

Lift high the cross at St Margaret's

Members of the congregation of St Margaret's Church, Mapledurham, are most grateful for a recent grant of £13,000 from the Government's Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund. Approval came just in time as there was an urgent need to replace worn tiles on the roof of the tower and the nave of this Grade One listed building and the church could not afford to fund the full cost itself. A close inspection by the church's architect, Robin Nugent, indicated that the lead flashing protecting a large Celtic cross directly above the chancel step needed urgent attention and the cross itself, weighing well over a hundred kilos, was soon likely to come crashing down through the ceiling below as the oak support beneath it had rotted away.

It is most probable that the cross was placed there during the extensive alterations and additions to the church in 1863, when the well known Tractarian architect, William Butterfield, was instructed by the then vicar, the Revd Richard Coleridge. Unfortunately, Mr Coleridge and Mr Butterfield went well beyond the faculty granted by the diocese at the time and much of the work went undocumented. Butterfield was one of the great exponents of the Gothic revival and a most prolific architect. Among his many admired works are Keble College in Oxford, All Saints' Church, Margaret Street in London and the Cathedral of the Isles, Great Cumbrae in Scotland.

The Revd Richard Coleridge was a nephew of the poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and had been an exact contemporary of Edward Pusey, a founder of the Tractarian Movement, at Eton College. He was a co-founder of St Augustine's Missionary College in Canterbury and, before coming to Mapledurham, had been a very popular master at Eton and was married to a daughter of Dr John Keate, the College's longest serving headmaster. Mr Coleridge bore the total cost of the 1863 restoration of St Margaret's from his own resources.

The most recent work was carried out by Stone Technical Services Group Ltd of Darlington who had recently carried out remedial work on St Paul's Cathedral and on Westminster Abbey's chapter house. The cross was taken to their Durham workshop and returned, looking just as good as it did when first placed on the roof.

Peter Stratton, a churchwarden at St Margaret's, who supervised the contract on behalf of the parish, was very pleased to see the work completed. He said, "The cross is a clear sign of our Christian fellowship here and will be appreciated by all who visit this peaceful location at Mapledurham in this beautiful part of South Oxfordshire".

St Margaret's is a pilgrim church and is open every day throughout the year for Sunday worship and for private prayer and meditation. There has been a place of Christian worship on the site for well over 900 years. One of its previous vicars was the Revd John Bird Sumner, who later became Bishop of Chester and, subsequently, Archbishop of Canterbury. He was succeeded at St Margaret's by the Revd Lord Augustus FitzClarence, a natural son of King William IV and the only known son of a British monarch to have been ordained in the Church of England. More recently, St Margaret's achieved universal fame by featuring extensively in the film *The Eagle has Landed*, which featured Sir Michael Caine, Jenny Agutter and Donald Sutherland.



St Margaret's Church.



The cross is safely back in position on the roof of the nave.

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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas
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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
Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331810
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www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

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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@cavershambaptist
church.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 John Ogden

A few years ago I joined a number of my old school friends at a dinner to mark fifty years since we moved out into the big wide world. Strangely, it was not so much the faces that I remembered, but the voices.

This year we have been remembering the Battle of the Somme, a key battle in the First World War, evoking both awe and reverence and, for many, incalculable sadness. The voices of the fallen are silent. Through photographs we can see their faces, but very few can now be remembered as voices. It is surely important that we listen for those voices, to understand what they believed they were fighting for.

This is not just about memories of people, as if it were a family album. It is not to be dismissed simply as 'living in the past', eking out precious memories of years gone by, lest too soon they fade altogether. We remember, we listen for those voices, in order to live our own lives better in the present moment. As we salute them for their sacrifice in the service of the values, the human and social treasures, that have shaped our nation, we are prompted to ask ourselves a very serious question. To what extent do we, in our present national life, continue to sustain those values, those treasures? It is surely idle to profess solemn remembrance for those who made sacrifices if in our daily living we fail to honour and cherish that for which they were willing to give life and limb.

But wait a minute! Those Veterans of the First World War certainly gave their lives for a cause, but we must surely ask ourselves: what exactly was the shape of the world and of their own society that they were willing to give their lives for? Watching television series like *Downton Abbey* is no doubt wonderfully entertaining and enlightening but does it represent a world which we must preserve for all time? Can we imagine our contemporary soldiers sharing precisely that vision of what is worth dying for?

