



CAVERSHAM

June
2016

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616

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BRIDGE



A new venture for Churches Together in Caversham (CTC)

One word that you do not hear very often is non-denominationalism! It's quite a mouthful, but what is it? Some years ago the buzzword was ecumenism, which meant people of different church traditions (Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Baptist, Free Churches and more) working and worshipping together, with the conscious intention and hope of bringing their traditions (or 'denominations') closer together. In many ways their work succeeded because today, in organisations up and down the country, such as Churches Together in Caversham, no-one thinks anything of the fact that we all work together. We take it for granted.

Of course we all get on together and work together for the sake of God's kingdom. Why wouldn't we? But it was not ever thus and we have the dedication of the ecumenical pioneers to thank for today's reality which is almost non-denominational. In other words, it just doesn't matter to which denomination the church belongs where you regularly worship and attend. The powers that be in our various church traditions struggle and fail to reach consensus over certain issues: meanwhile the people on the ground are just getting on with it.

We are in a time when the statistics which hit the headlines are no longer about the decline in attendance of this or that church denomination, but about how many (or few!) people go to church at all. Churchgoers and Christians are rare enough. In this context we are less concerned about differences of belief or habit, and more aware of what unites us: a commitment to Jesus Christ and seeking his kingdom. In Caversham our main activities as Churches Together are REInspired and the summer Holiday Club. See www.cavershamchurch.org.uk for more details (and notice that the name of the CTC website takes for granted that there is really only one church in Caversham, to which we all belong).

At the recent Annual Assembly of CTC we agreed a new venture: that we would adopt a 'Charity of the Year', which the churches and people of Caversham are encouraged to support in whatever way suits them and fits in with what they already do to support charities and projects. One fundraising activity at some point in the year is planned, and we hope that churches and individuals will wish to contribute to this new joint project.

We also agreed that the CTC Charity of the Year 2016-7 would be Hope Asia. Hope Asia was founded by Crispin Fairbairn, pastor of Grace Church, one of our Caversham churches, and provides a home to orphans in orphanages in Cambodia and Myanmar (Burma). It is a small local charity, and is able to guarantee that of every pound donated every single penny goes directly to the work on the ground with the children. Nothing is deducted for administration. To find out more about Hope Asia, and to donate online, you can visit their website www.hopeasia.org. You can also send a cheque payable to Hope Asia to Crispin at 97 Kidmore Road. Join in and be non-denominational!

Revd Nigel Jones, CTC co-chairman



children outside an orphanage in Myanmar

PACT recruiting more adopters after another successful year

Adoption charity Parents and Children Together (PACT) is celebrating finding forever families for the 78 children who were placed with 57 PACT families between April 2015 and March 2016.

PACT has been supporting local families for more than 100 years providing adoption services as well as running inspirational community projects for vulnerable women and for families affected by domestic abuse.

However the search for adopters at PACT continues. Last September there were 2,060 children in England with a placement order for adoption still waiting to be placed with adopters, nearly half of whom are in sibling groups of

two or more children.

PACT chief executive Jan Fishwick said: "We're delighted to have made so many placements with our families over the last year. We must continue to recruit adopters for 'priority children' who have been waiting the longest. These children can be aged four or over, have additional needs or are in a sibling group.

"We're finding that sibling groups are often made up of three children, so if you think you're up to the challenge of three, we'd love to hear from you. Finding adopters for these groups means they can stay together which is so important.

"There is also great demand for adopters of Black British, Caribbean and African heritage."

PACT is rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted and offers support for life to all families through its award winning therapeutic support service, FACTS. PACT can also offer accelerated adoption assessments to the types of adopters who are needed most, in order to speed up the adoption process.

PACT run regular adoption information events to find out more about the process and hear from a PACT adoptive family. To find out more visit <http://pactcharity.org/> or call PACT's dedicated enquiries team on 0300 456 4800. Lines are open Monday - Friday, 10am - 3pm.

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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas
Rev'd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.
Tel: 947 8239.
www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrews

Rev'd Nigel Jones, St Andrews Vicarage,
Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788
www.standrewscaversham.org

St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Rev'd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Marion Pyke

Tel: 947 5834
Rev'd John Dudley Tel: 9470265

Riverside Church (Reading)
www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Secretary: Dr Alison Johnston
Tel: 0118 947 5152

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

Rev'd Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road.
Tel: 947 2223

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Transitional Minister Rev'd Jonathan Edwards
Church office tel 954 5353
Email Secretary: sue.cantwell@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

GRACE CHURCH

(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)
Crispin Fairbairn tel 9474529

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Fr Paul Martin, The Presbytery,
2 South View Avenue.
Tel: 947 1787.
Deacon: Hugh Anscombe

Fr Paul Rowan

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD
Rev'd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009 (contact)

The newspaper produced by the members of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Caversham and Mapledurham for the local community.

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The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board.

The Editors also would like to bring to readers' notice that the inclusion of advertisements in this paper does not mean an endorsement of the products or of the services offered.

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TALKING POINT

by Jenny Dowding

Agreeing to disagree

Why are there so many different churches? From time to time, this question crops up in conversation. Sometimes the implication is that Christianity is less authentic because there are so many denominations and strands of the faith.

Christian ministers in Caversham are talking together much more about what unites us than what separates us, and we're rediscovering that there are many ways in which churches can work together effectively, whilst continuing to differ about some aspects and emphases of our faith.

