



Christmas Services at Caversham Churches



St. Barnabas, Emmer Green

Sun 4 Dec 9.30am Toy Service for Reading Family Aid
Wed 14 Dec 7.00pm Christingle Service with 89th Scout Group

Sun 18 Dec 4.30pm Christmas Carol Service
Christmas Eve 4.30pm Christmas Nativity
Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Mass with Caversham Park LEP
Christmas Day 8.00am Christmas Day Communion
Christmas Day 9.30am Christmas Day Family Communion

St Andrew's Caversham

Sun 18 Dec 6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols followed by mulled wine and mince pies
Christmas Eve 3.30pm Nativity Service (with a real baby)
Christmas Eve 8.00pm Christmas Night Service – like midnight mass, but not so late
Christmas Day 8.00am Said Eucharist
Christmas Day 10.00am All-Age Family Communion Service

Our Lady & St Anne's

Information on services is not available at the time of going to press.

New Testament Church of God

Sunday 18th Dec 11.00am Morning Service
Sun 18 Dec 6.00pm Carol Service
Christmas Day 10.00am Christmas Morning service
Saturday 31 Dec 10.00pm Thanksgiving service

Caversham Park LEP in Caversham Park Primary School

Sunday 18 Dec 3.00pm Carols at the Milestone
Christmas Eve 11.30pm Midnight Communion at St Barnabas
Christmas Day 11.00am Christmas Morning Worship

Caversham Baptist Church (South Street)

Sun 18 Dec 10.30am Family Nativity Service
Sun 18 Dec 6.00pm Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Eve 4.00pm Nativity Live! (see panel)
Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Service

Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

Sun 18 Dec 10.30am Family Carol Service
Christmas Eve 4.00pm Nativity Live! (see panel)
Christmas Day 10.30am Family Worship

Caversham Heights Methodist Church

Sunday 18 Dec 10.30am All Age Worship Everyone Welcome
Sunday 18 Dec 5.00pm Carols by Candlelight
Christmas Eve 11.15pm Midnight Communion
Christmas Day 10.30am Family Worship

Grace Church

Sun 11 Dec 4.30pm Family Carols followed by mulled wine and mince pies.
Sun 18 Dec 6.30pm Carols by candlelight followed by mulled wine and mince pies
Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Day Service

St Michael's Sonning Common

Sunday 18th Dec 4.00pm Pangbourne & District Silver Band Christmas Concert. Adults £5, children free
Monday 19th Dec 7.30pm Advent Penitential Service to prepare for Christmas
Christmas Eve 5.00pm Mass for families with young children
Christmas Eve 8.30pm Readings and Christmas Carols followed by 'midnight' mass at 9pm
Christmas Eve 9.00pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day 10.30am Christmas Morning Mass

Caversham Thameside & Mapledurham

St Peter
Sun 27 Nov 6.30pm Advent Carols
Sun 4 Dec 9.30am Toy service and Brownie & Cub Parade
Sun 18 Dec 6.30pm Carol service (with Peace Light)
Mon 19 Dec 7.30pm Carols in Cav Court led by St Peter's Choir
Sat 24 Dec 3pm & 4.30pm Christingle
11.30pm Midnight Mass
Sun 25 Dec 8am Holy Communion
9.30am Festival Communion

St Margaret

Sun 11 Dec 6.30pm Carol service
Sat 24 Dec 4.00pm Christingle
11.30pm Midnight Mass
Sun 25 Dec 11.15am Christmas Eucharist

St John

Wed 14 Dec 7.30pm Carol Service
Sun 18 Dec 4.00pm Christingle
Sat 24 Dec 4.00pm Nativity Live! (see panel)
11.30pm Midnight Mass
Sun 25 Dec 9.30am All Age Eucharistic

Nativity Live

A procession with real animals, music and drama, will leave Caversham Baptist Church at 4pm on Christmas Eve, travel via Caversham Methodist Church Gosbrook Road, and at St John's Church for all-age worship and refreshments. You are invited to start at the beginning or join at any point along the route

Merry Christmas to our readers

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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

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

St Andrews

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

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

Revd Marion Pyke
Tel: 947 5834

Revd John Dudley Tel: 9470265
Revd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331810
Revd Judith Ryder Tel: 9473783

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

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Secretary: Dr Alison Johnston
Tel: 0118 947 5152

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

Revd Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road.
Tel: 947 2223

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Transitional Minister Revd 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

Revd 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 Penny Cuthbert

I love candles. Sometimes when the pace of life gets too frenetic, and it feels like there are too many plates to keep spinning, I retreat to the armchair in my study, light a simple candle that sits on the coffee table, and just watch the flame. It's restful, peaceful, and somehow the opposite of frenetic. It helps me to slow down, to find time to breathe, and to simply rest in the presence of God.