So, how do we hear those distant voices, speaking to us across four or perhaps five generations? The intervening century has brought change and we are warned that these processes of change are continuing apace. Across the world people have been rallying around ideas and projects which we may find admirable, or horrifying. Part of our responsibility to the past is, I believe, to ask questions about how our values, our social treasures, can be sustained through change, possibly dramatic change. A prime example can be found in the pattern of good neighbourliness which we have shown to people fleeing persecution. Do we regard that as a worthy social treasure? If so, how do we sustain it in our own day?

We remember the past in order to shape our approach to a changing global order. The nature of power and conflict are both changing. What pattern of warfare might emerge? What pattern of peace might emerge? Would it be something that we could recognise as 'peace'? What might be our nation's role in future conflagrations? If we need to ask more generations of young people to stand ready to make sacrifices, how are we to ensure that those demands are made in good faith, and for good reasons? It comes back, doesn't it, to those values, those social treasures.

*Rev'd Dr John Ogden is a retired Methodist Presbyterian
He has been active in Caversham since 2001*



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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 December 2016 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by **Monday 31st October**. The date for the January 2017 issue is **Monday 28th November**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk
Advertising copy for the December 2016 issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twiggmore, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by **Friday 28th October**. The date for the January 2017 issue is **Friday 25th November**.

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Reading RESCUE targets Caversham

A popular area along the River Thames and an alleyway in Caversham received a deep clean during this year's autumn RESCUE event in October.

Employees from Thames Water and IHS Markit, of Henley-on-Thames, joined the council's Streetcare team in the clean-up events on 6th and 7th October.

Thames Water volunteers were litter picking along the River Thames near their headquarters at Clearwater Court, Reading Bridge, on Thursday 6th October.

The following day, IHS Markit staff and the council's Streetcare team were working on the long alleyway which runs from Henley Road to Chiltern Road in Caversham. Volunteers on the day were more than welcome.

Reading RESCUE events are held in association with Thames Water in the spring and autumn every year and communities across the borough are encouraged to get involved.

Councillor Liz Terry, Reading's lead member for neighbourhoods, said:

"Reading RESCUE brings together volunteers and neighbours all with a common purpose - improving their local area.

"Residents working together on cleaning their streets, footpaths, grass verges and alleyways can help transform the look of their neighbourhoods."

Neeti Bindra, community investment co-ordinator at Thames Water, said:

"As a major employer in Reading it's important for us to make sure our surroundings are well cared for. Reading RESCUE is a great community event which allows us to participate and engage with local people and it really does make a difference to the town."

CADRA open meeting on Primary Health Care

The Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA) open meeting this autumn will be at 7.45pm on Tuesday 22nd November in Thameside School Hall, Harley Road, Caversham. Dr Andy Ciecierski, Chairman of the North and West Reading Clinical Commissioning Group, will talk about the challenges facing Primary Health Care. More information can be found at the commissioning group's website, <http://www.nwreadingccg.nhs.uk/>

Healthwatch Reading - the independent consumer champion for health and social care - will give a summary of its latest projects looking into people's experiences of GP and A&E services, and also explain how it helps individuals resolve their NHS complaints. More information on Healthwatch Reading can be found at the website <http://healthwatchreading.org.uk/>

Everyone is welcome to attend. It is also a good opportunity to learn more about CADRA's work locally and to take out or renew membership. Healthy associations always need a strong membership and local involvement. Do come and see us, or visit www.cadra.org.uk for more information.

