

Countdown to the New Organ at St Peter's

At a recent forum held in St Peter's Church the congregation were given a presentation on the new organ and the changes planned to accommodate it. The installation, scheduled for October this year, will be the culmination of three years fundraising by the church, which has raised over £60,000 to pay for the instrument.

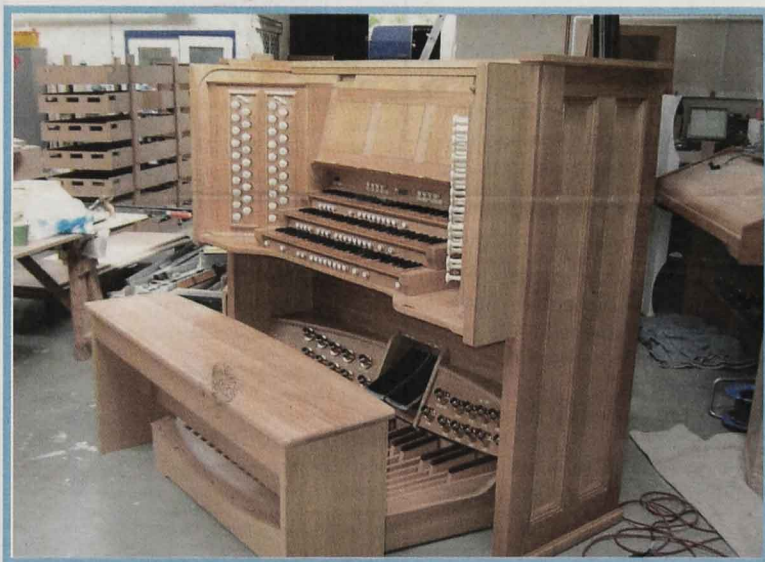
The Rector, Revd Mike Smith, churchwarden Nigel Smith and church treasurer Richard Larkin, were on hand to explain the plans.

Richard, who led the fundraising campaign, described the new instrument, which replaces one installed in 1987. It will be a three manual digital organ supplied by Viscount Classical Organs and will have a solid oak Renuis console. He said he was sure it would be a worthwhile addition to the church's musical heritage, of which it is rightfully proud.

One of the biggest problems with the current instrument is the location of the

during services rather than at the back of church, as they do currently.

The two illustrations show the area in its current configuration, and a mock-up of how it will look when the pews are removed and with the new south-facing console.



An organ console similar to the one to be purchased



View from the pulpit before...



...and after

speakers, which are at the west end of the church. This means the choir have difficulty hearing the organ, while the congregation, especially those at the back, sometimes struggle to hear anything else!

After three consecutive Sundays in February, when various speaker positions were trialled with a temporary organ, it was decided to position the main bank of speakers in the Lady Chapel (the area south of the chancel). This will mean a far better balance of sound for the congregation and improved co-ordination between organ and choir.

Nigel went on to describe the changes required to the church interior to accommodate the new organ. To improve communication between organist and choir the console will face south, rather than west as currently. This means there will be even less circulation space in what is already a cramped area at the top of the nave in front of the chancel step.

So it has been decided to remove the front two rows of pews. This will offer improved performance space for concerts and children's nativity plays etc. It will also provide an area for wheelchair users to sit within the main body of the church

The Rector emphasised the advantages the new arrangement will provide both musically and from the point of view of the flexible use of the church for worship and secular events, such as concerts. He also encouraged the congregation to view these changes within a wider long-term vision to transform the welcome the church provides and the facilities it offers to Caversham not just as a place of worship but also as somewhere for use by the whole community.

The building work to remove the pews and level the floor underneath is planned to take place in June and July before the main wedding season commences at the end of July. This will ensure the church is ready for the installation of the organ in October. More information, including 3D videos of the church as it will look, is available at <http://www.stpetercaversham.org.uk/news/2015/installation-of-new-organ/>.

Nigel Smith, Churchwarden of St Peter's

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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 Jeremy Tear

St John's Vicarage, St John's Road,
Caversham RG4 5AN Tel: 946 2884

Revd Marion Pyke

26 Priest Hill, Caversham RG4 7RZ
Tel: 947 5834

Revd John Dudley Tel: 9470265

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (READING)

Revd Rob Beardsley Tel: 07736 353233
Email: rob.beardeley@sky.com
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 Ministers Revd Jonathan Edwards
Church office tel 954 5353
Email Secretary: sue.cantwell@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

GRACE CHURCH

(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)
Crispin Fairbairn. Tel: 947 4529

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 Mappedurham 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 David Jenkins

A newcomer to Caversham

My wife and I are newcomers to Caversham. I came here to retire in August, but I also wanted to be actively involved in the Church's life and am glad to be working part time in the Methodist Ministerial Team led by Revd Jenny Dowding.