For example, there are now a number of projects serving the Caversham community in which Christians from different backgrounds work alongside each other. The majority of children in primary schools in Caversham have had the opportunity to explore what it is that Christians believe, through the work of RE Inspired Caversham. Groups of volunteers from local churches help deliver the RE curriculum as a free service to the schools. They are not there to convert children or persuade them to change their minds, but simply to enable children to understand what Christians believe and how those beliefs affect the way they try to live. A key feature is that volunteers explain how not all Christians have the same understanding or way of doing things, and pupils are helped to see how we still work together whilst agreeing to disagree.

Every summer, the Caversham churches work together to provide a week of holiday club fun for 150 children, and several churches have been collaborating for the past five years in the work of ARCC (Amersham Road Cooking Club) for children.

CCA (Christian Community Action) provides a weekly drop-in/support centre based at Caversham Baptist Church, and once again, there are volunteers from different church backgrounds making this happen.

At the centre of all our diversity and differences is Jesus Christ. The roots of my own denomination, Methodism, are in the pragmatic approach of John Wesley, who always put the work of the Kingdom of God before issues about church. As one Methodist put it, "We have never thought that Jesus came to found a church and then to leave the church to do his work. Much rather he came to declare the Kingdom of God. The order of thinking, we believe, goes: 'Kingdom, then the world, then the Church' rather than 'Kingdom, then the Church, then the world.'"

Unity is not the same as uniformity. In Caversham we are continuing to focus more deeply on what we can do together to serve God's kingdom in the world.

The Rev'd Jenny Dowding is a minister of Caversham Methodist churches

SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's, St Peter's Hill

8.00am Matins 1st and 3rd Sundays
Holy Communion 2nd and 4th Sundays
9.30am Holy Communion 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays
6.30pm Evensong

St John's, Gosbrook Road

9.30am Holy Communion 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays
9.30am All Age Worship 2nd Sunday
Fifth Sunday Services as advertised

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.15am Morning Worship 1st Sunday
Holy Communion 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays

St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

8.00am The Eucharist
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)
First Sunday, Family Eucharist
11.30am The Eucharist first and third Sundays only, first Sunday BCP
6.30pm Evening Prayer (as announced)

St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

8.00am Said Communion (BCP)
9.30am Parish Communion
9.30am COGS for all ages (1st Sunday of Month)

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (READING)

Meeting at Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham
10.00am Morning Worship & Teaching

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP Meeting at Caversham Park School

11.00am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)
Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH South Street

10.30am Morning Worship each Sunday
8.00pm House of Prayer (praise and prayer) – 2nd Sunday each month
3.45pm Messy Church – for all the family
Fourth Sunday of the month

GRACE CHURCH Old Peppard Road

10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church
6.30pm Prayer Meeting

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road

9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am
6.30pm (second and fourth Sundays)

Gosbrook Road

10.30am

Woodcote Parish Church

9.45am (second Sunday)

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne's, Southview Avenue

Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm
Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)

Church Street, Reading

10.30am
(House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Church Street, Caversham

9.30am / Sunday School
11.00am Divine Worship
6.00pm Evening Service

Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the July 2016 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by Monday 6th June. The date for the August 2016 issue is Monday 4th July. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Advertising copy for the July 2016 issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twiggmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by Friday 3rd June. The date for the August 2016 issue is Friday 1st July.

PARISH OFFICES

PARISH OF CAVERSHAM THAMESIDE AND MAPLEDURHAM

St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX
Tuesday and Friday 9.30am to 2pm
Tel: 947 1703 email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

ST BARNABAS

St Barnabas Centre
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Tel: 947 6310 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk



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Final Landscaping Works for Christchurch Meadows

Final landscaping remedial works on Christchurch Meadows, which remain following the construction of Reading's new pedestrian and cycle bridge, were scheduled to begin in May, weather permitting.

A visit to the site by the council's contractors found ground water levels remained high on Christchurch Meadows following recent rainfall. It means that outstanding landscaping work, previously scheduled to start in April, had been delayed.

As an active floodplain, water levels on the meadows have been high since the autumn, which has limited opportunities for the contractor to revisit the site to complete the necessary landscaping work. The council remains fully committed to ensuring the works are completed,

and the contractor is contractually obliged to complete the work at the earliest opportunity.

A sustained period of dry weather should have allowed the work to begin in May.

Alison Bell, Reading Borough Council's Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services, said,

"The council would like to reassure local residents that despite ongoing delay to the completion of these important landscaping works due to the high water levels, we remain fully committed to ensuring the outstanding works are completed as quickly as possible.

"Christchurch Bridge has been widely welcomed by local residents as not only a key new route for pedestrians and cyclists, but as a key

local landmark for Reading and the region. Associated landscaping work for Christchurch Meadows was a key element in the construction of the bridge. That remains the case and the work will be completed as soon as the weather allows."

The design and planning processes for Christchurch Bridge included specialist environmental studies. As part of that work, a flood risk assessment concluded it would be necessary to develop flood compensation areas as part of the project design. These areas have been sensitively provided on the meadows as part of the main construction contract. These are separate to the associated landscaping works which remain outstanding.

Reading's new Cycle Hub

Work to build Reading's largest cycle parking hub on the north side of Reading Station, with space for around 600 bicycles, is progressing well. It should be complete by the time you read this. The project began in February, alongside Vastern Road, and should have been finished in April, but completion was delayed due to unforeseen contamination on the site which has now been cleared. When complete the new facility will be lit and completely covered to protect bikes from the elements.