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Bible Friends

Hezekiah and Isaiah



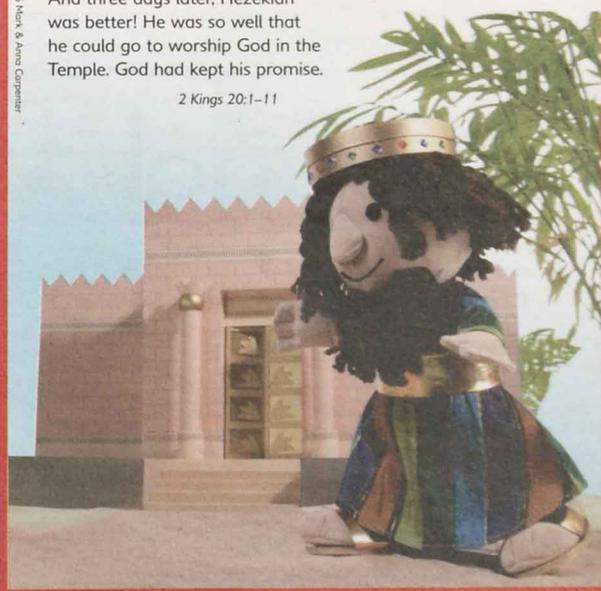
King Hezekiah was very ill. He talked to God. "I have always tried to do what you wanted," King Hezekiah said, crying because he was so sad and he felt so poorly.

God sent his messenger Isaiah to talk to the king. "God has heard you," Isaiah explained. "He will make you well again. In

three days' time you will be well enough to walk around. You will even be able to go to worship God in the Temple." Then Isaiah told the servants what to do to make Hezekiah better.

And three days later, Hezekiah was better! He was so well that he could go to worship God in the Temple. God had kept his promise.

2 Kings 20:1-11





The Biggest Coffee Morning in the World

This annual event, or rather a series of events, is held towards the end of September. Anyone who wishes to support Macmillan Cancer Support is welcome to arrange a coffee morning to raise money for the charity. Many such events were held in and around Caversham, and we have received information about a number of them.

A coffee morning was held at Caversham Bowls Club, and this was combined with a book sale. Many books and cakes were donated, and the Bowls Club would like to thank everyone who attended or contributed for their support which was much appreciated. Attendees included the Reading east MP, Rob Wilson. Over £300 was raised for the charity. The



Serving coffee and cakes at St Peter's church

unsold books (there were just a few!) will be circulated to other good causes in the area.

A coffee morning was held at St Peter's church, when members of the St Peter's flower team and craft group joined in the nationwide fundraiser for Macmillan *The World's Biggest Coffee Morning*, on Friday September 30th. Coffee, homemade cakes, scones and biscuits were served. A raffle was held and a competition to guess the number of spots on a cake was won by a member of the craft group with a guess of 450, the nearest to the actual number 495. Thanks to those who attended on the day and also donated money for cakes after services on the following Sunday, £280 was raised.

The Social Side of Our Lady and St Anne's church and the Parents Staff Association of St Anne's School joined forces to arrange a Macmillan Coffee Morning in the Cenacle. A splendid array of biscuits and cakes large and small were donated by parishioners and parents.

There was a constant stream of visitors wanting to help a good cause and to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a tasty cake.

Some people took the opportunity to buy advent calendars or greetings cards from the Phoenix Cards stall, different to the ones available in the shops.

By 11.30 a successful social occasion was over, apart from the clearing up, and a tidy sum had been raised for the Macmillan Cancer Support.

Friendship, food and fun were the key words when a resident at Lyefield Court, Emmer Green opened her home



Customers enjoying chat, drinks and cakes at St Anne's.

on two days, and with the help of her daughter welcomed fellow residents and friends to join her for coffee or tea and cakes. All the cakes had been donated. There was a raffle – always popular – and a box for donations.

On each occasion the rooms were filled with people welcoming the opportunity to meet up with friends. £772 was raised for Macmillan Cancer Support.

A coffee morning held at St John's church raised over £200 for the charity.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS



SCCS Christmas Concert

The 100 member strong South Chiltern Choral Society, conducted by Paul Burke and accompanied on the piano by Ian Westley, will be performing *Mass of the Children* by John Rutter with the wonderful Hawkedon Primary School Choir. After the interval, there will be a selection of favourite carols and songs for choir and audience.

Two concerts will be held, on Saturday 10th December at 7.30pm and Sunday 11th December at 2pm, at Chiltern Edge School, Reades Lane, Sonning Common, RG4 9LN, where there is free parking and wheelchair access. Tickets will cost £12 (under 21s £6) including interval refreshments and will be available via the choir's website www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk or the box office on 07500 032840 nearer the concert date.

FAIR TRADE Sale

You are invited to a Fair Trade Sale on Friday 18th November, 9am to 9pm and Saturday 19th November, 9.30am to 2pm at 97 South View Avenue, Caversham.