Belonging

A place of belonging is an important feature, both of retirement and of life, and the Church is providing this remarkably well. I lead worship around the Methodist Circuit but principally in the two Caversham Methodist Churches. When I am not leading worship I am often playing the piano for services at Caversham Methodist Church in Gosbrook Road.

Identity

The sense of belonging is boosted by having friendly neighbours and the friendliness of staff in the local shops (along Henley Road and in central Caversham). Stimulating publications (including Caversham Bridge, What's On and Xn) further develop a sense of identity.

Appreciation

I appreciate the attractiveness and excitement of living in Caversham with close proximity to Reading. At various points over the last four decades I have walked along Thames Promenade and admired the beauty of Caversham without ever thinking that one day I might be living here.

Vulnerability

Alongside the attractiveness there is a certain sense of vulnerability. I have experienced traffic gridlock and the ease with which the bridges can be blocked which may make residents of this area aware of the possibility of sometimes being somewhat cut off.

When we arrived there were a number of pressures and stresses we faced, and to discover how deeply caring the people of the local churches are has helped to provide us with strength and encouragement. The church at its best is a place of mutual caring and support.

Belonging, identity, appreciation and vulnerability are significant features of human life for us all to reflect on.

Revd. David Jenkins is a member of the Methodist Team Ministry

SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's, St Peter's Hill

8.00am Holy Communion
9.45am Parish Communion
6.30pm Evensong

St John's, Gosbrook Road

10.00am Parish Communion (except 2nd Sunday)
10.00am All Age Worship (2nd Sunday)

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)

St Margaret's, Mappedurham

11.00am Parish Communion

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)

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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
First 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

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ROMAN CATHOLIC

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Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm
Mappedurham 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 2015 issue should be sent to the Caversham Thameside and Mappedurham parish office by **Monday 1st June**. The date for the **August 2015** issue is **Monday 6th July**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk
Advertising copy for the July issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twiggmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, by **Friday 29th May**. The date for the August issue is **Friday 3rd July**.

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St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX
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New Thames Valley Fire Control Service goes live

The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS), the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire and Rescue Service (BMKFRS) and the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service (OFRS) have joined forces to set up a new joint control centre, based at RBFRS HQ in Calcot, Reading.

The Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) answers 999 calls and mobilises resources on behalf of the three Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) to incidents across the Thames Valley, serving a combined population of around 2,253,400. The phased transition to the Thames Valley Fire Control Service (TVFCS) was completed on Thursday 23rd April.

The TVFCS replaces the three FRSs individual control rooms, which were in urgent need of updating following the termination of the Government's national FiReControl project in 2010. After the FiReControl project came to an end, each FRS in England was given up to £1.8m grant money from Government to undertake this work.

The three Thames Valley FRSs chose to boost the value of this upgrade by working in partnership on plans for a joint control centre to deliver increased resilience, efficiency and improved performance – which will result in collective savings of over £1m a year for the next 15 years.

The TVFCS features the most up-to-date technology. This includes a new mobilising system, which enables control operators to identify the exact geographic location of an incident more quickly and, at the same time, pinpoint the precise position of each available fire appliance and officer via GPS. This allows the quickest available fire appliance to be used – irrespective of whether it is based in Berkshire, Oxfordshire or Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes – and consequently helps to improve attendance times.

Furthermore, every fire appliance across the three FRSs has been fitted or upgraded with the latest Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs). These display incidents on a mapping system, enabling fire crews to see their location and that of the incident in real-time. MDTs also provide the crews with risk-critical information such as individual building design and details about any special hazards or unusual processes or manufacturing at a particular location.

As a back up for the TVFCS primary control at Reading, a non-staffed secondary control room has also been created and is being maintained at OFRS' headquarters in Kidlington. In the unlikely event that the TVFCS primary control fails or needs to be evacuated, North Yorkshire Fire

and Rescue Service will take 999 calls and mobilise resources on behalf of the TVFCS for the short period of time needed to transfer control staff to the secondary control in Kidlington.

In total, the TVFCS cost in the region of £5.4 million funded by the three Services' combined grants from central Government. Royal Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Fire Authorities project that the TVFCS will achieve total savings of £15,871,672 by the end of 2024-25.

TVFCS programme senior user, DCFO Nathan Travis said, "This has been a huge team effort across all three services and, on behalf of the three Chief Fire Officers and Fire Authority members, I would like to thank all those who have been involved in the delivery of this partnership since its conception over four years ago – staff from the separate control functions affected by this change and staff past and present from within the Thames Valley FRSs, as well as our supporting organisations, representative bodies and third party suppliers.

"Without the professionalism and support from all these people, this significant collaboration between the three FRSs would not have been possible."

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Thames Vale Vultures Bikers and Rotary in Reading worked together to make it a Berkshire (Easter) Egg Run bonanza at ASDA, Lower Earley this Easter.

