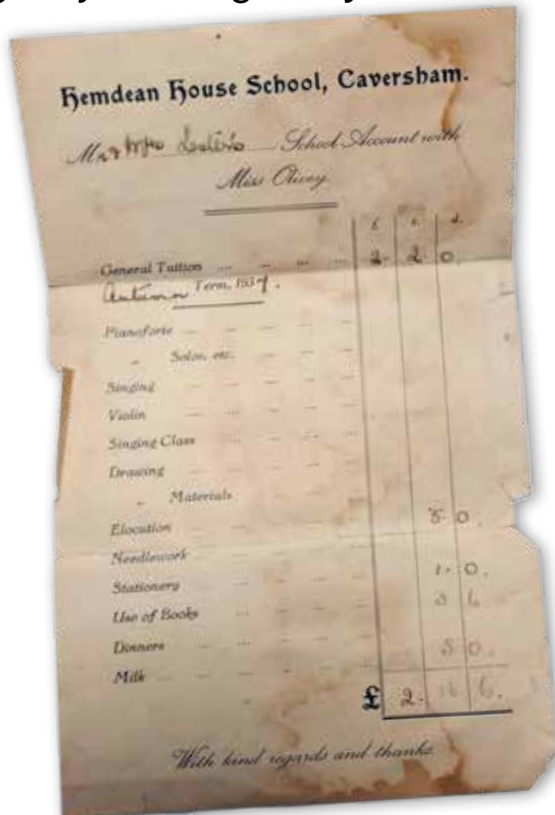
**W**HEN FOUNDED as a girls' school in 1859, it had a different name, Verona Lodge, and was situated in Church Street where the old telephone exchange is today. The owner, Francis Knighton, from Reading, had set up a boys' school in the 1820s when he was just 23 – initially in Gun Street, Reading, then moving to Friar Street. By 1849 he had acquired a Georgian house where St Martin's Precinct now stands, and his boys' boarding school became known as Caversham House Academy. It was very much a family business; Francis Knighton's wife, three sons and three eldest daughters ran the academy together.

Having four daughters in all, Mr Knighton decided on a new venture. Verona Lodge was established as a school for girls, to be run by his daughter Rosa (already teaching at the Academy) and his youngest daughter, Matilda. The new school was an immediate success, so Mr Knighton bought agricultural land for £320 in Bottom Lane (now Hemdean Road) and had a school built on a hill overlooking trees and fields.

### ...pioneering opportunity...

This was an innovative idea – girls' schools were almost unheard of at the time (a Schools' Enquiry Commission carried out by the government in 1864 found there were only 12 public secondary girls' schools in the whole of England and Wales). Schools such as Caversham House Academy were normally based in converted houses. When Hemdean House opened its doors in April 1862 offering an education for boarders and day girls in a purpose-built school building, it provided a pioneering opportunity for the daughters of middle-class families.

Francis Knighton and his family clearly had firm views on how best to nurture young minds – whether boys' or girls' – and the family ethos seems to have continued throughout the school's existence. While academic subjects, externally examined, were at the forefront, Mr Knighton was also an enthusiastic musician, and piano and violin were on offer to pupils at both his boys' and girls'



Invoice, dated 1937 – this document was recently sent to the school

schools. Enjoying the world outside the classroom was also important; and a highlight of the calendar at Hemdean House was the annual 'hay tea' to celebrate mowing the long grass!

When Rosa Knighton married and left Hemdean, her younger sister Matilda continued as principal. Matilda Knighton retired at the age of 87 in 1926, when Miss Alice Olivey was appointed the new principal. Alice Olivey, whose family lived in Priest Hill, had joined Hemdean at the age of five as a boarder. When she took over as principal, Alice increased the school fees from three guineas to four and a half guineas per term and, under her leadership, the number of pupils substantially increased from 38 to more than 100. Miss Olivey remained principal until her retirement in 1972 (by which time she had spent 70 unbroken years with



Hemdean House School and the lodge (top); once the Music Rooms, these classrooms have been replaced by Home Economics Unit (above)

the school) and by then boarding had ceased. The school remained under the ownership of the Knighton family until 1973, when an educational charitable trust purchased the premises from the family.

Head teachers since then include Mrs Monica Ralph (1973-1994); Mrs Pat Pethybridge (1994-2001); Mrs Joanne Harris (2001-2015); Mrs Debbie Lee (2013-15) and Mrs Helen Chalmers (2017-2024). During the 1920s (when Caversham House Academy closed) boys were admitted to the Prep school. However, Hemdean continued to offer education to girls up until the age of 16. In 2016 the senior school closed, and Hemdean House became a co-educational infant and junior school. While some of the original land had been sold off, a modern new hall constructed near to the school gates, and some of the outbuildings re-purposed, the historic school building originally commissioned by Francis Knighton has remained in use as a school since the building opened.

#### With thanks to:

- The Story of Hemdean House School, by Molly Casey
- Life In Old Caversham, by Mary Kift
- CADRA
- The Royal Berkshire Records Office



Only at Hemdean...in years gone by an annual 'Hay Tea' followed the mowing of the long grass, which everyone participated in (left). Under Matilda Knighton, it remained an all-girls school until the 1920s (above)





Yvonne with her class in '93

## Yvonne Chase\*

*Transition year teacher – (1970-2004)*

'I STARTED teaching Transition (children aged five to seven) in 1970, and finally retired 20 years ago. As well as Transition, I also helped with PE.