I love Christmas, too. I love the excitement on children's faces as they anticipate and unwrap presents. I love the emphasis on being together, with friends and family, even when relationships may have been strained. I love the sense of goodwill, of giving, of making the effort, of celebrating. And I love the wonder of the Christmas story – angels appearing to Mary, Joseph and a bunch of poor shepherds on a hillside, frightening the life out of them. A baby, in a manger of all places! Rich wise men travelling a vast distance following a star. Political leaders getting in a tizzy. There's a sense that something extraordinary is going on. Something supernatural. Something heavenly.

John, in the first chapter of his gospel, explains what was happening that night. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world."*

Jesus, the Son of God, who was involved in the creation of the world, chose to leave behind all the glory and majesty of heaven and come to earth, to become human, and to live among us. To be our light, showing us how to live, and showing us God. Making it possible for us to know God. Not just know about Him, but know Him, as our heavenly Father.

"But to all who received Him, who believed in His name, he gave power to become children of God."

On that amazing night, heaven was breaking through to earth. Jesus was coming on a rescue mission, coming not just to live among us, but also to die for us, to remove the barrier of sin that separates us from a holy God. Coming to drive out darkness.

And that's the other reason I love candles. When I watch the flame, I am reminded of Jesus, the Light of the World, who dispels darkness, and whose power can transform any situation, no matter how dark it may look from a human perspective. Heaven still breaks through to earth whenever someone welcomes Jesus into their heart. He still comes to anyone who invites Him. The fire of His love still burns.

May you know the light and life and love of Jesus deep in your heart this Christmas, and throughout the year ahead.



Happy Christmas!
Penny Cuthbert, Transition Minister,
St John the Baptist, Caversham

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Caversham Good Neighbours is a group formed to offer essential transport to the elderly and disabled in our neighbourhood and visits to the sick or housebound. If you would like to give to the community by joining us as a volunteer driver or as a visitor, then do get in touch with us.

www.cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk
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Monday to Friday 9.30am – 11.30am
Church House 59 Church Street Caversham RG4 8AX

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 January 2017 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by **Monday 28th November**. The date for the February 2017 issue is **Monday 2nd January**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Advertising copy for the January 2017 issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by **Friday 25th November**. The date for the February 2017 issue is **Friday 30th December**.

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

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ENVIRONMENT

Figs at Christmas

This month, I should like to consider a plant which grows in many Caversham gardens, my own included, and which is particularly connected with Christmas celebrations.

I suppose that my first acquaintance with *Ficus carica*, the botanical name of the fig, must have come at a time before I can remember. In the 1940s and 50s, parents seem to have been very concerned about 'regularity,' and to have administered mild laxatives to their children on the slightest provocation. I have a younger brother, and I can remember him being dosed with a preparation called 'California Syrup of Figs.' I tried it, and it tasted pretty good. An Internet search has shown that the producers did in fact begin in San Francisco, California, and that by the 1890s they had a presence in this country.

My next encounter with figs came in the form of those blocks of partially dried and sweetened whole figs, wrapped in cellophane, which appeared in the shops at Christmas. They usually came from Izmir in Turkey. They were often displayed along with boxes of dates, which came from somewhere in north Africa. The boxes were unusual, made of thin wood, and with rounded ends.

People with false teeth didn't like the figs, because the tiny hard seeds got under their 'plates' and irritated their gums, but then onto the market came Batger's Chinese Figs. These were large brown sweets, made of jelly which tasted of fig, and dusted with sugar to stop them all sticking together. There were no irritating seeds there.

I never saw 'natural' figs until I came to Reading in 1969. I liked



them, and after I got married I began helping my in-laws with their large garden. They had two small unheated greenhouses. One of them I used for tomatoes, peppers, aubergines, cucumbers and melons, and the other one had just a grape-vine and a fig tree. I'm sure that my in-laws thought that the fig tree would be a waste of time, but it soon romped away and started fruiting. I was able to ripen two crops of figs in a year - all I wanted and more. I even tried making fig jam! The fig in the picture came from that greenhouse, about 30 years ago.

Figs are large, interesting plants, with big lobed leaves which remind me of Adam and Eve. The 'fruit,' which technically isn't a fruit, starts as a kind of sac, with a hole at the end opposite the stalk. It contains lots of tiny flowers, and the little hole is to enable tiny wasps to enter and pollinate them. Figs are native to the Mediterranean and the Middle East, so when they tried growing them in California, they had to take care to import the wasps as well. The kind of figs we usually grow in this country are self-fertile, and the figs will develop without the help of wasps.

For some years now it has been my custom to make a figgy pudding at Christmas, as mentioned in the old carol, 'We Wish you a Merry Christmas'. It has suet and flour, dried figs and spice, and I serve it flamed in brandy, with a white sauce poured over. If I could buy some syrup of figs these days, it might be nice to pour a drop into the pudding mixture - but not too much!

Happy Wanderer

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Defence Committee to visit BBC

Members of the Defence Committee are to visit BBC Monitoring at its Caversham Park site, following an invitation from Reading East MP, Rob Wilson.