Thames Vale Vultures Motorcycle Club (TVVMC) and the Rotary Clubs in Reading (RinR) came together in the "Berkshire Egg Run" to bring some fun for disadvantaged children and senior citizens in Reading and Berkshire by collecting Easter Eggs for them to enjoy in the run-up to Easter. The plan was to collect as many boxed Easter Eggs as possible and then distribute most of them in the week running up to Good Friday to make real Easter presents.

Attached you will see photographs from the collections at ASDA on the weekend of 21st and 22nd March including both TVVMC and RinR members surrounded by powerful motorbikes in the main parade at ASDA Lower Earley. During the weekend over 3,800 boxed Easter Eggs were collected and packed expertly by the bikers ready for transportation to a site provided by the Rotary Clubs of Reading. From there the eggs were distributed to the Reading Rotary Clubs who delivered them to the various schools, orphanages, homes, care-homes and hospices in Reading and Berkshire.

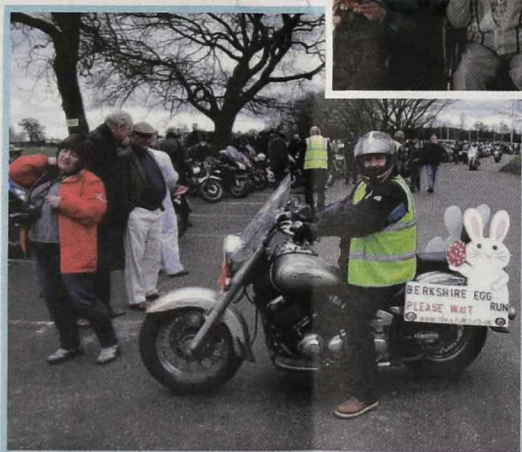
One of the photographs shows a delivery of the eggs to the Age Concern Day Centre in Twyford and it features Gordon Holmes, a delighted manager, his assistant Debbie Hefferman and Dennis Shepherd, one of the lucky users of the Age Concern facilities and recipient of one of the Easter eggs. Another photograph shows the users of the Age Concern Day Centre in Woodley receiving their Easter eggs - President Trevor Barber of Loddon Vale Rotary is featured in the photographs and commented that "the Day Care users seemed delighted with the delivery of the eggs and wanted to know more about Rotary and the Thames Vale Vultures".

On Good Friday, 3rd April, this activity culminated in a final motorbike procession of hundreds of bikes through Reading from Tilehurst along the A4, then the IDR along the Oxford Road and through Caversham before ending at The Abbey Rugby Ground at Sonning Common around 1.00pm. The collection has been organised and implemented by the Thames Vale Vultures

Motorcycle Club and the distribution of the eggs to the children and senior citizens was primarily undertaken by the Rotary Clubs of Reading. Everyone involved met at a grand reception at The Abbey Rugby Ground to celebrate the collection of the eggs and to announce the total number of eggs collected with plenty of boxed Easter Eggs still in evidence.

Thames Vale Vultures Motorcycle Club has been undertaking Berkshire Egg Run in Berkshire for the past 11 years. Their objective is to portray to the general public a more balanced view of "bikers" and their friends. Over the years the number of eggs collected has risen from 200 in the first year to over 9,500 in 2014. Throughout most

of this period ASDA, Lower Earley have been a major supporter of the TVVMC Berkshire Egg Run and have allowed the group to carry out most of their Easter egg collections in the main parade at the Lower Earley store. This year the Vultures decided to invite the Rotary Clubs in Reading to help with the distribution of the Easter eggs to the disadvantaged and/or disabled children and senior citizens of Berkshire. The Rotary Clubs in Reading were delighted to help because it supports one of the objects of Rotary, "Service above Self". The six Rotary Clubs involved are Loddon Vale (RCLV), Reading, Reading Maiden Erlegh, Reading Abbey, Reading Matins and Pangbourne.



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Bible Friends**Jesus is with us**

Jesus' friends are happy.

But they are also a little bit sad.

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Jesus' friends saw him die on the cross because he loved everyone so much and they met him when he came back to life again.

But Jesus' friends are a little bit sad because Jesus has gone back to heaven and they cannot see him any more.

Jesus' friends know they must go and tell everyone about Jesus.

They know Jesus promised to help them to do this. All Jesus' friends are happy because Jesus still promises to be with all his friends today.

Matthew 28:20

**Caversham Heights Methodist Church****Nepal Earthquake Disaster**

A silent auction will be held on Saturday May 30th

Bidding between 10.30am and 12 noon

Please look out new, or nearly new, items and come with money to bid.

Donated goods to be delivered between 7pm-9pm Friday 29th

and 9.30pm-10.30pm on Saturday 30th

Home made cake stall, tea and coffee.

Caversham Heights Methodist Church**Pet Service**

June 14th at 3pm

Our annual outdoor service of witness.

Please support this outreach.

Pet not essential!