Many Caversham residents cycle to the station before switching modes to train for their onward journeys. The hub will allow an easy transition between cycle and train travel. It complements the new Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge at Christchurch Meadows, which provides a key new cycle route from Caversham into Reading Station and the Town Centre.

The new cycle hub is funded through the council's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF), which also funded the Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge.

Swan Heights site could become a temporary car park

The Swan Heights developer (Lochailort Investments) is applying to use the Reading town centre site as a car park for three years. The site of the former Cooper BMW car showroom in King's Meadow Road, near Reading Bridge, is now vacant, and the buildings on the site are being demolished.

The developer wanted to build three 98 meter high towers on the site, which would have been clearly visible from many locations in Caversham. But the plan was turned down in April last year.

Now Lochailort has applied to Reading Borough Council's planning committee for a 'part retrospective change of use' for a temporary public car park with 207 spaces for three years.

In Reading's development plan, the site is earmarked for mixed residential or office use.

Lochailort is working on a revised plan for the site.

Letter to the editor

Dear Editor,

I visited St Margaret's Church in Mapledurham today and was delighted to read a copy of Caversham Bridge. I retired to East Reading in 2013 after 40 years of ministry as an Anglican priest, so I was encouraged to see how well the Churches in Caversham clearly work together; and also how well you communicate with the local community.

Since moving to Reading my wife and I have joined the True Food Community Co-op with its shop in Emmer Green opposite St Barnabas Church in Grove Road. I became their chairman in 2014. It is an excellent example of members of the community seeking to serve their neighbours. They work together as volunteers to provide organic food and other ethically sourced products at affordable prices, so as to improve the health and life chances of people in Reading.

I don't know whether you have ever featured the co-op in the pages of your paper, but if you think your readers would be interested I would be very happy to help you prepare something for publication.

With very best wishes,
Francis Jakeman



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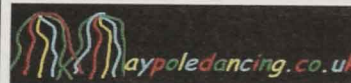
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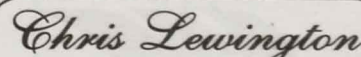
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Crossrail comes to Reading – the CADRA AGM

Over 140 people were present at the Thameside School hall in April to hear a run through of local issues followed by a presentation from Crossrail's community relations manager, John Goldsmith.

Planning issues have dominated the CADRA agenda in Caversham and news is expected on how the owners of St Martins Precinct hope to progress the full scheme, with some alterations and new tenants, following the withdrawal of the Waitrose extension. This should, in turn, allow some progress on a transport scheme. Work is moving forward for conservation areas, including St Peter's Conservation Area around Church Road. Look out for more details in the next issue. In 2017, CADRA will celebrate 50 years and would welcome views on how the organisation should move forward and how best to mark the anniversary. Please contact info@cadra.org.uk.

Crossrail comes to Reading in December 2019 but new services from Paddington will start in 2018. The project brings a 10% increase to London's rail capacity, with new 200 metre long trains carrying up to 1500 passengers. New routes will improve connectivity and the new rolling stock and infrastructure will improve reliability and bring savings in energy and CO2 emissions.

The scale of the engineering project is impressive and there were some extraordinary pictures of the work to create 42 km of new tunnels. A new training facility was established to address the national shortage of tunnelling and underground construction skills. Up to 3500 workers will be trained at the new academy and more than 400 apprenticeships will be created through the Crossrail supply chain.

A vast amount of excavated material has been transferred by rail, barge and road to provide material for the Wallasea Island Wild Coast project. This is a landmark conservation and engineering scheme and the largest of its type in Europe.



New Crossrail rolling stock - copyright Crossrail



Canary wharf station north dock - copyright Crossrail

You may already have seen some of the changes at Paddington Station. The taxi rank has been relocated, Eastbourne Terrace has been closed for major construction works and a new road concourse. A new waterside northern entrance is starting to take shape. Many other stations require major work but Reading Station already meets the new requirements. The new ticket hall at Liverpool Street is to be built on the site of Bedlam psychiatric hospital and the archaeology has uncovered more than 85 burials so far, providing insight into lives of Bedlam inhabitants, as well as information about diet, disease and mortality.

On the western track section, six bridges have been replaced and one bridge demolished. Tracks have been lowered beneath four bridges. Work now underway includes the Acton dive-under, Stockley flyover track improvements, signalling improvements, electrification from Stockley to Maidenhead and station improvements.

continued on page 5



New waterside northern entrance to Paddington Station - copyright Crossrail

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Thursday* is Fisherman day!