Earlier this year, the BBC announced cuts of £4 million to its BBC Monitoring operational budget, which will see approximately 100 jobs axed and the organisation relocated from its Caversham Park base – its home for over 70 years.

Rob is opposed to this decision, arguing that in an increasingly volatile world, where the UK faces unprecedented and unpredictable threats, the open-source intelligence being observed, analysed, translated and communicated by BBC Monitoring to Government departments has never been more vital to our national security.

This view is shared by the chairman of the Defence Committee, Dr Julian Lewis, who has joined Rob in stating publicly his opposition to the BBC's proposed cuts.

This mutual interest prompted Rob to write to Dr Lewis and invite the Defence Committee to visit Caversham Park to gain a first-hand understanding of how its specialised output will be affected by cuts to its funding.

The visit will contribute to the parallel investigations being undertaken by the Defence and Foreign Affairs Committees into the operations of BBC Monitoring.

Speaking in anticipation of the visit Rob said "I consider the decision to be deeply misguided and detrimental to our national interests – both in terms of our own security and intelligence capabilities, but also our world-wide influence and engagement with international partners"

Dr Lewis said: "Caversham Park is to open source intelligence what Bletchley Park was to secret intelligence and that is why it is of vital interest to the defence of the United Kingdom. The fact that it has been continually cut is of grave concern and any further cuts will have a significant impact upon national security".

Reading Library Service Launch New eBook Service

In October Reading Library Service launched a new eBook service, offering members the opportunity to download books from a choice of hundreds of popular titles.

The new service is accessed through the cloud Library app available through visiting <http://yourcloudlibrary.com/index.php/en-us> or from the App Store, Mac OS or Google Play.

The library's eBook collection includes many popular adult and children's titles, ranging from Lee Child to Bill Bryson, to J K Rowling and more.

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The app makes it simple to download titles, save reads for later and even read across multiple devices. Members can borrow up to four books at one time and keep them for up to 21 days. There are no overdue fines.

The cloudLibrary app is compatible with the following devices: iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch, Android Phones, Android Tablets, NOOK Tablets, NOOK eReaders, Kobo eReaders and Kindle Fires.

Cllr Paul Gittings, Reading's Lead Member for Culture, said: "Accessing books online couldn't be easier for our library members now. Once you have accessed the cloudLibrary you can browse, borrow and start reading straight away. You can keep the eBook for three weeks and what's even better, there are no overdue fines to worry about! For anyone unsure on how to access an eBook, there is also help available at the library."

For technical assistance, email info@readinglibraries.org.uk, call 0118 901 5950 or visit the cloudLibrary support website.

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Step 3: Browse, borrow and start reading!

Thursday* is
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*every Thursday 2pm - 6pm

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CHURCHES

New Organ at the church of Our Lady and St Anne

Bible Friends

David's song

David wrote a song about a good shepherd. "God cares for me like that," thought David.

This is what he wrote:

"God is my shepherd. God makes sure I always have everything I need.

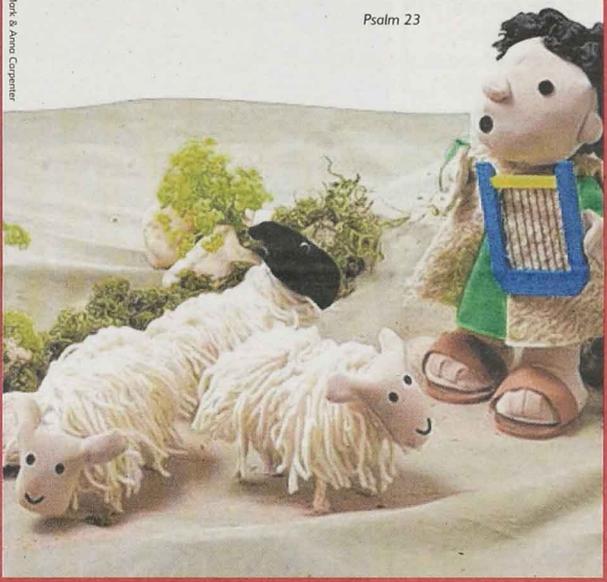
God leads me to beautiful places, where I can rest.

God shows me which paths to follow, and keeps me safe.

Even when I can't see where I'm going, I'll never be frightened because I know God is there with me.

God gives me many lovely things to enjoy. He is very good to me. I will always follow him."

Psalm 23



From The Big Bible Storybook © 2006 Scripture Union Illustration © 2006 Mark & Anna Carpenter

A new organ has been installed in the church of Our Lady and St Anne. The old one, installed 35 years ago, had recently become unplayable due to problems resulting from the damp in the walls of the choir loft.

For advice, Fr Paul approached Jeremy Meager, general manager of Viscount Organs, whom he knew from his Bicester days. After investigating the cost of restoration compared with buying a new organ, the decision was made to buy new, and this received diocesan approval.