100th Birthday Celebration

On 8 April, the Wednesday congregation at St Peter's Church sang an enthusiastic "Happy Birthday" to Jess Blythe, who celebrated her 100th birthday that week. As usual, she braved the traffic on St Peter's Hill and walked to church by herself!

There was a party in Jess's honour at Woodrow Court and a telegram was received from Her Majesty the Queen.

A simple said service of Holy Communion, followed by coffee, is held at St Peter's every Wednesday at 9.30am.

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Jess with the Rev Marion Pyke and some members of the St Peter's Wednesday morning congregation.

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Monday 27th July - Friday 31st July at Caversham Primary School

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*every Thursday 2pm - 6pm

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EMMER GREEN RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION 2015 AGM

A record ninety members attended the EGRA AGM on 15th April in St Barnabas Church Hall. After refreshments, Margaret Ormonde, the Chairman, led the formal business. Full details of her report are available on the association website www.egra.co.uk. Margaret thanked the four retiring committee members Vera Bodman, Jane Handley, Doris Hiscox and Mark Hutchings. She particularly mentioned Vera Bodman, a committee member since 1999 and Jane Handley, the Minute Secretary, who also managed the Noticeboard Team and Tradesmen's List. She welcomed Annette Fairweather and Veronica Leeke, who joined the committee during the year. Annette is now Membership Secretary and Veronica monitors



Margaret Ormonde, Doris Hiscox, Rachel Sanderson, Vera Bodman, Barry Prior, Liz Lyke, Rusty - the red kite, Veronica Leeke, Bill Harper, Linda Glithro, Jane Handley

planning in Reading and South Oxfordshire. An Ambassadors Group of members who are willing to help occasionally without becoming full committee members has been set up. The EGRA committee is focusing on the core functions and a new contact email account has been set up, egra.contact@gmail.com.

The Treasurer, Bill Harper, presented the annual accounts. In February this year EGRA received an unexpected, but very welcome windfall of £500, when the Bugs Bottom Action Group was disbanded. Bill also thanked Margaret for her eight year tenure as chairman and presented her with a plant as a token of thanks. For many years Margaret has been the association's lynch pin and has worked tirelessly in the interests of Emmer Green residents. A large card was available for members to sign.

With the formal part of the evening completed, Margaret introduced the guest speaker, Rachel Sanderson. Rachel is the Chiltern Commons Project Officer and spoke to members about this project.

'Common land' originated in medieval times when half of England was common. The commons were found on poor land, known as the 'waste' of the manor. They were the lands that the Lord of the Manor could not use for profit. Hard to believe these days that Kingwood Common could be described as 'waste'! The lord gave certain households 'common rights' to use common to supplement their livelihoods. There were six principal rights – grazing, pannage, estovers, turbary, piscary and common in the soil. All commons have owners and these owners maintained rights too, including mineral, sporting and timber rights. Commons today may be owned by private individuals, by estates (e.g. Nettlebed or Stonor), by Parish Councils (e.g. Ewelme), by Local Authorities, e.g. the National Trust or by conservation organisations. There are about 200 commons in the Chilterns, covering over 2,000 ha or 2.5% of the AONB. Some of them are very small – the smallest common at only 8.7 m is the Parish Well, Loosley Row.

They are usually at the edge of the parish, often peculiar shapes, frequently long and thin. They may be daughter settlements (detached parts of parishes). Clues to their existence appear in place names such as Upper, Lower or Bottom, Heath, End, Common and Green. These place names abound in our area. Maps show Binfield Heath, Gallows Tree Common (old oaks were the gallows trees), Hook End Common. The remnants that are still common land are often ponds, water being an essential common resource. Greenmoor Ponds, Woodcote, are a remnant of Woodcot Common [sic].

The commons provided essential resources for rural parishioners and supplemented their livelihoods. They were often meeting places and non-conformist places of worship which had to be several miles away from the

parish church. Schools were often established by philanthropists. Most of the common land closest to Emmer Green has been lost to enclosure. Old maps show historical clues that there was common land in Emmer Green. These are its narrow shape, the presence of a church, school, hall, pub, the allotments and the recreation ground.

Sonning Common was a detached upland part of Sonning Eye-on-Thames that provided grazing for cattle and sheep. It was enclosed into several fields in 1865 when hedges were planted and the land was sold for building sites at the turn of the last century. The settlement grew due to the health-giving properties of its position and the fine, bracing air of the Chiltern Hills.

Commons were eroded in several ways, by the Lord of the Manor, by local farmers and by building. A reported custom from 1500s was that if a squatter could establish a new house and have a fire going before the officials arrived, they were powerless to evict them. Imagine being able to stake a claim on a piece of Peppard Common! From the 16th to the 19th century massive enclosure reduced common land by more than 90%. Some was agreed, some was by stealth, and some was authorised by thousands of Acts of Parliament, until eventually a General Act was passed in 1845. Part of this act stated that 'A final residue was to be left for communal use including land for a poorhouse or field for fuel, a gravel pit for road making and, whenever possible, an area for the 'exercise and recreation' of inhabitants'. Understandably enclosure caused tension; most Lords of the Manor benefited and farmers increased efficiency, but the almost landless peasant was made even poorer.