*every Thursday 2pm - 6pm

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CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

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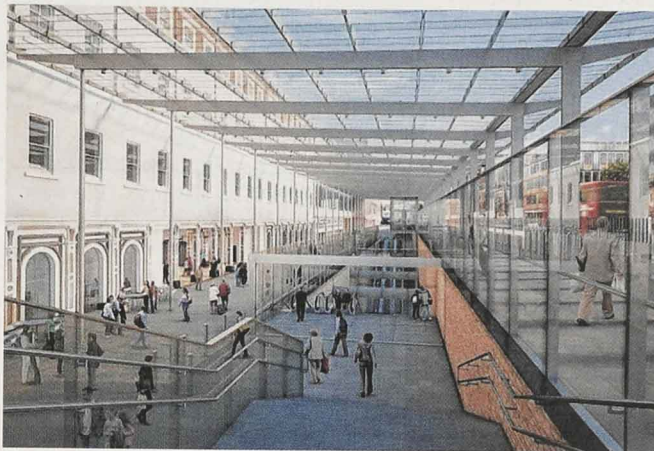
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Crossrail comes to Reading

Continued from page 4

When the service starts at Reading, at peak times there will be two trains per hour between Reading and central London. The operation will be franchised by TfL London Rail Ticketing system and fully integrated with Oyster. From Reading, you will reach Paddington in 50 minutes, Tottenham Court Road in 55 minutes, Liverpool Street in 61 minutes, Canary Wharf in 67 minutes, Stratford in 69 minutes and Shenfield in 102 minutes. You will be able to reach Heathrow Airport via Hayes and Harlington, Gatwick Airport and Luton Airport via step-free access at Farringdon, and Stansted and Southend airports via Liverpool Street.

John also set out the programme of electrification by Network Rail



Crossrail Paddington Departures, Road Concourse - copyright Crossrail

which you can find at <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/great-western-route-modernisation/>. So far, the foundations between Didcot and Reading are complete and wires going up. New electric multiple units for Thames Valley and Oxford start this year and over 50% of masts for Crossrail West (Paddington-Maidenhead) are complete. In response to questions, he explained that a possible semi-fast Crossrail service from Reading and a direct Great Western link from Reading to Heathrow are still under discussion.

While the express trains to Paddington will continue to be the fastest journey, Crossrail will provide direct links with central London, Canary Wharf and east London, a more comfortable and reliable service to and from London, and more options for those living or working in

Reading, allowing businesses to draw staff from a larger catchment area.

The evening ended with a retiring collection in aid of the Helen and Douglas House hospice which was just short of £180.



Crossrail Tunnel Boring Machine - copyright Crossrail

Supporting older people to live the lives they want

A service which aims to help older people with their health and social care needs is beginning to make a real impact in Reading.

The **Living Well** service is aimed at residents over the age of 60, who have long term health conditions, enabling them to live a happier and healthier life.

A couple from Pangbourne have benefited from the service. Peter has Parkinson's disease and 79-year-old Gillian, his wife and main carer, has health problems of her own. Their personal independence co-ordinator, Sarah Finch, one of two co-ordinators employed by the service, was able to find a new care provider for Peter as the couple weren't happy with the care they were receiving. Gillian says: "Often carers would arrive late or wouldn't stay their allotted time! I was in a bad way myself and didn't feel able to handle them, but thankfully, Sarah helped us to get back on track again."

90-year-old widow Doreen, from Theale, is another person who has benefitted from the service, after being referred by her GP in August 2015. Doreen, who is visually impaired, says: "If I have a problem about any aspect of my care I can rely on my co-ordinator to help me."

As well as helping her claim attendance allowance, her co-ordinator has also helped with day-to-day tasks that are challenging for Doreen because of her sight problems, including changing batteries in her remote control, adjusting the screen size on her television and turning the alarm off on her talking watch.

Sarah ends by saying: "The Living Well service is about holistic care and improving the quality of life for our older residents - this can take a number of forms including providing support with financial matters, putting them in touch with different social clubs and encouraging them to get more exercise."

If you or someone you know would benefit from the Living Well service and is registered with one of the following Reading practices you should discuss this with your GP or ask the receptionist for information on being referred. The practices taking part are: Tilehurst Surgery Partnership, Boathouse Surgery, Balmore Park, Mortimer, Emmer Green, Western Elms, Circuit Lane, Peppard Road, Priory Avenue and Theale Medical Centre.

Following referral, a personal independence coordinator will visit the patient in their own home and help to identify activities and services that could benefit them.

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CHURCHES

Caversham Church Fete

The traditional church fete will be held on Saturday 9th July. Gates open at 1pm. The fete is organised by the parish of Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham.

You are invited to come and enjoy all the fun of a traditional English fete in the beautiful surroundings of Caversham Court Gardens, alongside the River Thames.

There will be entertainment with music and dancing, also Fred in the Shed and children's races. Attractions will include stalls selling cakes, plants, toys, bric-a-brac, crafts, jams and preserves; sideshows like Hook a Duck and many more; a bouncy castle; refreshments; at least three tombolas; and the Grand Draw with many exciting prizes.

There will be a spectacular flypast of a Lancaster bomber, the largest aircraft from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

Lots more to discover when you arrive, including, of course, teas and the Pimms tent.

CTC Summer Holiday Club

The Summer Holiday Club this year will be at Thameside School August 1st to 5th.

Information on how children may apply to attend will be available soon. See the CTC website for details.

Caversham Baptists celebrate 150 years

The community of Caversham came out on a sunny May Day bank holiday to help Caversham Baptist Church celebrate their 150th anniversary. The centrepiece of the event was a replica of the church building in cake created by church member Shane Lowings, who runs a local bakery business, the Baker Station.

Over 200 friends and neighbours of the church enjoyed, bouncy castles, face painting, ball games and Steve Riley's famous Royal Berkshire Grill.

Jonathan Edwards, transitional minister at the church, said, "We are delighted that the Caversham community turned out in force to celebrate with us."

Caversham Baptist Church emerged out of a group of Christians that first met on the afternoon of Sunday 19th April 1866 in the building on Gosbrook Road that is now the Waterhouse flats. The church was formally constituted in January 1871 and moved into the current building on the corner of Prospect Street in 1876 after it outgrew the original premises.