The Transition classroom was in a large terrapin, near to where Reception and Year One are now. At that time, Mr and Mrs Webb, the caretakers, lived in the lodge by the school gates. The Knighton family had said they could live there for the rest of the lives. So when a new caretaker came to work at the school, he had to live in one of the bedrooms which were at the top of the main school house – where boarders used to sleep.

My strongest memory was the drama over the proposed closure of the school in 1988. Joanne Harris (later headteacher) had just been appointed as science teacher. She arrived – just as we were being handed the letters to say the school was closing.

We formed an action committee, we were a group of teachers and parents, and we fought to keep the school going. Saving the school – that was fantastic!

In the 1990s, the PE teacher and I would load up our cars and take pupils to watch the tennis at Wimbledon, setting off after an early lunch on the first Tuesday of play.

One time, it rained all afternoon, so we phoned the school to say we wouldn't be getting back until after 9pm. Such dedication!

I still see a lot of the children – and their parents – who I taught during my time there. I must have taught two generations of children. My own daughter and my granddaughter both attended the school, and I know that my granddaughter has remained in contact with everyone from her class.'

*\*now Yvonne Watson*



Winner of School Motto competition

## Babita Sharma

*Hemdean pupil (1988 -1993)*

'THE JOURNEY up the winding driveway to Hemdean House always held a special allure for me. It wasn't just a path to a building, it felt like the gateway to a cherished second home. Each step brought me closer to a community where friendships were forged with the strength to endure a lifetime, and where the guidance of our teachers wrapped us in a blanket of holistic care.

Yet, amidst the warmth of camaraderie, some moments spoke volumes about the essence of our school. I recall the day I misjudged a leap over the fences, inadvertently breaking one. I was tasked with repairing what I had damaged. It was a profound lesson,

a tangible reminder that the integrity of our surroundings mirrored the values instilled within us in the classroom.

Now, as we bid farewell to Hemdean House, we acknowledge its closing with a heavy heart. It wasn't just a school, it was a sanctuary where minds flourished, hearts connected, and memories were etched into the very fabric of our beings. In this place, we didn't just learn academic lessons, we thrived in the essence of community, empathy, and the profound significance of lifelong learning. As we depart, we carry with us not just certificates and accolades, but a treasure trove of memories that will continue to shape our lives.

Farewell, Hemdean House. You were more than a school, you were the cornerstone of our journey, and I am eternally grateful for that.'

**Babita Sharma spent 15 years as a BBC News presenter. She is also an author – her first book *The Corner Store (Two Roads)* was published in 2019. Her latest book for children, *Priya Mistry and the Paw Prints Puzzle* (Hachette) has just come out, available at Fourbears Bookshop.**

## Anna Greaves

*Hemdean Senior School teacher (2002 – 2016)*

'I FELT fortunate to obtain a teaching job at Hemdean House School, working mainly in the girls' Senior School. I was initially appointed to teach Religious Studies and PSHE. Over the years, I also taught some Drama and did some 'one to one' English, so life was very varied and interesting.

While I was there, the school was ably

led by Joanne Harris, Debbie Lee and Alison Pomeroy, all who contributed to making a school environment which was very happy for staff and pupils alike. The Senior School classes had a maximum of 12 pupils (mainly owing to the size of the school rooms). This meant teachers felt they had the opportunity to know their pupils well, and I think the girls found their teachers accessible and available for them.

I loved working at the school and was very sad when in 2016 the Senior School had to close.'



Anna (far left, 2nd row) with the Senior School, summer 2016



*Silhouettist*

## Sarah Head

*Hemdean parent (2019 - 2024)*

'MY DAUGHTER and son both attended Hemdean House – my son is now in Year 6, and he will be going to Highdown in September; my daughter is already there.

They were both so happy at Hemdean, it is such a lovely little school. They started off elsewhere, but we decided to change to Hemdean where they took us under their wing. The school is so forward thinking, they offered an enriched curriculum which always made learning so interesting.

My children really loved Forest School where so much use was made of the lovely grounds. I was also impressed with the residential trips, which were not just for Year

6 – even the infants had a chance to attend maybe just for a day, so they got used to the idea of being away.

All the age groups are supportive of each other, there is such a good buddy system, with the older children looking after the younger ones. My son is now the oldest boy in the school – he is enjoying the fact the younger ones are looking up to him! But it is different this year – in previous times, only Year 6 would be leaving. Now the whole school is leaving.

We wanted to give our two children a good start in their education, and we knew they needed some extra help and support, and they certainly got this at Hemdean. I love the fact the school is so diverse, and I think the teachers there are so special. They think outside the box, so the children had such a range of experiences.

For example, members of the School Council made a presentation to Reading Borough Council asking for traffic speeds to be reduced outside Hemdean House School. All the council members – including my son – gave a speech. What an experience!



## Mrs Helen Chalmers

*Hemdean House School head teacher, (2018-2024)*

MRS HELEN CHALMERS has been Headteacher at Hemdean House School since January 2018, when the school became a co-educational infants and junior school.

No longer a girls' school, nevertheless, the ethos established by Francis Knighton remained in evidence. In 2018, the school was delighted to be positioned in the top 30

best performing independent schools by the Sunday Times, reflecting the school's determination to nurture academic potential alongside enrichment to cultivate every child's potential. The following year, Hemdean's extraordinary continuity as a place of education was celebrated as it reached its 160th anniversary.