Although historically the commons were restricted to the owners and those who had common rights, today everyone can walk anywhere on Registered Common Land, providing the habitat allows. Commons are special because they incorporate centuries of cultural and social history. Usually they have never been ploughed and as a result they often support species no longer often found in the open countryside. Over half of the common land in the Chilterns is designated for its wildlife habitats. Commons are highly valued by local communities and legislation protects commons and regulates their management.

Rachel finished her talk with information about the Red Kites Conservation project and introduced 'Rusty', the red kite that appears in the photo. Margaret thanked her for an extremely interesting and entertaining talk.

More information about the project can be found at www.chilternsaonb.org/commons.

Linda Glithro EGRA Committee Member

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Treasures to Explore

An appreciative audience in Gosbrook Road Methodist Church was treated to a lively and most entertaining evening of 'Treasures' presented by David Jenkins on Saturday 19th April. David is an avid supporter of UNICEF the United Nations Children's Fund – and all proceeds from the concert were donated to that wonderful organisation.

David got the evening off to a humorous start, an indication of treats in store, by declaring his opening number was to be 'Oh what a beautiful morning'. This lively rendition assured us we were indeed in for a truly 'Beautiful evening'. His voice was superb and his piano accompaniment brilliant – a great 'Pianoer' as one of our Sunday School children used to say!! No straightforward account of a simple tune by David though, rather a highly accomplished improvisation covering the whole range of the keyboard. This 'pianoer' must have spent many hours practising his scales and arpeggios and many more blending his pianistic and vocal skills – how

on earth is it possible to sing and play the piano so well at the same time?

What followed was amazing, showcasing David's wide ranging talents to the full. Each musical item was preceded by a humorous story, many in dialect -- his Welsh and Cockney anecdotes had the audience rolling in the aisles. His second musical item, 'The River Nadder' was an introduction to 'The Salisbury Suite' which he had recorded on Sir Edward Heath's piano in the ex-prime minister's home, 'Arundells' situated in the beautiful Salisbury Cathedral Close. So, the evening proceeded with a comprehensive range of musical items including Welsh traditional music, songs from the shows, a belting rendition of the Beatles' *Lady Madonna*, *The Dream of Olwen*, (with some superb double octaves!) and *Non Nobis Domine*, which evoked happy school day memories for many of the folks in the audience.

An array of refreshments provided in the interval by the Gosbrook Road ladies was greatly appreciated. During the munching and coffee drinking many complimentary comments about David's versatility were heard including the possibility of entering him for a well known TV talent show – watch this space!

Following refreshments, the audience returned refreshed, eager for more entertainment.

David opened the second half of his concert with a composition of his own entitled 'Tapestry'. This was a lovely piece that developed out of an unusual chord ('The River Nadder'

and 'Morning Cloud' also began with such a chord and all three pieces developed in very different directions). These compositions were in contrast to 'Waterfall' a piece that replicated in music the flow of the water downstream; with the river at first splashing playfully then building slowly to a rush towards the edge before plunging down with a crash only to move quietly onwards. Very nice indeed!

In 1989 David's musical 'Fishman Jazz' was produced at Wesley Church with people from the Circuit taking part. Possibly to mark the occasion of now being back in Reading, David performed a piece from this work 'The greatest man' and 'Standing on the threshold' from another musical performed at Wesley called 'Undeclared'.

Versatility being a feature of this concert David then gave us the third movement of Dvorak's 'Symphony No 8'

Finally, or nearly finally, David gave us a sort of medley from 'West Side Story'. I say "sort of medley" because he played and sang, without a break, a selection of songs from this show that he remembered so well from seeing it first performed in his teenage years.

Unsurprisingly there was much applause and as an encore David performed Three Jazz Preludes that fittingly he had composed at Gosbrook Road Church and accordingly premiered them there for the first time.

The final total raised for UNICEF was £457

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Council Announce Three More Sites Earmarked for its House Building Programme

Progress on the Council's scheme to build about 250 new homes in Reading over the next five years is set to be unveiled.

The first 125 of these new homes are now programmed to be delivered.

Over a 30-year period the Council hopes to build in the region of 1,000 homes. The go-ahead for the scheme was given by Policy Committee in

September last year. The Council has since begun planning the first phase of development.

In February this year, the Council approved a budget allocation of £8million to fund new Council houses, along with a programme of improvements to existing Council housing stock, including the installation of solar panels, worth £23.5million over the next three years.

A Council House Building Project Manager has been appointed and further specialist resources are now being sourced.