There will be a wide range of Tradecraft stock, Christmas cards and giftwrap, Fair trade gifts and jewellery for sale, also teas, coffees and chocolates. Refreshments will be available.

For details, contact Phil and Pam Chatfield, tel: 947 2444, e-mail: pchatfield@waitrose.com

St Peter's Church Christmas Market

The Christmas market will take place in the church on Saturday 10th December from 10am to 12.30pm. Hand-made Christmas gifts, decorations and other items will be on sale.

There will be a raffle, a tombola, refreshments, and games and activities for children. Money raised will be used to support Christian Aid's Refugee Crisis Appeal.

St John's Church Christmas Fair

The Christmas fair will be held on Saturday 19 November at 2pm at St John's church, Gosbrook Road. Stalls will include cakes, books, raffle, tombola, preserves etc.

Reading Haydn Choir

The Reading Haydn Choir will perform Handel's *Messiah*, one of Britain's best-loved choral works, at St John's Church, Victoria Road, Mortimer, RG7 3SY on 12th November 2016 at 7.30pm. The conductor is Mandy Kesel, and the choir will be accompanied by Ian Westley, with orchestral musicians from Sinfonia Musicisti.

Ticket prices: adults/concessions £14/£12 on the door (£1 off for advanced sales), under 17 £5, under 12 free.

Tickets are available via the website www.haydnchoir.org.uk or on the door.

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Funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund and by Springboard, Reading



Caversham Heights Methodist Church supports Headway

Visitors to the Autumn Fair at Caversham Heights Methodist Church on November 12th will be providing support to help raise money for people with head injuries. The Fair, which runs from 11.00am to 2.00pm, will be raising money for Headway Thames Valley. There will be a variety of stalls, including such brain-teasers as 'guess the weight of the cake', and 'number of sweets in the jar'. In addition to this there will be plenty of opportunities to buy all sorts of items for your house, from indoor plants, bric-a-brac and second-hand books to games and toys.

Also as the festive season approaches, why not visit the Christmas stall for some Christmas decorations, cards and paper. Refreshments will also be provided, for those who wish to take a rest from browsing. If you like the cakes on offer, you will not be able to resist visiting the cake stall to take another home with you. There will also be a selection of home-made jam, marmalade and chutneys.

Caversham Heights Methodist Church has always been keen to raise money for charities both home and abroad. In recent years they have raised money for a school in Southern Africa with links to a former minister, and also Riding for Disabled at Wyfold. Headway Thames Valley is a Henley-based charity that seeks to improve life after brain injury for the survivor and their families, as well as campaigning to try and reduce the incidence of brain injury across the Thames Valley.

If you succumb to a brain injury either through illness or trauma, it can challenge every aspect of your life. Things you feel are second-nature can be gone in an instant, and may or may not return; walking, talking, thinking and feeling. It means losing the life that you once lived, and the person you

once were; however, you are a survivor and with the help of Headway Thames Valley, they will help you find a new you, a new life, and new challenges to strive for. For more information on Headway and its work, visit the website www.headway.org.uk.

Why not go along to Caversham Heights on the Saturday, I am sure across the stalls everyone will find something they can buy, and think of the valuable support you are giving to a worthy local charity.



Tom Birch

Tom Birch, who sustained a serious brain injury while serving in the Royal Marines in Afghanistan says:

"My brain injury will always be with me, but Headway has helped me rebuild my life. With the right help and support, there can be life after brain injury."

At Headway, people use insight and care to help survivors regain some quality of life through a wide range of services, including rehabilitation programmes, carer support, social re-integration, community outreach and respite care.

On a national level, Headway provides a range

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- a freephone helpline (0808 800 2244, helpline @headway.org.uk);
- a comprehensive award-winning website containing information and factsheets on all aspects of brain injury (www.headway.org.uk);
- an award-winning range of booklets and publications designed to help people understand and cope with the effects of brain injury;
- an emergency fund to assist people dealing with the financial implications in the immediate aftermath of a brain injury;
- Headway Acute Trauma Support (HATS) nurses to support families whose loved ones are in the acute stage of care following brain injury.

Headway organises an annual 'Hats for Headway' competition to help raise awareness of the charity, when supporters of the charity design and wear their millinery creations. The pictures show some of the entries for this year's event.