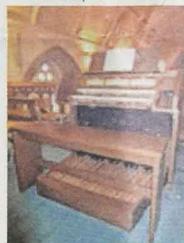
Just as this decision was made, a legacy from the estate of the late Ian Cane was handed to the parish. Ian had been a member of the choir for many years until his death two years ago and he had a great love and knowledge of music. It seemed that to use the bulk of the inheritance to pay for the new organ would have been what he would have wished.

Jeremy agreed to supply a two manual instrument with many added extras which Ian's money paid for. The money left over went to the Church and Shrine restoration fund.

The organ has been installed and is now in use.

A dedication ceremony took place during the ten o'clock mass on 20th November, the feast of Christ the King, which was the day before Ian's anniversary.

Jeremy Meager supplied the organ used for Pope Benedict's mass for the beatification of Cardinal Newman and the recently installed organ in St Peter's church was also supplied by Viscount, so Our Lady and St Anne's church is in good company.



The old organ has a new home, having gone to a parish in Malvern where a parishioner who is an organ builder has undertaken the task of restoring it.

Photo by Jane Shaw shows the new organ in situ.

Harvest Mass at St Anne's

The church was filled with the children from St Anne's school and parishioners for the Harvest Mass. A formal display had been arranged in front of the Altar.

Each class had collected non perishable goods for days before and pupils from each class carried the boxes they had filled as the classes processed into church and placed the goods in the sanctuary in front of the altar. The reception class box was brought in a trolley and the children each carried a tin of food from it and placed it with the other offerings.

Fr Paul talked to the children during mass about the harvest and about the Reading Food Bank. Pupils read the bidding prayers and all joined in the harvest related hymns.

The food was later collected by representatives from the Reading food bank to add to their store. It would be parcelled up and distributed to needy families.



The photograph by Jane Shaw shows the display before the altar.

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Concerts in Caversham

Christmas Concert by Candlelight

10th December – 7.30pm
St Andrew's Church, Albert Road,
Caversham RG4 7PL

Peter Fischer will direct an evening of beautiful and seasonal music played in the warm glow of candlelight by the superb soloists and musicians of The Caversham Ensemble Chamber Orchestra.

The programme will include music from the *Messiah*, a Vivaldi concerto, extracts from Howard Blake's *The Snowman*, *A String Serenade for Christmas Eve* by Suk, Schubert's *Ave Maria*, Bach's *Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring* and much more. The soloists with the orchestra are: Peter Fisher (violin), Jiafeng Chen (violin), Will Melvin (violin), Gabriel Dias (trumpet), Timothy Watts (oboe and oboe d'amore) and Naomi Watts (cello). Seasonal refreshments in the interval are included in the ticket price.

Tickets in advance are £16, £18 and on the door £18, £20. They may be bought in advance from Waltons the Jewellers in Caversham (cash only and closed Mondays), or on the door. See www.concertsincaversham.co.uk for more information or ring: 0118 9484112 A very popular concert, so book early to avoid disappointment!



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SILENT AUCTION

The silent auction held on October 29th at Caversham Heights Methodist Church raised over £1000 for the Haiti Hurricane relief fund.

The event received a great many high quality gifts from members of the church and the local community plus some generous monetary donations. The lots ranged from a compressor, a chain-saw, and a garden shredder to a bread maker, a golf bag, pictures, beautiful vases, jewellery, perfumes and kitchen ware. Despite extensive advertising the event was not well attended. It would have been good if more people had come to make bids as this would have raised more money and more people would have gone home with smiling faces and real bargains.

Many donors kindly said that unclaimed items could be kept and put into the church Autumn Fair which was only two weeks away. This event is raising funds for Headway Thames Valley, the charity that helps those with brain injuries.

The Haiti disaster has slipped from the headlines but the need is desperate with many families, having lost everything are sleeping in the open and totally dependant on food drops. Not only is there a very great need for help now but many crops were destroyed and the future looks extremely bleak for whole communities.

This disaster happened at a time when the country was still struggling to recover from the earthquake of a few years ago. The money raised will go some way to help aid which is already being provided.

This was the fourth silent auction the church has held, with the aim of making a speedy response to international tragedies. In excess of £5000 has been raised – thanks to people's generosity.

Two weeks later at the church's Autumn Fair over £1,500 was raised for Headway – the charity that helps people with head injuries.

The church would like to thank everyone in the community who supported these two very worthwhile events.



Parish Barn Dance

People from the three churches of Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham came together for the Parish Barn Dance which took place at St John's on Friday 21st October. The local band 'Inisheer' provided the music and caller Howard Ballard steered us through the different dances. A sell-out event, we had great fun and raised £389 for church funds.

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SCOUT CHRISTMAS POST - SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY AND SAVE MONEY AT CHRISTMAS!