A total of 13 Council-owned sites have been identified and feasibility studies are being completed for 125 of the 250 new Council Homes planned for the first five-year phase of the House Building programme.

The sites include vacant land at North Street, Caversham, for about 25 homes, and land at 94 George Street for two homes.

The sites identified also include Caversham Nursery, which will take around 15 new homes, when it is no longer used as a temporary site by The Heights Primary School. After the EFA has chosen a permanent site for the school, the Council plans to use the Gosbrook Road site for Council housing.

The Council has signed up to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Procurement Framework to help find a range of architectural, multi-disciplinary technical and construction services for larger contracts.

This council house building scheme aims to meet the growing need for affordable housing in Reading as house prices and private sector rents continue to rise, pricing many households out of the market. Homelessness in Reading has tripled since 2011 and there are more than 9,000 people on the town's housing register.

The council owns land with potential for about 300 new homes and will need to acquire land for the remainder on the open market. Funds to buy sites are included in the proposals.

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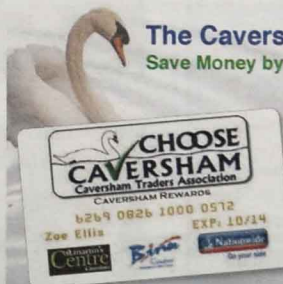
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Caversham Court gardens once again hosts the annual Caversham Church Fete, on Saturday July 11th, organised by St Peter's Church, Caversham, and St Margaret's Church, Mapledurham.

Attractions will include

- Entertainment including music and dancing
- Stalls from cakes, plants and bric-a-brac, to jams and preserves
- Sideshows including coconut shy, hoopla and hook a duck
- Refreshments including homemade cakes, tea, coffee, ice cream and a Pimms tent by the river.

It all starts at 1.45pm with the ringing of St Peter's bells and a Spitfire flypast.

Summer Party in Caversham Court Gardens.

Come to the gardens for a friendly summer party on Sunday 21st June.
2pm-5pm.

The Friends of Caversham Court Gardens, of Reading Museum and of Reading Abbey are getting together again to host a joint party for all. Everybody is welcome; you don't have to be a member of any of the groups and entry is free. Entertainment will include live music, theatre and creative activities for children.

Cream teas will be on sale at the Tea Kiosk run by local charities.

Disabled parking only, on site at Caversham Court.

For more details email friends@fccg.org.uk

Caversham Bereaved Attend Annual Service of Remembrance

Caversham people who have been bereaved were amongst hundreds of people who came together for the annual service of remembrance held at Reading Minster of St Mary the Virgin organised by Berkshire based funeral directors A.B. Walker & Son. Candles were lit in memory of loved ones at the emotional service.

Amongst those who attended were Councillor Tony Jones The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Reading, Mayoress councillor Liz Terry and Sir John Madejski.

Matthew Walker, Director of A.B. Walker & Son, welcomed those attending. He said: "Each of you will be here on your own personal journey adjusting to the pain of losing a loved one. We come to this place of peace and hope to remember, to share and to comfort. We hope that this service will inject you with energy, the will, the comfort and support that makes the future less lonely, less daunting and more hopeful."

The service was officiated by the Bishop of Reading, the Rt Revd Andrew Proud.

Lt Col Norman West, whose wife died last year, read a poem 'I'm there inside your heart' in her memory.

There was also a reading from Sonia Gordon, who is one of the Cruse facilitators for the Link bereavement course.

The Link Bereavement Care group was set up by A.B. Walker & Son and has provided a bereavement course for people who have lost loved ones. Anyone in Berkshire who has been bereaved in the past year, and feels they can benefit, may apply to go on the six week course. The group was set up in partnership with the charity Cruse Bereavement Care.

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From L-R: Councillor Tony Jones The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Reading, his wife the Mayoress councillor Liz Terry, Lt Col Norman West, Miss Sonia Gordon (CRUSE bereavement volunteer), Mr Matthew Walker and wife Melissa Walker of A.B. Walker & Son Funeral Directors.



From L-R: Councillor Tony Jones The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Reading, Sir John Madejski, OBE, DL and Mayoress Liz Terry