Jonathan continued "We thank God for the fantastic work of our predecessors, to establish the Baptist Church in Caversham and we look forward to serving our community for many years to come."

Spring Concert at St John's

We were treated to a very special evening of music at St John's spring concert on 23rd April. It featured the 'Burnished Brass' quintet and the mezzo-soprano Caroline Carragher, with accompaniment from Len David on piano and pipe organ.

The programme included many popular tunes from the shows including *Time heals everything* (Mack and Mabel), *Get me to the church on time* (My Fair Lady), *Love changes everything* (Aspects of Love), *All that jazz* (Chicago), as well as the folk songs *Early one morning* and *Widcombe Fair*, and music from the 1920s. We were also treated to one of Stanley's trumpet voluntaries.

The concert ended with the audience joining the performers in the hymn *Praise my soul, the King of Heaven*, with a descant especially written for Caroline. The event raised £175 for church funds.

Grow Hope

On June 19th at 4pm Matt Mbanga will be visiting St Andrew's Church from Harare, to talk about Grow Hope, a new project that he is setting up in his native Zimbabwe, and which St Andrew's are hoping to support. All are welcome to come along.

Situated in Zimbabwe's rugged Eastern Highlands, with a view of the country's highest peak, Mt. Inyangani, Grow Hope is located near the Eastern border with Mozambique, 250km from Harare. It is a Christian initiative, the aim of which is to use the *Christian Foundations for Farming* (FfF) programme, which has been used successfully in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa, and the world, to encourage young people to take responsibility in their own lives, and as farmers. Grow Hope is supported by Highlands Presbyterian Church (HPC).

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CHURCHES

New Bishop of Oxford

The Queen has approved the nomination of the Right Reverend Steven John Lindsey Croft, MA, PhD, Lord Bishop of Sheffield, in the Diocese of Sheffield for election as Bishop of Oxford in succession to the Right Reverend John Pritchard, MA, MLitt, who retired in 2014.

The Bishop of Oxford leads the Church of England in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, supported by the Area Bishops of Dorchester, Buckingham and Reading. The Diocese is one of the largest and most complex in the Church of England, stretching from Milton Keynes in the north to Newbury in the south; from the Cotswolds in the west to Slough in the east.

The Diocese has a population of 2.3 million people, more than 800 churches and almost 600

parochial clergy. It also includes 12 secondary and 270 primary church schools. As the senior bishop in the Diocese, Bishop Steven will lead a large team and is expected to have a wide ranging role across the Thames Valley alongside his national responsibilities.

The Bishop of Dorchester, the Right Reverend Colin Fletcher, has been acting as Bishop of Oxford since October 2014. The Diocese faced 'an extended vacancy' after votes in May 2015 failed to produce a candidate.

The Right Reverend Dr Steven Croft, aged 58, is from Halifax in West Yorkshire. He studied at Worcester College, Oxford and then at St John's College, Durham where he trained for ordination at Cranmer Hall. He served his title as Curate at St Andrew Enfield in London Diocese from 1983 to 1987. In 1987 he returned to Halifax to be Vicar of St George, Ovenden in the Diocese of Wakefield. From 1996 he moved to become Warden at Cranmer Hall, Durham, before taking up the role of Archbishops' Missioner and Team Leader of Fresh Expressions in 2004. Since 2009 he has been the Bishop of Sheffield.

Bishop Steven became a member of the House of Lords in 2013. He is one of two bishops elected to serve on the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England, and has been chairman of the Ministry Council since 2012. In 2008 he was awarded the Cross of St Augustine by the Archbishop of Canterbury in recognition of his work with Fresh Expressions. He is the author of a number of books on Christian life and ministry and a novel for children. He writes a regular blog.

Bishop Steven is married to Ann. They have four adult children and one grandchild. He is a keen cook and bakes his own bread.

decorate your own crown and wear it in the fancy dress parade - open to all in red white and blue, or wearing a crown! We look forward to seeing you there.

Solar energy at St Andrew's

St Andrews Church, Caversham, has recently completed a PV solar installation on its community hall. The 1960s hall, built to celebrate the 50th anniversary of St Andrews, has a large south facing roof, and was ideal for a large array that generates up to 10kW on sunny days. The electricity generated is used by hall users, and to heat the hot water for the building. Any excess is exported to the national grid.

As the hall is used during most days by the Pre-school, as well as many community groups, this should help bring down our electricity bill, as well as being good for the environment, and an advertisement for others to consider doing the same.

The funding was met through a generous legacy from a former parishioner, and Reading Borough Council had been instrumental in helping make this a reality, with Sumreen Sheikh (sustainability partnerships officer) providing advice on the process and helping search out the best solar firm to fit the panels during January.

As the panels become as ubiquitous as television aerials and chimney pots, they may gain more acceptance as a standard feature on buildings old and new.

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Queen's 90th Birthday Fun
Day at St Andrew's

St Andrew's church will be celebrating the Queen's 90th Birthday in style on Saturday 11th June between 2 and 4pm with a royal-themed fun afternoon. There will be delicious refreshments - cream teas and cakes - in the Church Hall, with entertainments and quizzes, and we will be showing royal films throughout the afternoon. For those with a lot of energy, there will be games and activities, including a bouncy castle. You can

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS



Pamela Chilvers gives rare Caversham performance

Caversham pianist, composer and music teacher Pamela Chilvers will be performing at Caversham Baptist Church on Saturday 2nd July at 7.30pm.