The 89th Reading Scouts are once again providing the highly valued Christmas Post service for the delivery of Christmas cards to Caversham, Caversham Heights, Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village. This is a great opportunity to save money (at 30p per card it is half the price of a stamp!) delivering your local Christmas cards. At the same time this service supports the activities of the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers of the local 89th Scout Group based in Kiln Road, Emmer Green.

Post boxes will be situated at a number of locations in the area including: Caversham Library, McColls Newsagents in Emmer Green, Balmore Park and Emmer Green Surgeries, Woodcote Way News, St Barnabas and St Andrew's Churches and number of local primary schools. The last posting day will be on Thursday 15th December and all cards will be delivered in time for Christmas.

The 89th Reading Scouts have been running the Christmas Post for over 30 years, raising funds for the Scout Group and most importantly providing a great service to the local community. We don't take parcels, only cards, and we only deliver to houses in the local Caversham, Caversham Heights, Caversham Park Village, and Emmer Green communities. We don't go south of the river Thames, Kidmore End or Tokers Green.

The service is really valued by the local community, especially the older residents, and all of the post is sorted and hand delivered by the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers of the 89th Scout Group.

For more information please email robin.kent@89th.org.uk



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Caversham Christian News Limited
Church House
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My husband, Anthony John Hindle (Tony) recently died and I am going through all the papers etc. he had kept.

I came across the enclosed cutting from your newspaper, my first thought was is it still in existence? I was very pleased to find it on the computer. I thought you might be interested in it, no doubt you have a copy in your files.
We lived in Emmer Green on moving from Manchester in December 1955, then moved to Binfield Heath, back to Caversham at the top of the hill in The Horse Close moving to Harrow from there, and then retiring to Burnham. The reason for all these moves was that Tony worked for the Trustee Savings Bank, he was manager at the Caversham Branch in Prospect Street for over 20 years. I remember his involvement with the newspaper and also many things to do with the bank, sponsoring things. I also remember several times when we were away on holiday bumping into some of his customers. He took early retirement in 1986, a very long one, he was 87 when he died. We worshipped at Caversham Hill Chapel, Tony being a Deacon and Church Secretary for many years.

I expect there are still many in Caversham who will remember him. As I said I am so glad the Newspaper is still thriving. I see it started in 1964, the cutting dated the next year. I'm sure he would have been pleased to know it is still growing strong. I don't want the cutting back.

Best wishes,
Joyce Hindle

The CAVERSHAM BRIDGE has now been in existence a year. It is a unique venture - it is the only newspaper of its kind: a combined effort by all the churches.

It excites a good deal of interest in Caversham and Reading, and in many other parts of the country and abroad.

This illustrated page shows some of the people who produce and distribute the paper.



The Board of Directors of the Caversham Christian News Limited - the company which produces the "Caversham Bridge" - meet regularly to discuss and plan the paper. Our photo shows a board meeting in progress. Left to right: Miss E. M. Alderson, J.P., Mr. H. J. Pilgrim, Mr. A. J. Hindle, Mr. J. A. Hargreaves, the Rev. J. G. Grimwade (Editor), Mr. W. C. S. Harrison, Mrs. M. Cliff. Also on the Board are Mrs. B. Millar and Mrs. J. Mair, J.P.

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ST BARNABAS CHURCH

Members of the local uniformed organisations and friends will hold their annual Christingle service on Wednesday the 14th December at 7.00.p.m. and visitors will be most welcome. The offertory collection that evening will go to the Children's Society.

On the 18th December a service of lessons and carols will take place at 4.30pm. Leading up to Christmas itself the customary nativity play is being held at 4.30pm on Christmas Eve and Midnight Mass will be held at 11.30pm that evening. An all age service will be held at 9.30am on Christmas Day and children are invited to take a present for the 'show and tell' part of the occasion. As with all our services and events everyone is welcome.

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Caversham Court Christmas tree sale

Nowadays, everyone is looking for the *green option*, and indeed green is one of the traditional colours for Christmas. So, why not go for a truly green solution for Christmas and in turn help both a local charity and biodiversity? Many of you may have seen the report on Autumnwatch where the effects of the planting of softwood conifer plantations to help provide pit props after World War II has had a detrimental impact on lowland heaths, where the conifers have severely impaired the growth of wild heathers, by desiccating the soil and over enriching it when they drop their needles.

This area is important nationally and internationally for its areas of lowland heath, and volunteers in the area have been working hard on this for over a quarter of a century. They have found a good seasonal way to not only resolve the problem of the conifers depriving groundcover plants such as heather of water, but also raising funds into the bargain. They have been cutting the Scots Pine in early December, and selling the best ones as Christmas trees – a win win result on the green stakes.

Initially, people had a reluctance to try the Scots Pine as a Christmas tree as they are not as dense as say a Douglas Fir. However, now many people return year after year for the trees for a lovely fragrant tree, which may have decorations of its own in the form of cones and will not drop needles all over your lounge floor. So, you can bring a Berkshire tree into your home and help the local heathland management with valuable funds.