Mrs Chalmers, alongside her team of enthusiastic and dedicated staff, championed the development of Forest School, taking advantage of Hemdean's wooded site. The children's enthusiasm earned a Woodland Trust Platinum Award, as well as the RSPB Wild Challenge Gold Award. Both Forest School lessons and the formation of an Eco Committee helped the children to develop an understanding of sustainability and biodiversity and subsequently a Green Flag with Distinction in 2022 and 2023, as well as the accolade of being named Biodiversity School of the Year in 2023. The dedication Helen and

her staff to champion every child's talent has ensured Hemdean continues to foster confident and creative children who make a difference. The School Council succeeded in persuading the local Councillors to agree to traffic calming measures outside the school, whilst budding architects took up the challenge to design a new energy saving station in the "Look, Draw, Build @ Reading Station" competition, achieving the Gold Award.



Above: After the Senior School closed in 2016 old school desks were sold off. Sarah Head bought this one, and it has now been resold - and will be used on stage in a play. A little piece of Hemdean lives on!

*Report compiled and written by Elestr Lee  
Visiting teacher of violin and viola  
at Hemdean House School (2008-2023)*

*photos*

*Y.Watson; S.Head; Hemdean House School*





# THE GOOD, THE BAD AND UGLY

text and drawing  
by Les Cooper



**The Editor will not thank me for saying this...**

JUNE HAS TO be one of a gardener's favourite months, with the sun shining and so many beautiful flowers at their best. This year I am growing a delphinium called 'Laurin'. It is not one of the usual varieties that stand out in most gardens, but one of a delphinium species called *Delphinium nudicaule*. I have managed to grow quite a few from seed. I took the advice on the packet and sowed the seed in a pot of compost, which I placed in the refrigerator for four weeks before bringing it out to stand on my kitchen windowsill. It germinated quite well, and I have ten plants which I hope to see in flower this year. According to the catalogue, they will have compact free branches with glossy green foliage and scarlet-red flowers in abundance.

On a more gloomy note, there are times when I get really fed up with gardening. The Editor will not thank me for saying this, because I am meant to be encouraging readers, not depressing them. But I am sure most gardeners have their moments of thinking, 'Why am I doing this?' In March I went down my garden and discovered a patch of cornflower plants chewed to ribbons, two of my clematis disappearing, and a slug on a pot of seedlings in the greenhouse. Even the flowers on my daffodils had been shredded by those damned snails. Days of wet weather have meant the slugs and snails enjoying themselves immensely. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) tell

us we should respect molluscs, and I am sure there are some saintly ones, but I appear to have only sinners in my garden. I particularly dislike those little black slugs.

In the past, because I grow delphiniums, I have put down hundreds of slug pellets that were probably detrimental to wildlife. For example, I have not had a beautiful song thrush in my garden for years. Of course, that may not be because of the pellets but you never know what harm you may have done. I agree we should err on the side of safety.

The RHS is correct, and we should keep an open mind and definitely attempt to be as green as possible. But how? Possibly easier said than done, but some thoughts are:-



1. Using deterrents like eggshells, but you need to eat a whole lot of eggs!
2. Collecting the slugs and snails by hand. That is not for me, but keep a watch out in case your neighbours are doing it and throwing them over the fence!
3. Organic pellets are available, but I haven't tried them yet.
4. Copper tape works, especially if you place it around the sides of the pots of your hostas.
5. Organic treatment using Nemaslug works well in keeping my delphiniums slug free, but is only effective for approximately six weeks.

**The best tip is to think ahead ...as I never appear to do.**

## Theatre Group highlights History in the Making



by Elestr Lee

LAST SUMMER, theatre fans were thrilled by Rabble Theatre's history of medieval King Henry I – founder of Reading Abbey. Their play, which toured to both Winchester and London, received national accolades. Now the Caversham-based theatre company is creating a new drama which is examining events far closer to our present time – in fact, the inquiry uncovering facts contributing to the Post Office Horizon scandal, which remains on-going.

Rabble Theatre was first approached by the University of Reading's School of Law in 2022 with the idea of commissioning a production about the largest miscarriage of justice in English legal history. This complex story is being presented through the experiences of local sub postmistress, Pam Stubbs, from Barkham near Wokingham, who found herself caught up in the nightmare.

Pam's story has been turned into a script by Zannah Kearns, with dramatic composition by Henry I's Beth Flintoff.

### Told through the experiences of local sub postmistress

Working on the first draft of this fast-moving, real-life situation, Rabble will be staging a preliminary version of *Glitch* at the Minghella Theatre in the University of Reading from Thursday 27 June until Saturday 6 July. In 2025, Rabble plan to take *Glitch* on national tour.

"We are delighted to welcome Gareth Taylor - associate director on *Henry I* – to co-direct the production with Gemma Colclough. Benjamin Hudson, whose soundtrack to *Henry I* was also celebrated, is also back," Rabble's Co-Artistic Director Toby Davies told us.

"We're also very pleased that Pam Stubbs herself will be joining us for a Q&A after the performance on Monday 1 July, which will be fascinating."

#### Glitch

June 27 – July 6 at the Minghella Theatre, University of Reading

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# Food for thought

by Tricia Marcouse

JUNE IS THE month to explore the wilder side of Reading, to find out all you wanted to know about reducing energy use in the home or installing a heat pump, and to talk to university experts about their latest research on biodiversity and climate change issues.