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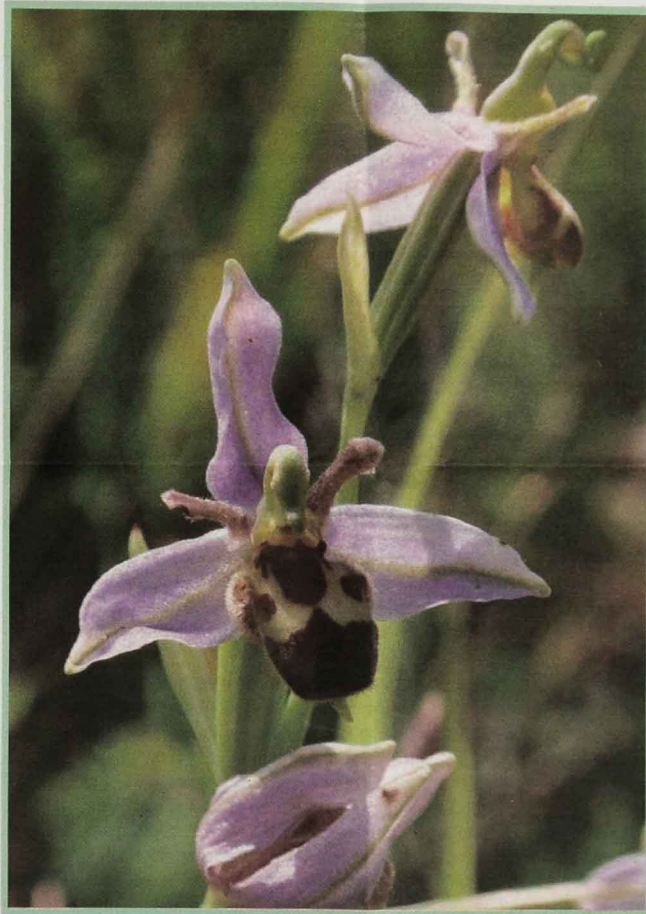
BEE ORCHIDS

In past years, I have written about the Military, Monkey and Lady Orchids, and about the hybrid between the Monkey and the Lady which was discovered at the Hartslock Nature Reserve near Goring. This year, I've chosen the Bee Orchid. It is supposedly commoner, but you never know quite where it's going to turn up, and in what quantity. One year there may be many flower spikes in a colony, and the next year, very few or none at all, but there may well be new colonies waiting to be discovered. It seems to like soils that have been recently disturbed, but gives up if the surrounding vegetation becomes too rampant.

The plant in this picture cropped up in the open on a roadside bank at Woolhampton, but I've also come across a colony under trees in the Chilterns, near Sonning Common.

It's one of a group of orchids where the flowers mimic insects and spiders. In this country, we also have the Fly, Early Spider and Late Spider Orchids, the two latter with just toe-holds near the south coast in Great Britain. On the continent, there are lots more orchids belonging to this group, and it can be great fun in southern Europe in April, looking for the Sawfly Orchid, the Mirror Orchid, the Woodcock Orchid, and their relatives.

The insect mimicry involves not only the shape, the colour, and sometimes the furriness of the flowers, but the scent that they give off, a scent which mimics that of the female insect. Experiments have shown, by hiding the flowers or cutting off parts of them, that male insects are attracted to them by scent. They take the flowers to be their mates, and in their sexual frenzy, remove the pollen-sacs from one flower, and transfer them to another.



In this country, disappointingly for the male bees, this doesn't happen very often with Bee Orchids. The very detailed chapter on orchids in the book 'The Natural History of Pollination' in the 'New Naturalist' Series says that it happens in southern Europe, but in this country, the flowers are usually self-pollinated. If the pollen-sacs are not removed by insects or other means, their stalks elongate so that they dangle down, and the pollen in shed, to be transferred to the stigmas by the wind. V. S. Summerhayes, in another 'New Naturalist' classic book, 'Wild Orchids of Britain,' says that this self-pollination is responsible for some of the aberrations found in this species being carried on across the generations. These aberrations include the variation known as the Wasp Orchid, which has a deformed-looking lower petal.

I well remember the first time I saw a Bee Orchid. I had my new single-lens reflex Praktica camera with me, and the poor solitary spike was well and truly photographed. I went on my merry way through the wood, but on the way back, I couldn't resist the urge to take a final lingering look. To my dismay, I found that it wasn't there any more. So then I felt guilty – maybe somebody had been watching me, and, curiosity aroused, had gone to see what the attraction was, and picked it, and it was all my fault!

Happy Wanderer

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Probus

The speaker at the April meeting of the Reading and District Probus Club was Peter Constable, whose subject was 'Eye surgery'. Peter is the Ophthalmology Consultant at the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

Peter's medical training included stints at both Oxford and Cambridge universities, followed by about ten years practical experience at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London. He also did two years research at the Institute of Ophthalmology, before being appointed to his current position in 2005. He also operates at Spire Dunedin and Newbury hospitals.

His talk concentrated on cataracts. A cataract is an abnormality in lens clarity, caused by a hazy or blurry structure, leading to loss of vision. It is the leading cause of blindness worldwide. It is forecast that 38 million people will be blind by 2020, 16 million of them as a result of cataracts.

Cataracts can be congenital, but are usually acquired, due to age, trauma, radiation, medication, systemic diseases or ocular diseases. They usually grow gradually, but in some cases can grow more rapidly.

The effects include reduction in visual acuity, loss of contrast, myopic shift, monocular diplopia (double vision), glare, colour shift and loss of visual field.