Hats for Headway





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Alpha at St Barnabas



The next Alpha Course at St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green will begin with an introductory evening, including a supper, on Monday 9th January 2017 at 7pm in the Parish Centre. The course will then run each Monday evening for 10 weeks, starting with a meal, followed by a DVD on a specific topic and then a time for discussion. We would hope to finish by 9.30pm.

Alpha is a practical introduction to the Christian faith. Alpha is for everyone, especially those wanting to investigate Christianity, new Christians, newcomers to the church and those wanting to brush up on the basics.

If you would like to find out more, we are holding an Alpha launch supper on Monday 21st November at 7pm in the Parish Centre. You would be very welcome to join us and meet former Alpha guests.

If you are interested in attending either the Alpha launch supper or the Alpha course, please contact Marianne on 0118 947 9708 or email alpha@saintbarnabas.org.uk.

St Barnabas Church

There has been much happening over recent months at St Barnabas Church. Two fund raising events were held relating to a Summer Fair and also a furniture sale.

For the past 18 months the Rev David Little has been the associate priest at the church. His ministry has been a great blessing to us all. On a very wet evening in September, a contingent of church members travelled across the town to attend the installation of David as the Team Vicar of Loddon Reach Benefice. The church was full and, as ever, the Bishop of Reading preached a thoughtful and challenging sermon. David's two sons read the lessons with aplomb. The congregation at St Barnabas wished David well in the belief that he will find his niche in his new ministry.

The Harvest Festival service was held on the first Sunday of October with the young and young at heart joining in to make a joyful noise unto the Lord.

Forthcoming events are the annual All Souls service on the 6th November at 4.30pm, and a return visit from the Gratis Choir. This concert is being held on the 26th November at 7.30pm at which there is no charge. All are welcome to this double celebration of music and the restoration of the church organ which has been away for some considerable time and is now back in situ.

Tadley Band at St John's

St John's Church was filled with the sound of brass on Friday 16th September when it hosted a brass band concert presented by the Tadley Band, conducted by the band's leader Stewart Lewens.

The programme featured selections from Cabaret, Les Miserables, Burt Bacharach and Elvis Presley, with other favourites from Walt Disney and Richard Rodgers, and the finale to Sullivan's *Pineapple Poll*. There was a memorable piece which blended Procol Harum's *A Whiter Shade of Pale* with Bach's *Air on a G string*, an unlikely combination but one which the band proved worked very well.



The Tadley Band is a traditional English brass band which was formed around 1875, when it was known as the Tadley Silver Gospel Temperance Band.

The band consists of about 25 players who come from all walks of life and travel from far afield to be part of the band.

The musical director is Stewart Lewens, who was appointed in 2014.

Reading Family Aid - Toys and Teens Appeal

Reading Family Aid was officially established as a charity in 1993 but has actually been bringing smiles to the faces of disadvantaged local children since the 1950s. The charity was set up to help children living with poverty, drugs, abuse, illness or disability, principally through the annual Toys and Teens Appeal but also, budget permitting, outings throughout the year.

The charity's annual appeal collects and redistributes new, or as new, toys at Christmas to disadvantaged families who have been nominated by social workers and support organisations across the Reading area.

This year the appeal kicked off on Thursday 20th October when over 30 toy collection points came into operation across the Reading area, from Theale to Twyford and from Winnersh and Emmer Green to Shinfield. The collection points will remain open until Sunday 4th December after which scores of volunteers will sort, pack and deliver over 10,000 donated items to their grateful recipients.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of local volunteers and businesses such as Big Yellow who provide free storage facilities and Rabbits who provide vans to deliver all the gifts.

Last year the appeal delivered gifts to 1,500 children from over 600 families and, with the help of the local community, we aim to achieve the same again in 2016.

The full list of donation points is available at www.readingfamilyaid.org. If you would like to get involved with volunteering, please contact us at info@ReadingFamilyAid.org.

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Noah's Ark mural

During the summer, a wonderful transformation was made to the library corridor at St Anne's school. An uninspiring shade of magnolia was replaced by an eye-catching mural representing the story of Noah's Ark.