It's a full programme, from 7-21 June, starting with a weekend of Wild About Reading walks and a full range of energy experts at WaterFest in the Forbury and Chestnut Walk on Saturday 8 June. During the following two weeks, you can join a

workshop on pollinators at the university, listen to expert advice on heating and draughtproofing, learn the impact of digital technologies on climate change, join The Big Lunch in the Forbury to think about how we eat and, most important of all for me, listen to two free talks on Zoom from Reading and District Natural History Society –one on Scintillating Swifts and the second from Professor Lukac at Reading University on storing carbon in the soil. There has been a focus on tree planting to store carbon, but there is limited space in urban areas for massive planting schemes so storing it in the soil may be more realistic and is good for climate change and biodiversity.

**These are the websites for full information:**

Wild About Reading: [www.wildaboutrg.com](http://www.wildaboutrg.com)

Reading Climate Festival: [www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/reading-climate-festival-31664834047](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/reading-climate-festival-31664834047)

WaterFest: [www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/things-to-do/events/water-fest](http://www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/things-to-do/events/water-fest)



text and photo Fred Smith

CAVERSHAM COURT Gardens were buzzing on 20 April for the annual Beanpole Day. It was a cold but dry start for stall holders as they set up, but at least the wind, which was so much a feature of the weather in April, had dropped.

All the stalls were busy, from the Reading Food Growing Network seed exchange to the local honey producers and Caversham Fair Trade. The Ways and Means Trust had a good display of plants and a selection of homemade cakes. Both were popular and sold well, as did the beanpoles cut from local woodlands, and the bird boxes and tables from the local Royal Society for the Protection of Birds stall.

The fine weather encouraged a steady stream of visitors throughout the event, with the refreshments from the Tea Kiosk proving very popular. It was good to see so many families and to welcome visitors from all corners of Reading to enjoy the gardens, river and the event.

Beanpole Day is organised each year by Econet. Please look on their website for the next practical tasks in local sites such as Clayfield Copse and for other activities at [www.econetreading.org.uk](http://www.econetreading.org.uk)



by Tricia Marcouse

FOUR SWIFTS were seen in Thatcham at the beginning of May, signalling the return of these summer migrants who stay a few short months to breed in the UK. Swifts, Martins and Swallows are natural insect control systems for the summer months, and make nests in and on buildings in this area. Swifts are the nicest roommates, creating far less mess than the others, but all need our help.

## Swift Action Please

Since they nest in communes, the best way to expand numbers is to put up artificial nests in areas with existing colonies. This allows colonies to grow and provides some security against development eliminating nest sites or flight paths.

Please help identify existing nesting areas for these wonderful travellers. Sightings of swifts going into boxes or buildings, or sightings (hearings) of swift parties screaming around buildings at eaves' height, should be added to Swift Mapper [www.swiftmapper.org.uk](http://www.swiftmapper.org.uk) where you can also see if there is a colony near you.

Even more in need of help are House Martins. Numbers in England declined by 75% in the years 1967-2018. The reasons

include changes to houses construction, since the mud they use to build the nest does not easily stick to plastic soffits. There isn't a super mapping system in place, but Reading and District Natural History Society (RDNHS) would welcome reports of sightings of Martin nests (mud or artificial) or of Martins collecting mud, and will share records with other conservation groups. Please send details to

[RDNHSzoom@outlook.com](mailto:RDNHSzoom@outlook.com)

Finally, RDNHS have a potential offer of funding for new swift boxes and martin nest cups to extend colonies in Reading. If you live near swift and martin nests and would like to provide a home for more, please contact [rdnhszoom@outlook.com](mailto:rdnhszoom@outlook.com)



Swifts come here to breed photo Swift Action

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## The Boys' Brigade Band

SOMETIMES, WHEN I am looking for something to watch on my computer, I come across videos of marching bands in the United States. They are great fun, with scores of brightly uniformed musicians parading around in different formations playing stirring music, with lovely girls waving flags, and a cheeky drum major throwing his baton way up into the air.

It does make me think back to when we had our own marching band in Caversham, called the Ambassadors - and they were good too! They were an offshoot of a small Boys' Brigade band formed way back in the 1970s at the Methodist Church in Gosbrook Road.

During the Second World War, a man called Mr Jimmy West started a Boys' Brigade Company for the evacuees, which became extremely popular with local boys. The BB, as it was usually called, was in two sections, with the Life Boys for the 8-10-year-olds, and the main company for boys aged 11 to 16. The evenings were fun, with marching drill, games and badge award activities. Each month there was always a Church parade, because the motto of the organisation was 'The Advancement of Christ's Kingdom'.

When Mr West died, Tony Champion became captain and the company thrived. Then, one day, it was decided it would be fun to start a bugle band. Accordingly, under the auspices of Brian Bosier, also a Local Preacher, the band was formed with a few lads playing a small array of drums and bugles. One 'tune' I think I remember them playing was 'When the Saints Come Marching In'.

As these things do, the band gradually increased in popularity and size, with better instruments and more intricate music. They began entering marching band competitions, bringing in a number of girls twirling flags (The Colour Guard) to enhance performances.

Sadly, and as always, the world moves on and the Boys' Brigade and The Ambassadors, as the band became known, are now just a stirring memory of the past.

## LIVE AND LOCAL

**A Vision of Freddie Mercury** – The Club at Mapledurham – 12 April  
**Celebrating George Harrison** – The Crooked Billet – 23 April

report and photos Richard Wells

**K**NOWING JOSEPH Lee Jackson had been performing as legendary rock icon, Freddie Mercury, for over 20 years, we had high hopes for the show at The Club Mapledurham.

'Freddie' appeared dressed in authentic costume and had the sold out club in the palm of his hands right from the outset. Pulling all the iconic moves and poses of his hero whilst brilliantly emulating that unique and instantly recognisable voice.