'An Evening With Pamela Chilvers and Friends' will be a rare opportunity to hear Pamela perform live in Caversham, with guest performances from a few of her special friends. As well as playing, Pamela will be explaining the background to some of the pieces with stories from her life and musical career.

Pamela recently released a CD of compositions from throughout her life called 'Changing Place' through Mozart Music. These will be available to purchase at the concert.

Tickets are £12 (£10 concessions) on the door, but are available at a £2 advanced purchase discount up to 30th June from <https://pamelachilvers.eventbrite.co.uk>. Soft drinks and cakes from local business Baker Station will be available on the night.

Concerts in Caversham

The Summer Concert on Saturday 18th June 2016 at 7.30pm at St Andrew's Church, Caversham RG4 7PL will feature the Bernadel String Quartet with Katie Ayling (clarinet) and Marie Bitloch (cello).

The concert will include two masterpieces from the classical period: Mozart's sublime *Clarinet Quintet in A major* and Schubert's extraordinary and wonderful *String Quintet in C major* featuring two cellos. The Bernadels will be joined by clarinetist Katie Ayling from the Royal Philharmonic and by cellist Marie Bitloch from the Elias String Quartet.

First prize winners of the 2013 Royal Greenwich Intercollegiate String Quartet Competition, the Bernadel Quartet were formed in 2009 at the Royal Academy of Music and have since performed at many of the UK's finest concert venues.

A concert not to be missed - this should be a truly uplifting evening. Come along and enjoy the spirited playing of these up-and-coming young musicians.

There will be an interval in which you can enjoy strawberries and Prosecco in the hall, all included with the ticket.

Ticket prices are £16/£18 (concession/adult) in advance, £18/£20 on the door. Tickets may be purchased from Waltons the jewellers in Prospect Street Caversham (cash only).

For more information visit www.concertsincaversham.co.uk

An Evening of Summer Music

Hurst Singers were formed in 1976 and are celebrating their Ruby Anniversary this year. They will be including songs composed during the last 40 years when they present 'An Evening of Summer Music' at St John's Church, Gosbrook Road, Caversham, RG4 8EB on Saturday 25th June at 7.30 p.m.

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"Jonah," said God again, "I want you to go to Nineveh. Give the people a message from me. Tell them that I am angry with them because of all the bad things they have done. Tell them that, as a punishment, I am going to destroy their city."

This time, Jonah did what God asked. He went to Nineveh. The people there were very upset when they heard God's message. "If we show we are really sorry," they said, "perhaps God will change his mind."

Everyone, including the king, began to pray. They took off their smart clothes and wore some made of rough, itchy material. They stopped eating, and only drank water. "Now God can see we are sorry," they said, "perhaps he will change his mind."

And because God loves and cares for people, he did!

Jonah 3-4



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ENVIRONMENT

FLAG IRISES

What did you call them when you were a child? Yellow flags? Yellow irises? Or maybe you used one of the old 'country' names, like cucumbers, water-seggs, or queen of the meadow? In this part of the country they were apparently called butter-and-eggs, on account of the yellow flowers, though I've never heard that name used.

The Oxford English Dictionary says that the origin of the word 'flag' is obscure. It is recorded as meaning a plant with sword-like leaves growing by water as early as the fourteenth century – before the same word was used to denote a piece of cloth used to denote ownership, or as a means of signalling. Maybe people had looked at the 'falls' of an iris flower, flapping slightly in the breeze, and been reminded of flags on flag-poles.

Growing with the flag iris along the River Thames near here, you can sometimes find the sweet flag. Its botanical name is *acorus calamus*, while the botanical name of the flag iris is *iris pseudacorus* – the false sweet flag. The leaves of both plants are similar, and the easiest way of distinguishing them, when they're not in flower, is to crush a bit of leaf. The flag iris is scentless, but the sweet flag gives off a pleasant smell, somewhere between vanilla and oranges. In days gone by, it was strewn on the floors of churches and the houses of the wealthy.

The word 'iris' takes us back to Greek mythology, where Iris was the messenger of the gods, and wore a brightly-coloured scarf. Wherever she went, she left a rainbow in the sky. Flag irises are always yellow, but in eastern Europe, irises can be multi-coloured. A favourite of mine is *iris reichenbachiana* – which always makes me think of Sherlock Holmes, fighting it out with Moriarty above the Reichenbach Falls. I've found it across the Balkan peninsula, in Bulgaria and Greece, and the flowers can be yellow, purple, or anything in between, even in the same flower. The effect, in some cases, might be described as blackberries-and-custard.

Flag irises have big flowers, they're very common, and it's interesting to take one apart to see how it 'works'. Unusually, all the flower-parts are in threes. Most conspicuous are the 'falls', the lower petals with the pretty dark-coloured veining. Above them are the 'standards', and between them is the passageway with the stamen in it. The plant is obviously trying to attract larger insects, like bees, which have the strength to force their way along that passageway to the pollen – though often you find that tiny beetles have managed to get in as well. The stigmas are the three little upright frilly bits looking like petals that you find between the 'standards' and the 'falls'.

Intriguingly, this is one of those flowers that is marked to attract bees in a way that humans can't see. The 'fall' is intended as a kind of landing-stage, with markings to show bees the way to the pollen.