It was the work of Mrs Anne Orife. She has two children at the school and she volunteered to work on making the corridor a more cheerful place for the children to walk along.

She suggested using the story of Noah's Ark to the headteacher who was delighted at the idea. Mrs Orife worked on the project for several months whenever she had free time, using left over paint donated by parents and buying what she needed to finish the project. She loved hearing the comments made by the children as the mural progressed. They enjoyed looking for the pairs of animals and putting names to them.

Photographs taken in the corridor hardly do justice to the paintings but they give an idea of the scale and scope of the wonderful mural - a labour of love indeed.



Reading - Düsseldorf Churches

In 2017 we will be welcoming church members from Düsseldorf, Reading's twin city in Germany, in the week 19th-26th August. This twinning, one of the oldest in the country, has its 70th anniversary in 2017. You could enjoy getting involved by joining our outings and other celebrations, being a host for one or two of our visitors, inviting them to your church services and other events, or going with us to Düsseldorf in 2018.

Most of our guests will speak good English - if you know some German, so much the better. If you would like to know more, then come to our Information Meeting at St Michael's Church, Tilehurst, RG30 4JX at 8pm on Friday 11 November 2016. This is preceded by our interdenominational service at 7pm and bring & share buffet at 7.30pm

For more information about Reading's friendship with Düsseldorf, visit www.reading-dusseldorf.org.uk

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CLUBS

The Caversham Heights Society

The society opened its 2016/17 season on 21st September with an interesting and rather detailed talk by John Brierley on The Verney family of Claydon in Buckinghamshire. A story of love, war and madness in the Civil War. At least that was the title that was billed for the evening. In fact it was much more a commentary on the tumultuous period of social and religious upheaval in England in the seventeenth century with the story of the Verney family loosely set against this background. The talk was detailed and informative and was based on considerable research. It was also laced with humour and insights into, and comments on, English society at that time. What was striking was that while historians are aware of the lives of the higher echelons in society- the monarchy, nobility, aristocracy, and the top clergy- remarkably little is known about the lives of the common people, the 'freeborn Englishmen' and yeomen.

The 17th century was essentially a time of political and religious upheaval, especially between 1640 and 1660, which saw the English Civil War, the execution of Charles I in 1649, and the Commonwealth Parliament under Oliver Cromwell. It was a period of antagonism against the monarchy and nobility, especially the bishops, and there was regicide against Charles I. Amazingly the country never descended into the anarchy such as led to the French Revolution. It could so easily have done so because there was a very clear social hierarchy where 5% of the population, who had the wealth and power, controlled the 95%, and because men clearly dominated society, though John Brierley did cite examples of women who showed remarkable courage and determination in difficult circumstances.

Out of a population of roughly 5 million, 100,000 were either killed or injured during the Civil War and another one million lived on charity. The changes that began included the creation of the Royal Society in 1660 and other scientific organisations, the creation of banks, the building of great houses for the landed gentry, many of which were destroyed in the 1950s and 1960s until the National Trust and English Heritage stepped in to preserve them for the nation. It was also a time of great diarists such as John Evelyn and Samuel Pepys and following the Plague and Great Fire of London [1664-66] we saw the rise of a merchant class and the beginnings of social mobility and political parties.

We know so much about what was happening because of the Verney family. They were granted Claydon House by King John [1165-1216] and were given even more lands by Edward IV [1367-1413]. As a family they were involved in numerous battles, for example Sir Edward Verney was the royal standard bearer who lost his life at the battle of Edgehill [1642], but by and large they were more of an 'in between' family who sought to improve the lot of their tenants and employees rather than seek higher status through the royal court. We know this because of the findings of Sir Henry Verney who inherited the Claydon estate in 1827 and found over 100,000 family documents dating back to the 14th century and 30,000 letters that were written during the three years of the Civil War, equivalent to 60 letters a week! Amongst these papers were diaries and details of debates in the Houses of Parliament, strictly forbidden but a mine of information to future historians, as well as social commentaries on the times.

While the talk was at times difficult to follow it was nevertheless a fascinating talk for a historian.