Performing all the hits we know and love from 'A Kind of Magic', 'Radio Ga Ga' through to, of course, 'Bohemian Rhapsody', he had the crowd on their feet and singing along with ease. Not forgetting earlier Queen and Freddie's solo work, the show left no one disappointed, whether casual fan, or Queen fanatic.

*...snapped up...*

The Club easily adapted from clubhouse to a music venue and, with ample parking and local beers on tap, I'd definitely recommend checking it out next time you see something advertised. These types of events are open to members and non-members alike, but be sure to get in early, especially if Joseph makes a return as Freddie, as I'm sure tickets will be snapped up after the success of this show!

Later in April, we visited The Crooked Billet for an evening celebrating the music of George Harrison of The Beatles.

We arrived to a warm welcome from Crooked Billet owner, Paul Clerehugh, who then took to the stage to introduce the evening. He regaled us with fascinating stories of the times George himself had visited The Crooked Billet. Paul is obviously passionate about putting on great music at his lovely countryside pub and clearly has the contacts to book some familiar faces.

Once we had enjoyed an excellent dinner, it was



Vision of Freddie Mercury at The Club



Celebrating George at the Crooked Billet

time for the music. Although often performing with 10-piece ensemble, The All Things Must Pass Orchestra, Bernd Rest and Alex Eberhard appeared on this evening just as a duo. Without their usual backing band, they perfectly performed stripped back versions of George's iconic Beatles' numbers, alongside a selection of his solo work, most notably, of course, tracks from his album, 'All Things Must Pass'.

The Crooked Billet often host musical evenings, charging a cover fee for the performers, in addition to the cost of an always exceptional meal. It is a warm and friendly, intimate setting, allowing you get close to the wide range of artists. A lovely way to spend an evening.

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# H. K. STORES



Drawing by Janina Maher

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

FEEL VERY grateful to Mr Kapoor and his wife and son who form the family team running the Post Office in Hemdean Road. If they had not agreed to add a post office counter to their corner shop, Caversham would be without this vital service in its centre. The previous post office, which used to be part of a chemist shop in Church Street, closed down, creating real concern for the public. The Kapoors had to undertake extensive training, and opened the post office counter four years ago and were immediately hit by the covid restrictions. Much to their credit, they battled on, providing this important service, given the terrible revelations of the Post Office scandal.

Mr Kapoor and his wife took over the shop in 1999, having previously run a similar store in Andover. A hundred years ago in this Victorian residential area, No 47 Hemdean Road, on the corner with Oxford Street, was owned by a Mr G Pullen, who

was a grocer. But today, as in more recent times, it has been a general store packed with the usual range of a handy corner shop. Mr Kapoor told me he enjoyed chatting to customers about Caversham's past, and one old chap had passed on his memories of the Dairy that was once on the other side of the road on the corner with Priest Hill. Further along the road from No 47 in Victorian and Edwardian times was 'Balmore Hall', described as a 'village hall' which is now the site of the Balmore surgery.

**Long may H K Stores and Post Office continue to serve the public.**

*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.*



photo True Food Co-Op

## A True Food Legend

THE TRUE FOOD Community Co-op grew from an organic food club established in 1999. It was registered as a company in 2004. Over the years it changed from a mobile market at a number of venues around Reading to the store we know today in Emmer Green.

In 2014, Helga Bogisch-Francis joined the team and has since become something of a legend, celebrating her 10th anniversary at the shop in April. More recently, she has also joined the proofreading team for the Caversham Bridge!

Congratulations to Helga and a thank you from us for your support with the paper. **The Editors**

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# Community Connections

Report and photo Adrian Raffill – This month we meet author Sir Peter Stothard

IN HIS latest book *Palatine: An Alternative History of the Caesars*, Peter Stothard describes how Epictetus saw the world. The Roman slave turned philosopher said that everyone had their place and their part to play, like actors in a drama. This world view was reflected in the stratified society of postwar Britain in which Peter grew up and the housing estate of his childhood.

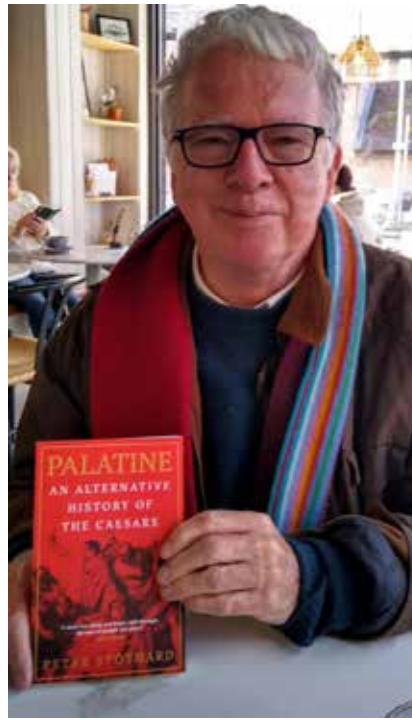
Peter's father, a radar engineer for Marconi, lived on an estate in Essex owned by the company. "It might be one of the last examples of workers' estates in the country", Peter told me when we met for coffee at The Collective. In the Rothman's estate community, children were expected to follow in their fathers' footsteps, but Peter's place in the world was not to be engineering. "I had no aptitude for maths – Latin and Greek were my subjects at school." He would go on to study both at Oxford University.