Flag irises should be flowering now near you. In some ways, they are a bit like dandelions. Both have yellow flowers, and both are gorgeous to look at. If they weren't so common, you'd go out of your way to look at them – but fortunately, you don't have to. Please enjoy them, but don't fall in the water!

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April Bee-day at St Anne's School

Pupils from Years 1 and 2 at St Anne's school spent a week during April studying the topic 'mini bugs'. They learnt about all sorts of very small creatures such as beetles and flies.

One day the subject matter was bees. The children learned a lot of information about bees and their habits and how they lived. Parents were asked beforehand if they could dress their children to look like bees for the day. There was a wonderful response and the children arrived at school in all sorts of bee-like outfits.

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CLUBS

Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club

Our June meeting will be held on the 8th with our demonstrator for the evening, Lucy Ellis. The theme is 'To The Manor Born'. We will also be holding a floral design competition entitled 'Happy 90th Birthday, Your Majesty', so feel free to come along, visitors are very welcome.

We meet on the second Wednesday of the month at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. Doors open at 7pm and the demonstration begins at 7.30pm with an interval for refreshments.

Caversham Croquet Club

Caversham croquet club celebrated its 21st birthday on Monday 30 May and National Croquet Day on Sunday 5 June.

You are invited to come to Albert Rd Recreation Ground and try Association Croquet, though a simpler game called Golf Croquet is also played at the club.

It takes three hours for a full game, the balls go through each hoop twice, but you don't have to play for three hours.

The game has a reputation for being vicious, but it isn't. It is competitive, both physically and mentally, and there can be alternating elation and frustration before 'pegging out', but it is always fascinating.

Caversham Horticultural Society

For our June talk we will hear about the behind-the-scenes BBC filming activities in a talk entitled 'The Crazy World of the Big Allotment Challenge' by a local contestant and society member, Alan Thorpe. The talk will be on Wednesday June 22nd at 7.45pm at our usual venue, Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road. £3.00 admission for non members. Either pay on the door or in advance using eventbrite.

Caversham WI

A welcome splash of colour greeted members at the April meeting when the speaker, Jackie Biddle from Playhatch Nurseries, brought along examples of summer colour. She gave a comprehensive talk on what to plant, how to take care of them and even new varieties of vegetables suitable for the smaller garden.

Jackie then judged the competition, a small spring flower arrangement. The winner was Margaret Cameron with Monica McMaster and Doreen Newbury as runners-up.

A report was given of the recent Spring Council meeting and also bookings were taken for the boat trip in June.

The subject of the June meeting is 'walking the length of Britain'.

Chazey WI

The April meeting of Chazey WI was a special evening when we celebrated our 34th birthday.

Hayley Scott gave an interesting talk on her former career as a Crime Scene examiner. Hayley also brought along her Forever Living Skin Care products which proved very popular. A candle was lit on the cake and then our President, Hilary Morrison, cut the first piece and 'Happy Birthday' rang out from the members.

The Berkshire Federation AGM was being held the following Wednesday at the Hexagon, two members were attending.

The summer outing in August is a coach trip to the Isle of Wight. A signing up sheet was circulated, friends and relatives are welcome.

Our competition of a 'Small Vase of Spring Flowers' was won by Valerie Wing. Catherine Crabb won the raffle.

New members are welcomed to our meetings which are held on the first Tuesday in the month at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall at 7.30/7.45pm.

Rotary Club of Reading

President Bill Montague and his members gave a warm welcome to members of the Inner Wheel club when they joined them for lunch in April. Following lunch, a speaker from Smart Works, Sarah Burns, gave a power point presentation about their work.

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Following Sarah's talk, president Bill presented Caversham resident Janet Offord, president of the Inner Wheel Club of Reading, with a cheque towards her chosen charity, The National Eczema Society.

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Probus

The speaker at the April meeting of the Reading and District Probus Club was Rod D'Ayala, whose subject was 'Wildlife in the Chilterns'. Rod is a self-employed ecological consultant, and specialises in undertaking species and habitat surveys. He has a wide-ranging knowledge of the wildlife and plant life that exists in the Chilterns.

The Chilterns is a low range of hills stretching from Goring in the south west to Hertfordshire in the north east. There is a lot of beechwood and other coppiced wood including ash and hazel. It is mostly laid on chalk, being part of the central band of chalkland crossing the UK. There are many attractive landscapes in the Chilterns, which form an escarpment facing north west, and much of the area is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The M40 motorway splits the Chilterns in two.

Wildlife habitats consist of woodland, scrub and grassland, and there are many ponds and rivers. Dead wood is a very important habitat, particularly for insects, and the scrub at the edge of woodland contains a wide diversity of wildlife.

Rod showed many pictures of the plants that exist, including, in the woodland areas, blackthorn, wych elm, dog mercury, bluebells, wood anemone, bush vetch, woodland orchids and many more. Animals include muntjack, polecat, woodmouse, dormouse. There are many varieties of insect, including beetles which live on dead wood, and reptiles including adders, slowworms and grass snakes. Different types of wildlife inhabit the different habitat types. The Chilterns contain 40 of the 60 varieties of butterfly that live in the UK.

Some types of wildlife are diminishing because people keep their gardens tidy, instead of allowing naturally scruffy areas to develop, as these are the environments in which insects and other animals will flourish, and these are important elements of the food chain.

This was a fascinating talk, enlivened by Rod's knowledge and enthusiasm for his subject, and illustrated by his many superb photographs.