The trees initially came from Bucklebury Common, but over the years the scheme has extended to cover land at Wildmoor in Bracknell, Caesar's Camp at Padworth and more recently they had worked in association with the MOD to bring areas of the Special Protection Area at Camberley under active management.

But the trees are not the only local decoration that you can use and be green. Reading Urban Wildlife Group planted 6000 willow trees from local stock as part of a millennium project. This original planting was completed with the assistance of 400 volunteers all co-ordinated by Econet (www.econetreading.org.uk) Part of that project was a willow arboretum at Kings Meadow and beds of coppiced willow that can be

used by local willow workers. These plots are harvested annually by the Wildlife Group and volunteers from Conserve Reading on Wednesdays (Crow), part of Econet. The resulting willow has been turned into many things from the sides of watercress beds in Ewelme and raised beds on the roof of RISC, to willow baskets and supports.

Not forgetting of course, willow wreaths and stars, these together with the Christmas Trees can be purchased at Caversham Court on Saturday December 10th between 9:30am and 1:00pm. While there you can watch the skilled designers at work making decorated wreaths or stars. There are also stalls from Fair Trade, RSPCB, and Reading Beekeepers who will have some locally produced candles.

While you are in the area, why not pay a visit to St Peter's Church Christmas Market which is on at the same time where there will be a wide range of handicrafts, games and a raffle plus hot drinks and other refreshments.

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Christmas Carols in Caversham Court Monday 19th December

The choir of St Peter's church will be leading the singing on an evening of traditional Christmas carols in Caversham Court on Monday 19 December, at 7.30pm. Members of the Salvation Army Band will add to the festive music.

The floodlit gardens will be open from 6.15 pm and mulled wine, hot chocolate and mince pies will be on sale in the Tea Kiosk in aid of local charities. The church bells will ring out from 7.15pm.

Members of the Friends of Caversham Court Gardens will be lighting your way in the magical floodlit gardens. Wrap up warm, bring a torch (to read the carol sheets!) and come along to sing in the festive season.

St Barnabas church Christmas fair

The St Barnabas Christmas Fair will take place on Saturday 3rd December from 2pm until 4pm in the Parish centre and Church Hall.

There will be good quality gifts, handicrafts, cakes, preserves, toys, tombola, fabulous raffle, refreshments and much more including Father Christmas and his bran tub. Entry by donation at the door. All proceeds will go to our overseas charities. For more information contact Wendy Howell on 0118 946 1365

The Children of God family service the following day at 9.30 am will be an opportunity to donate new or good quality second-hand toys which will be distributed to disadvantaged children in Reading via Reading Family Aid.

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The Caversham Heights Society

October was a busy month for the Society. Following the annual general meeting, which was held on Wednesday 5th, members were enthralled by a fascinating, well-researched and informative talk about crossing the River Thames given by Tony Weston. *Entitled Thames Crossings - From a ford to a flight.* This was a comprehensive history of how crossing the Thames has evolved. At 215 miles long from its source, where there is virtually no water, to its exit into the North Sea, the Thames is the longest river in England. For thousands of years it acted as a barrier between tribes and kingdoms and the only way of getting across was wading, swimming or by boat. The Romans built the first bridge across the river at Staines but when they left, London Bridge fell into disrepair and it was another 500 years before it was replaced by a more substantial bridge. The original was eventually destroyed by a 240mph tornado which struck London in 1091. It is claimed that the nursery rhyme 'London Bridge is falling down' originated from this time though it is much more likely that it was the Great Fire of London in 1666 that destroyed the then seven storey high London Bridge, with its shops and over 200 homes and other buildings, that inspired the song.

When William the Conqueror arrived in 1066 he had to go all the way up to Wallingford before he could cross the river safely at Duxford, near Oxford, both towns where there were fords. It was William I who declared the Thames to be a royal river but it was left to William II (1056-1100) and Stephen (1090-1154) to build a new bridge.

For centuries the main means of crossing the Thames was by ferry. The oldest known one was Gravesend to Tilbury, recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. It was from here that Elizabeth I addressed her troops before the arrival of the Spanish Armada in 1588. In 1197 Richard I [the Lionheart] sold the river to the Corporation of the City of London who thereafter controlled what was, or was not, allowed. It was not until the reign of Henry VIII that watermen, or ferrymen, were licensed to carry passengers. Of the hundreds of public ferries that once existed only a handful still exist - Woolwich, Hampton, Twickenham, Gravesend to Tilbury, and Hilton Docklands to Canary Wharf.

During medieval times it was the monasteries that built several bridges, (Wallingford in 1200, Radcot in 1200 and Caversham in 1231.) Those built by the monks had pointed arches since these were the designs of their monastic homes but only a few survive. Their real importance was in providing revenues, by way of tolls, for anyone using them. They were also often the sites of battles between rival armies.