The society meets on the first and third Wednesdays at 7.30pm from 8pm from September to April in Caversham Heights Methodist Church hall on Highmoor Road. Visitors and new members are always welcome. Information can be found by contacting Carol Cozens on 946 1509 or via email to rooster10@btinternet.com or Jill Hodges on 959 5307 or via irishjill@southcote.net

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CLUBS

Probus

The speaker at the August meeting of the Reading and District Probus Club was Michael Haxelton who presented a talk entitled *Naughty Boy in Bristol and Birmingham*. He regaled us with stories of some of the scrapes he got into in the two cities in which he lived while he was growing up, and used these to demonstrate the effect they had on him in his adult life.

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.

Reading Gardeners

We have the following talks in November:

On November 2nd, the entertaining and informative speaker Timothy Walker, former director of Oxford Botanic Garden, will give a talk called *Bordering on insanity - creating an all year round garden*.

On November 16th, the title of the talk to be given by Sarah and Julian Sutton will be *I believe in the Western Cape*. Sarah and Julian have a nursery in Devon where they specialize in South African plants which they sell by mail order.

Our meetings are held in Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road, and begin with refreshments at 7.15pm.

Visitors are welcome on payment of £3.

For more information visit the website www.readinggardenersclub.org.uk

Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club

On Wednesday November 9th at 6.30pm for 7.30pm start, we will be holding a Christmas floral presentation by the national demonstrator Angela Turner entitled *All is calm, all is bright*.

Tickets are £12 in advance or £15 on the door, refreshments included.

If you are interested in tickets please contact Tricia on 0118 947 6811 or Lorna on 0118 947 5683.

Rosehill WI

In August we did not have a formal meeting, just a get-together with a selection of scones for us all to devour and much chatting - a very enjoyable afternoon.

In September Vice President Margaret Seal welcomed all members and visitors to our meeting. Margaret had received apologies from Margaret Pyle and Pat Denney.

Secretary Mary Robinson said she had received an invitation from Sonning Glebe for two members to attend their birthday meeting. She also said that the WI calendar would be on sale in October at a cost of £4.50. Treasurer Judith Sharp said that she had sent a donation of £40 to the Denman Appeal and thanked everyone for their generosity.

The meeting continued with the birthday buttonholes being distributed, one of which was to Phyllis Clinton. Scrabble took place twice in September, the Book Club still has a good membership. Two walks were arranged for September. The Cinema Club is hoping to see *Bridget Jones Baby*.

Our attention was drawn to various outings advertised in Berkshire WI News including visiting Winchester Cathedral and Christmas Market, also a lunch when the speaker will be Joyce Meader, a historical knitting expert, and a Christmas Crafts workshop at Grazeley Village Hall in October.

Our speaker was Peter Hague, who (with the aid of slides) told us about West Wycombe Park and the Dashwoods. This was a very interesting talk about the various baronets who had lived in the house bringing us right up into the 21st Century.

We meet on the first Wednesday of every month at St Barnabas Village Hall, Emmer Green, at 2.00 pm and any visitors will be welcome.

Caversham WI

We have had a very busy summer. We welcomed three visitors to the Harvest Supper evening. Business was dealt with including dates for Christmas celebrations.

Entertainment came from Pam Ayers' poems on a harvest theme, including a plea for a husband for the President! Romagne Flight had provided apple pies and cream which accompanied a food quiz.

The evening ended with an auction of produce - lots of fruit and vegetables and some home-made cakes. The raffle ended a most enjoyable evening.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

The guild's meeting in August started as a bit of a disaster. We were to have had a salad and chat, but at the 11th hour we discovered that the kitchen at the Church hall was out of use. As we didn't want our salads dressed with plaster and dust we had to move to our chairman, Hazel New's house for the chat with coffee and cake. This turned out to be a good idea as her lounge was more conducive to chatting, and saved us a bit of money. We will be doing this again next year!

September was a musical month. We started with Mrs P Purcell's *Tales of the Opera*. Hilarious stories from a Royal Opera House singer, laced with songs and arias.

This was followed by the social studies group's presentation by Mr T King, of *Another Opening, Another Show*, a history of the Musical.

Our sub groups continue to thrive: rambling, cinema, and scrabble.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 20th November at the Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road, Caversham, at 7.30pm. Margaret Dray will be presenting *From Blackboard to Whiteboard*.

Any ladies wishing to join or visit us will be most welcome.

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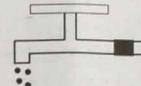
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