At 15, Peter managed to get a jazz review published in the Daily Telegraph, giving him

enough experience to get him onto Cherwell, the Oxford University student newspaper which he went on to edit. After university and several short-lived jobs, he started at The Sunday Times in 1979.

It was a good time to be a fresh face in political journalism, just as Margaret Thatcher took office. A growing reputation for getting the inside track (notably with the 1981 budget in the days when announcements were not routinely leaked in advance) culminated in Peter's appointment as editor of The Times in 1992, and later The Times Literary Supplement. He was knighted for services to the newspaper industry in 2003. Shortly afterwards he published his first book, *30 Days: A Month at the Heart of Blair's War* – an eyewitness account from Tony Blair's 10 Downing Street during the second Gulf War.

As his writing interests switched from politics to history, his next two books (*On the Spartacus Road* and *Alexandria*) were a mix of memoir, travelogue, and Roman history, and were written in Caversham. This change of tack coincided



Sir Peter Stothard

with recovery from life-threatening illness. Peter has found a thriving community here, where he continues to write (a biography of the poet Horace is due out next year) and to indulge his passion for water birds from his boat on the Thames.

## How long have you lived in RG4?

On and off since 1995, but more or less permanently for the last four years.

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

The wonderful new Spanish deli Serdio Ibéricos, The Collective, Persian Palace, Terry's (every community needs a Terry's and we are lucky to have one!), The Caversham Butcher and Thames Lido.

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

Why can't we have our bottles/glass collected for recycling like neighbouring councils?

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

By making use of what we have. You don't have to build new institutions, we already have local, independent, community-focused shops and services in Caversham – use them or lose them!

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

I think we're very lucky here – we have it all.

*Palatine: An Alternative History of the Caesars by Peter Stothard is out now in paperback.*



## Getting lost and found in Caversham with Dorothy L Sayers

text and photo Roslyn Weaver

FEAR IT takes an unusual kind of skill to get lost in Caversham and yet somehow I managed it recently. It's fair to say I already have something of a reputation in our household for issuing puzzling driving navigation instructions (Take the next left – no, wait, maybe you should have turned earlier). This time, in a fit of optimism, I decided to walk to Emmer Green by a different route. In theory, it seemed simple; walk up hill, turn left. In reality, the road curved into a different direction, and a rapidly dying phone had to be consulted, as pouring rain soaked my umbrella-less person and made a mockery of any optimism.

Yet the detour brought unexpected finds. The circuitous route revealed a hidden treasure of woodland tucked in behind houses, a second such delightful discovery in Caversham. I also walked past Hemdean House and noticed its motto, *Laborate et Gaudete*. Latin was not exactly on high (or any) rotation at my school, and a brief fling with singing *Gaudete* in choir hadn't enlightened me either. I can, however, hazard a guess at the meaning being somewhere in the region of work and play, or rejoice. And *Gaudete* put me in mind of Dorothy L Sayers' novel *Gaudy Night*.

### ...one of the first...

Sayers, who was born up the road in Oxford (where quite possibly I was accidentally heading on my ill-fated Emmer Green expedition) was one of the first women to receive a degree from Oxford. She might have appreciated the sentiment of the unexpected finding, given all her plotting mis-directions and dead ends. *Gaudy's*

heroine, Harriet Vane, attempts to solve a poison pen mystery at her old college, and learns that abandoning preconceptions and assumptions is a key part to solving the crime, all the while pondering her own life choice mis-directions, and unexpectedly finding personal happiness along the way.

I made it to Emmer Green in the end, but it's unlikely anyone will call on my orienteering services anytime soon. However, perhaps there is value in getting lost sometimes, because you never know what might also be found.



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## The Story of George – George Allen 1943-2024

**G**EORGE ALLEN grew up in Devon, one of eleven children. He attended Newton Abbott Grammar School and then, at the age of 18, started an apprenticeship with the railway in Reading. It was here he met his wife-to-be, Paula, who worked in the Drawing Office.

As was the way in those 'olden days', George asked Paula's dad, John, for her hand, and they were married 57 years ago. They moved from a flat in Reading to a maisonette in Caversham. Later they moved to Kidmore Road and then Matlock Road, where they spent much of their family life. Their children remember many happy occasions there, including street parties and their 25th Wedding Anniversary.

George was a very practical man, and was known for his ability to fix almost anything.

When on holiday, he would always have a tool kit 'just in case' and, for some years, he was the 'Manse Steward' at the Methodist Church in Highmoor Road – which often meant he fixed the problems at the Minister's home himself!

He was always a 'doer'. He became a school governor at his sons' school, which started a long involvement within the community. This included organising the school fete, collecting papers with the Scouts, putting staging up for the choir, volunteering with Parent Partnership, helping with the sound system for the church, and delivering the Caversham Bridge.

On retirement, his main endeavours were Odd Job George, handyman for hire, and volunteering for an organisation, Parent Partnership, then managed by a friend. The

Partnership advocates for parents of children with additional education needs. He enjoyed choral singing, joining first South Chiltern Choral Society and then enjoying many years with Rivarate, which meets at Caversham Heights Methodist Church.

In 2005, George and Paula became grandparents, embracing all aspects of their new status, from babysitting to making and repairing toys. The family would say, 'If anything breaks, take it to Grandad!' Despite health issues, George continued to maintain his garden, sing with Rivarate, and was delivering the Caversham Bridge until just a few weeks before he passed away.

Over the years, George helped many people with his practical, problem-solving, skills and he leaves behind friends and family with many happy memories.