During the 18th century there were many competitions and designs for new bridges over the river, and members were shown pictures of several of these. Real change came in 1869 when Isambard Kingdom Brunel began building the first tunnel, the most famous one is the Blackwall tunnel. In more recent years a new approach has been undertaken, namely a means of flying over the river. Perhaps the most bizarre idea of crossing the Thames is the so-called Garden Bridge but this is still mired in controversy and may never be built.

Still on the historical theme, on October 12th a coach full of members went first to Windsor and then to Dorney to be shown round Dorney Court, a medieval manor house first mentioned in the Domesday Book but then rebuilt in Tudor times. It has been owned by the same family, the Palmers, for over 400 years. Going round the house was like a tour through English history, both through furniture as well as through paintings and architecture. Because the house receives no government funding the owners have to rely on using the house and gardens for filming, weddings and corporate functions.

On the 19th of October members were entertained and enthralled by Shaun McCormick's personal insights into the Queen's Bodyguard of the Yeomen of the Guard. After serving in the army for 25 years Shaun became a Yeoman of the Guard in 2000 and has been based at St James' Palace since then. Founded by Henry VII as a bodyguard 'to support the crown and protect and guard the body of our Lord the King'. It is the oldest bodyguard in the world. It is armed and was originally made up of fighting men but today it is largely a ceremonial body of volunteer ex-servicemen. Each time there is a state occasion, such as the Opening of Parliament, the greeting and entertainment of a visiting Head of State, or a Lying in State, investitures, garden parties at Buckingham Palace or the Maundy Thursday services, the Yeomen of the Guard can be seen. Because the Yeomen of the Guard discovered Guy Fawkes beneath Parliament on November 5th, 1605 they still have the responsibility to check the cellars of the Houses of Parliament at each State Opening. The warders at the Tower of London are also part of the Yeomen of the Guard.

Shaun had brought his uniform for members to see and they were amazed at the sheer weight of it all.

Meetings of the society are held on the first and third Wednesday evenings at 8.00pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. New members are most welcome. We are developing a new website so inquiries are best made to Carol Cozens on 946 1509 or via

rooster10@btinternet.com or to Jill Hodges on 959 5307
 or via irishjill@southcote.net

Chazey WI

At our monthly meeting when Simon Williams gave a talk on 'Memory Techniques' there was much laughter from the members so a very enjoyable talk. Tea/coffee followed to encourage a lot of chat and a welcome to our visitors - we hope they enjoyed the evening and will join us. Business followed and members were reminded about toiletry packs to donate to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Future social events are coffee at the Herb Farm and lunch at the Packhorse, Panto in Newbury and Christmas lunch at the Highwayman. The raffle was won by Carol Briscoe and the competition by Valerie Wing. Chazey meets on the first Tuesday evening every month starting at 7.30pm in the Caversham Methodist Church Hall in Highmoor Road, Caversham Heights, new members welcome.

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Stay-a-while Lunch Club

The club, which meets on
**Mondays at the Caversham Heights
 Methodist church, is in urgent
 need of volunteers. Hot meals are
 provided for up to 20 members
 each week. Cooks and helpers are
 urgently needed to work on a rota
 basis.**

**If you can help and for more
 information please call Kathy
 Munns on 0118 954 6680.**

CLUBS

Probus

The speaker at the October meeting of the Reading and District Probus Club was Richard Harrison who presented a talk on the subject of *Citizen's Advice*. Richard has been the chairman of the Reading Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB, or CA) for the last few years. CA is the place where people go when they have a problem and have no-one to turn to.

CA was founded as a national body in 1939, and was funded by the government. It has two aims: to provide advice to people in need, and to improve policies and practices affecting people's lives. Nationally, CA was nominated as charity of the year in 2015. CA Reading is a member of the national body, but is independent of it. CA Reading has its own board of trustees, and it has 100 volunteers and 20 part-time staff. It is an advice service in areas which have become increasingly complex, providing advice in the areas of benefits, debt, employment, housing, family and relationships, and consumer issues.

CA Reading is open five days a week. It recruits and trains volunteers, and ensures that qualified advisers are available. It is independently audited. In a typical year, it will see over 6000 clients, deal with over 15000 issues, and will have gained over £2million for clients.

In the area of benefits, it will identify the correct benefits (the system is very complex), and assist with process. It will chase delays, appeal decisions, and assist with overpayments.

In advising people with debts, it helps with escalating debt, and assists with emergencies, such as court action, bailiffs, eviction. It will agree a financial statement and negotiate priorities.

People using CA are typically facing unexpected crises, have difficulty understanding their problems, and are vulnerable.

CA has a small management team and a professional training department. It no longer receives guaranteed grant funding (it has a grant from Reading borough council), and now has to compete for funding. Grants are being cut: it loses 25% this year, and 50% next year). To improve the funding situation it has to strictly control costs, and adopt a proactive approach to securing funding, such as providing training services commercially, doing direct fundraising, and seeking business and individual support.