Probus is a club for retired men, who enjoy a meal once a month in the congenial company of like-minded men. Lunch is followed by a talk, which may be on a variety of interesting subjects. The club meets at the Caversham Heath Golf Club. For further information visit the club's website www.probusclub-reading.org.uk. If you are interested in joining, please contact the secretary David Laird on 0118 9470709.

Rosehill WI

President Margaret Pyle welcomed all those present to the April meeting, and thanked Sue Hurneyman for the table flowers. She also extended special thanks to Doris Goddard who has now retired from her position as treasurer, and presented her with a plant. Doris also used to sort out the emergency packs for the RBH A&E, and Margaret is asking for a volunteer to take over this job.

Margaret said that she had the necessary order form if anyone wished to order bulbs from Walkers Bulbs. A board was being sent round for anyone who had not yet ordered a diary.

Margaret introduced the speaker, Moira Hemson from the Reading branch of Alzheimer's Society. This was a very interesting talk explaining the different types of dementia and how they manifest themselves in sufferers. She also said that within the society are groups, including 'Singing for the Brain', 'Befriending', 'Empowerment Group', and 'Memory Café'. She also showed us an example of a Twiddlemuff, which can help to calm dementia patients.

This was followed by tea and biscuits, before the raffle was called.

Rosehill WI meets on the first Wednesday of the month at St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green at 2.00 pm and any visitors are very welcome.

The Caversham Heights Society

The last of our series of lectures for the season was held on 6th April when Carl Feltham from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) gave a very interesting and informative talk on the Birds of Berkshire. His talk was made all the more interesting because of the enthusiasm and knowledge of the speaker and because his photographs,

as well as enthralling sound effects of different birds singing, brought everything to life. Carl provided an interesting discussion about different birds, reasons for their decline and/or increase, their habitats and the knowledge gleaned from catching and ringing different bird species so that a greater understanding of their flight paths and movements could be gleaned. Changing climates and strong winds are bringing new and different birds to our shores. However certain birds are in decline because of man-made actions, which include replacing wooden fascias and soffits to our houses, paving and concreting over gravel drives, and digging up or denuding our hedgerows, all things that could be reversed if we were concerned about preserving our wildlife. Carl also talked about camouflage that birds use to avoid predators and went through a 24-hour day in the life and behaviour of different bird species. The audience was encouraged to leave parts of their gardens natural with piles of logs in places for use by certain insects and slugs and snails, as well as hedgehogs; to put up nesting boxes; and to clean and disinfect bird trays, tables, bird feeders and the like to avoid the spread of infection which is killing off several of our small birds.

The audience was enthralled and felt that this was a fitting end to the season.

The following day saw a coach load of Society members travel to Beech Court Gardens in Challock, near Ashford in Kent. Unfortunately the weather could have been kinder and the spring flowers and blossoms were not in full bloom, but the trip was made by some excellent ploughman's lunches and by a fascinating visit to the medieval church at Challock. The church is now isolated, because in the 17th century the Turnpike Acts meant that the main road was diverted, leaving the villagers no option but to gradually move to a more accessible spot in what is now the village. Even so the church is well used and the unusual Millennium Murals, recognised and praised by Prince Charles, are well worth the visit.

The next season begins in mid-September. Potential new members should make enquiries via Jill Hodges at irishjill@souhcote.net or by 'phone on 0118 959 5307. We look forward to welcoming you.

The Royal British Legion

The Royal British Legion in Caversham has had both a sad and busy time over the last few months.

Six members who lived or had lived in Caversham have died - Sir Tony Durant, Gordon Phillips, Bob Holroyd, Jean Lewis, Dave Wells and Marion Lay. A lot of people in Caversham will remember Marion as the lady who helped at the Royal Berks WRVS cafe and collected outside (and more recently inside) Waitrose in Caversham for the Poppy Appeal. She was a very active lady who would have been 99 years old in December of this year.

Members have enjoyed their monthly Social and Supper and various other events. A full coach of 50+ went to Cardiff in April and the Branch was fortunate to find a dry day during a very wet week. On HM the Queen's 90th Birthday members enjoyed a celebratory supper at the Caversham Heath Golf Club. On the 25th May 60+ members visited Arundel Cathedral, the day before the Corpus Christi celebrations, to view the flowers in the Cathedral, and then went on to Littlehampton.

This year marks the centenary of a very sad event in World War 1 - The Battle of the Somme.

On July 1st the Legion will lay wreaths at the Henley Road Cemetery and the War Memorial in Christchurch Meadows. Following this, members, including the Branch Standard Bearer, together with a Bugler, will be joining the Friends of Caversham Court in the gardens. A short ceremony will take place in the vinery where a special commemorative border, designed by the Court's Head Gardener, Will Paice, has been planted. The President of Caversham RBL will recite 'The Ode to The Fallen', Jason Todd from the Salvation Army will sound the last post, the standard will be lowered and two minutes silence will be observed. A wreath will also be laid.

The battle was one of the largest and bloodiest of the First World War, with over 57,000 British casualties on the first day alone. By the end of the campaign in November 1916, more than 1,500,000 men had died on the allied and enemy sides.

Members of the public are most welcome to attend. Students from Hemdean House school and parents will also be present. An exhibition about Caversham in World War One will be on display, and the Ways and Means Trust will be serving refreshments in the tea kiosk throughout the day.

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