## The Property Market



# Leasehold Properties



by  
**Kate Fox**

*Whether you are buying or renting, finding the right place to live is one of the most important decisions any of us make. We asked Kate Fox, who runs a small estate agency in our area, if she could provide some insight into the local property market. The first of her articles deals with leasehold properties.*

**W**HEN I first moved to Caversham 24 years ago and coming from London, I had thought we would buy a period flat where conversions are the norm. I was surprised when house hunting in the area how few were available on the market, so we ended up buying a terraced house in the center of Caversham instead.

Since working as an estate agent locally for the past seventeen years, I am now much more aware of the vast range of local apartments. There have been some lovely apartments for sale recently in converted period properties in the area, from The Warren, Priest Hill, St Anne's Road and The Waterhouse, (a converted chapel on Gosbrook Road). These typically offer spacious proportions with period features, such as high ceilings and fireplaces. There are also some period conversions in Emmer Green, such as Osbert House on the Peppard Road and Rosehill House.

In recent years there have been new apartment developments in Caversham, on Rectory Road and North Street, offering more modern, open-plan living space. There are also the developments on Henley Road, Ruskin and Waller Court and Charlotte Close in Caversham Heights. One of my personal favourites locally is the 1960s split-level apartments in Riverside Court, with balconies and stunning views of the river Thames. Some have roof terraces and moorings too!

If you are buying an apartment, a key consideration is the lease length. Mortgage lenders aren't keen on short leases and expect a lease to be at least 80 years. So think about the cost of extending the lease in the future. You also need to

factor in service charges and ground rent. Service charges are paid monthly or twice annually, and include things like communal gardens, lift repairs, building insurance, and cleaning of communal areas. Ground rent can be as little as £1 a year 'peppercorn' rent, up to £250 per year, so factor in these costs too. Sometimes apartments are available without a service charge, in which case the residents are responsible for upkeep. Some properties may be leasehold but have a share of the freehold. The advantage of this is very often the residents form a management company and work together on the maintenance of the building, rather than having an outsourced management company to look after the service charge.

Next time, the varied range and style of terraced properties in Caversham!

*Kate lives in Caversham and works throughout our area, running a small bespoke estate agent, Fox-Beckett.*

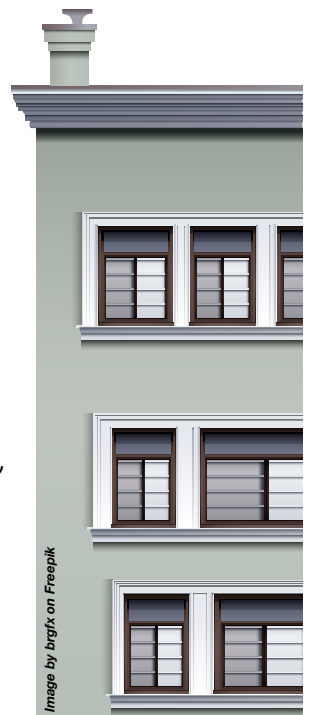


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## First Impressions Matter

# Three Years On

by Laura Harmsworth



I'VE BEEN writing for the Caversham Bridge for three years, so thought it would be good to introduce myself again, since I last did so back in 2021.

I live in Emmer Green with my husband, three teenage daughters (one now away at university), and our crazy cavapoo Molly. We've lived in RG4 since 1999, and love its sense of community.

When we moved here, I started work in Human Resources (HR) for a telecoms company in Maidenhead and stayed there until we started our family. During that time, I supported the business with recruitment, HR issues, and redundancies.

After a four-year career break, I returned to work part-time, working from home in graduate recruitment, which I continued with until 2018. During this time, I realised I had seen thousands of CVs (Curriculum Vitae – a short summary of your career) and that many people could do with support in selling themselves. Caversham CV Writing was born in 2012.

### ...support people...

Over the last 12 years, I've helped hundreds of people with their CVs, cover letters, LinkedIn profiles, and interview prep. Thanks to Zoom, I can support people across the country at all stages of their careers, in multiple industries, and at all levels. However, I particularly enjoy walking through Balmore to meet local clients for a coffee – we're lucky to have so many independent cafés to choose from.

I love what I do. I enjoy speaking with people, learning about their roles and what they've achieved, and seeing them grow in confidence throughout the process – either in themselves or in their CV, or both. I get immense satisfaction and joy from hearing clients have achieved interviews and, ultimately, found a job. What a privileged position I'm in to share these positive moments.

Since I first started writing for the paper, I've written a book on CV writing, founded the British Association of CV Writers, and taken on three CV writing associates.

My 33 articles to date have covered a range of topics including:

- ✦ The type of CV you should be using
- ✦ CV sections
- ✦ What to exclude
- ✦ How to identify and highlight your skills
- ✦ The importance of achievements and how to use them in your CV
- ✦ Spelling and grammar
- ✦ Tailoring your CV
- ✦ Cover letters
- ✦ LinkedIn (and the difference between the platform and your CV)
- ✦ Twitter
- ✦ Online job boards
- ✦ The role of career coaches
- ✦ Working with a CV writer
- ✦ Online and face to face interviews
- ✦ The use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) when writing your CV
- ✦ CVs for students, the over 50s, those with career gaps and changing career
- ✦ Job fairs
- ✦ Redundancy

I hope what I share is useful and, please, do let me know if there's anything in particular you'd like me to cover.

In the meantime, you can follow me on Facebook (@CavershamCVWriting) or connect on LinkedIn, where I post regular tips and articles.