Reasons for supporting CA are that it is local, is dedicated to the community, has a long history, is well-respected, its trustees are not paid, nor are its volunteers. CA are pioneers of the Reading Advice Network.

In the future, without financial help, it would have to restrict the support it can give, and in the extreme, closure is a possible threat. It costs £1500 and takes 12 months to train a volunteer. People can help by making a single or regular donation, leaving a legacy, running an event etc. Gift Aid can add 25% to funds raised.

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.

Caversham WI

One of Reading's 3Bs was the subject covered at the October meeting. John Harrison gave a detailed talk about bricks with many pictures of the different types and bonds in the local area. We will keep our eyes open in future when looking at local buildings.

The competition, a picture of a favourite building, was won by Sue Taylor with Sylvia Myszor and Claire Elliott as runners up.

Reminders were given about the Christmas events and the importance of the November meeting to decide the future of Caversham WI.

Rosehill WI

At our meeting on 5th October which turned out to be very successful, we were first welcomed by our President Margaret Pyle who extended greetings to all present, including visitors. We then tucked into a Harvest Lunch (costing £3) which included, pork pie, pate, various cheeses, salad, pickles and chutneys, rolls and bread, followed by a selection of desserts including fresh fruit salad, crumbles, lemon torte and Austrian apricot cake accompanied by a glass of fruit juice. Many thanks go to all who worked so hard, not only on the day setting up everything, but beforehand as well. There were about 50 ladies present who enjoyed a lovely meal.

Following this, we then had a short official meeting hearing about events advertised in Berkshire WI News including a visit to Winchester Cathedral and Christmas Market, a talk by Jean Sheppard about Russia, and the possibility of a holiday in Jersey. The birthday buttonholes were handed out. The Book Club continues to meet, their present book being 'Tennyson' by Linda Laplant. The Film Club were unable to find a suitable film.

There being no other business, Margaret then introduced our entertainment for the afternoon which was a Fashion Show given by four of our ladies wearing clothes from Bon Marche. The four ladies were: Liz Hutton, Pat Larkins, Arlene Riley and Barbara Wood. They each wore four different outfits, casual, two smart casual and something for that special occasion. All four of them did an excellent job On the Catwalk, even some twirls as well!!! Afterwards there was the opportunity to buy (or order) the clothes that had been shown, plus another rail of outfits. Thanks go to the ladies from Bon Marche who brought along the clothes to our meeting.

After all this excitement, we then had the raffle and a very welcome cup of tea.

We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green at 2.00 pm and would make any visitors very welcome.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

November saw Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild off on a vicarious trip to the Serengeti Park and Nduku area of Tanzania with Nigel Glover Wright.

In stark contrast, the social studies group were taken to the Falkland Islands in winter by R Snailham. This followed a *Brief history of the Dismal Trade* by A Miles our local undertaker-not as dismal as it sounded!

The subsidiary groups had a couple of visits to the cinema, walks, lunches and scrabble afternoons.

With Christmas fast approaching, November ended with a coffee and mince pie morning at the home of our chairman, Mrs Hazel New, and a trip to the Bath Christmas market.

The next meeting will be on December 15th with mince pies.

There is no meeting in January.

Caversham Horticultural Society

After another successful year of public talks, garden outings and not forgetting September's autumn show, the final 2016 event is the Christmas party. Join us on Wednesday 7th December at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road for seasonal musical entertainment by the Barfield Hand Bell Ringers. This event starts at 7.45pm. Non members entry fee is £3.00.

With winter coming on one might assume that the society's committee members would like their gardening to enter a state of hibernation. Not so. The 2017 series of public talks have to be organised and so do the two garden outings. In addition, stock taking and ordering of gardening sundries such as compost need to be done for the new season which opens on Saturday 4th February. Seed potatoes will then be on sale to members. Early plans for next year's autumn show to be held on Saturday 2nd September are also under way.

The society is open to all gardeners residing within the RG4 postal district i.e. from Caversham to Sonning Common. What do we offer to gardeners? As mentioned the society organises a series of talks on gardening topics by visiting speakers. Talks in 2016 included practical topics such as using non chemical pest and disease control to a romp through history of garden seats. The majority of these talks are free to members so just attending two will recoup one's annual membership fee. Caversham Primary School is the venue for this series of talks.

Membership offers the opportunity to use the trading shed to purchase items at very favourable prices. Roffey's compost is considered by many members as being far superior to rival brands offered by DIY stores and local garden centres.

Annual membership is £5 for a household and £3 for people over 60. To become a member in 2017 either contact our membership secretary erae@harpolutions.co.uk (0118 947 0510) or via our web site www.caversham_horticultural.org.uk. Alternatively visit our trading shed on the Oakley Road allotments next to the veterinary surgery. The trading shed is open every Saturday between February and October from 10 to 11.30am.

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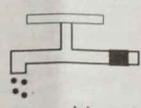
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