You can follow Laura on:

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

on LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth)

website: [www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk](https://www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk)

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



## Powerful Photographs Capture a Lost World

by Elestr Lee

AWARD-WINNING local photographer, Matt Emmett, is the latest artist to be featured in the Caversham Picture Framers' Gallery in Church Street. Pop in and take a closer look!

Matt's work features abandoned industrial sites and disused historic buildings or other examples of manmade heritage. As nature invades, Matt's evocative photographs capture the faded power frequently contrasted by the delicate beauty of the natural world. Regular readers might remember that Matt Emmett featured in our Creative Caversham page in January 2022 – now is the chance to see a lot more of his work.

The Exhibition at the Caversham Picture Framers runs until Saturday 29 June.

[cavershampictureframer@co.uk](mailto:cavershampictureframer@co.uk)

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(From left to right from the top)

bin, dance, fault, lumber, sin, rumba, sit,  
**six**, number, perch, digit, church, fidget,  
fish, finger.

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

### Future editions:

Contributions for the July issue should be submitted by 1 June and for the August edition by 1 July. These should be emailed to: [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)

Dates for advertising copy are 1 July for the August issue and 1 August for the September issue. These should be emailed to: [advertising@cavershambridge.org](mailto:advertising@cavershambridge.org)

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## Wellbeing *with Ami Roy*

# Spice – all things nice

**S**PICES ARE typically just dried herbs. Some are powdered, crushed, or ground, while others remain intact. But, because all spices start as herbs, many contain powerful antioxidants, which are bioactive compounds found in plants which do our body good.

Science shows the antioxidant properties found in herbs, fruits, and veggies help our bodies to fight free radicals and reduce oxidative stress. A buildup of free radicals not only makes us age faster, but also increases the risk factors for developing health conditions like high blood pressure, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and more. Spices can help our bodies to form a protective layer that may help defend against developing these conditions, making them an incredible dietary health tool to add to our diet.

Spices come from roots, flowers, fruits, seeds or bark of plants. They each have different active substances with specific functions in the body. Spices were mostly valued and used for their natural flavour and aroma in cooking.

Although household spices are now readily available, at one time they were a much sought after commodity, the subject of trade and power rivalries between colonisers and colonies.

*As my heritage dictates, let me explore some Indian spices:*

**BLACK PEPPER;** is pungent and heating. Useful for digestion, coughs and promoting health to the lungs and heart.

**CARDAMOM;** is sweet, pungent and heating. Good for coughs, breathlessness, burning urination and haemorrhoids.

**CINNAMON;** is sweet, pungent, bitter and heating. Effective in digestion, toxic conditions and for better circulation. Also has blood thinning properties.

**CORIANDER;** is sweet, astringent and cooling, with a sweet post digestive effect. Has good digestive properties, and can reduce fever and is diuretic. The seeds have the strongest impact, but the fresh herb can also be used.

**CUMIN;** is bitter, astringent and cooling and can be used generously. It aids absorption of minerals. Helps relieve

problem of gas and can also act as a mild pain reliever, especially for the tummy.

**GINGER;** the fresh root is pungent and heating, as is dry ginger. Both types improve digestion, absorption and help break down blood clots. It is a good remedy for the common cold, coughs and breathlessness.

**SALT;** is heating. It improves digestion and is laxative and antiseptic. Sea salt has a pungent post digestive effect. Rock salt is very digestive, less aggravating and doesn't retain water in the body.

**TURMERIC;** is pungent, bitter, astringent and heating. Can be used as an antiseptic and anti-inflammatory. It helps digestion, maintains the flora of the intestine, reduces gas, has tonic properties and is an antibiotic. Can be used for coughs, diabetes, haemorrhoids, cuts, wounds, burns and skin problems. Just bear in mind that the yellow colour tends to stain your clothes and skin!

I have just mentioned a few... there are many more. And remember, there are also spices like chili which, when mixed with digestive juices, can actually aggravate conditions like hyperacidity or intestinal inflammation!



photo A Roy

## 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](mailto:rector@ctmparish.org.uk)

Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810  
[penny@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:penny@ctmparish.org.uk)

Rev'd Rachel Ross Smith Tel: 07884 371688  
[rachel@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:rachel@ctmparish.org.uk)

Rev'd Dr Catherine Radcliffe Tel: 07740 475697  
[catherine@ctmparish.org.uk](mailto:catherine@ctmparish.org.uk)

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

#### Current services

##### St 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/](http://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](http://www.standrewscaversham.org)

#### Current services

St Andrew's weekly services are Sundays at 8:00 and 10:00. The 10:00 is also livestreamed on the St Andrew's YouTube channel. Prayer Book Communion at 11.30 on the first Sunday of each month. More info on the parish website. [www.standrewscaversham.org/services](http://www.standrewscaversham.org/services)  
Compline: 8.30 on Mondays during BST (in church)

### St Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park

Rev'd Kevin Lovell, [vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk](mailto: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](http://www.facebook.com/StBarnabasEmmerGreen/live_videos)  
Full details at [www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)  
Hymn Café 15:00-16:00 on the last Sunday of each month

#### Grace Church (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Elders Nick King and David Steed  
Tel: 0118 947 4529 [www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)  
See their web site for details:  
[www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

#### Riverside Church (Reading)

[www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk](http://www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk)

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

#### Our Lady and St Anne

Fr Joe McLoughlin, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue  
Tel: 0118 947 1787 [www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

#### Current services

See their web site for services at:  
[www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)

#### St Michael, Sonning Common

(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](http://www.cavershamchurch.org)





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