A cataract is treated by couching, or lens replacement. A pre-op assessment will determine if the cataract is the sole cause of the problem, and whether there are any other eye diseases present, what surgery is appropriate, what lens power is needed, and what anaesthetic will be used.

Lens implants were first performed by Harold Ridley in 1949. The existing lens was removed using extra-capsular cataract extraction, using a small incision (8-10 mm) in the eye, and the replacement lens was inserted in a bag. Today lenses are removed using phacoemulsification, which breaks up the lens, allowing a much smaller incision (2mm), so no sutures are required, leading to rapid rehabilitation. The whole process usually takes about 15 minutes. The process results in stable lens insertion, and can correct astigmatism, near and distant vision, using multi-focal lenses.

Post-op the success rate is greater than 99%, the risk of reduced vision is low, and the improvement in sight is rapid, often with much better colour definition. Sometimes the sight deteriorates due to capsule opacification, but this is easily corrected using laser treatment.

This was a fascinating talk on the causes and treatment of cataracts.

Probus is a club for retired men, who enjoy a meal once a month in congenial company. 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, then contact the secretary David Laird on 0118 9470709.

Rosehill WI

The President Margaret Pyle welcomed all members and guests to the April meeting, held on a rather windy afternoon on April Fools Day!! Margaret then said that the report for the March meeting was available for all to read at their leisure. A write-up was not submitted for our March meeting which consisted of electing a committee for the coming 12 months.

At the moment there are no walks planned as those members that used to walk are all unable to do so, but it is hoped that later in the year when the weather is warmer the walks will resume. There were no birthday buttonholes to present so Margaret Seal had a rest! Mary Robinson (secretary) then drew our attention to several outings in the Berkshire FWI newsletter that will be taking place in the coming weeks. Doris Goddard (treasurer) made an appeal to members for items (or money) for the Hospital Courtesy Packs as these are constantly needed. Doris was amazed to find out that up to 1,000 patients a week are admitted to RBH via the Accident and Emergency or Clinical Decision Unit following some kind of accident or trauma.

Margaret then reported that Margery Record had had a stroke and is now in the Royal Berks Hospital. Margery, at 97, is one of our founder members and we wish her a speedy recovery. Margaret also reported that, Daphne Walker had passed away on the 8th March - she will be missed. Daphne was a very talented lady and often had her photographs included in the WI Calendar - she was also an excellent watercolourist and her paintings were admired by many.

Our speaker was Jerry Duggan from the Citizens' Advice (formerly the Crown Court Victim Support Unit). This unit has many helpers mostly being either retired or students. They support both defence or prosecution witnesses and their families. These days more children are involved in court cases which can be quite terrifying for them. Jerry did mention that one of her longest serving helpers is the husband of Mary Robinson - well done John.

We have some very interesting talks and events coming up, so why not come along and join us for an afternoon? We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 2.00 pm in St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green

Caversham WI

Diamonds really are a Girl's Best Friend as members found when local jeweller Chris Walton was the speaker.

Enthralling information on precious stones and metals was given and even some samples to see though the 'diamonds' were not real. Many questions kept Chris busy and he judged the competition *My Favourite Piece of Jewellery*. The winner was Monica McMaster with Jill Wright and Margaret Cameron as runners-

up.

A report was given on the recent handover of the centenary baton from Berkshire to Oxfordshire which was held at Caversham rowing lakes.

The new programme for the coming year was available with plenty of interest to end a 'sparkling' evening.

Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club

Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club present Annette Parshotam who will be demonstrating floral arrangements with the theme 'Hollywood meets Bollywood' on June 10th at 7.30pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. Entrance fee £5.50 for visitors. For more details please contact Shirley Sexton 0118-9412329

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Caversham Horticultural Society

For the June talk we are very pleased to welcome Anna Platoni of the RHS Entomology Dept. to give a talk entitled 'Butterflies and Bugs: garden friends and foes'. This talk starting at 7.45pm will take place on Wednesday 17th June at our usual venue Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road.

Admission fee £3.00 for non members. Refreshments will be served afterwards

Caversham Allotment Society

The next meeting of the Caversham Allotment Association is on Tuesday 9th June at Church House, Caversham. The speaker will be Michael Keith Lucas who will talk about *Gardening in a Changing Climate*, a subject which I am sure will be of interest to most gardeners.. Talk starts at 7.30 and there are refreshments and a raffle. Entrance is free. Contact Carol Wheeler on 0118 9475802 for further details. Don't forget that Church House now has a lift which will appeal to all those who were prevented from attending in the past due to the stairs.

Caversham Heights Society

The final lecture for the 2014-15 season of the Caversham Heights Society took place on the 1st April. Colonel 'Paddy' Verdon OBE, from the Queen's Gurkha Signals, gave an enthralling, and very colourful, talk on the Albuquerque Balloon Festival in New Mexico. This is the oldest, and biggest, balloon festival in the world and Albuquerque is a unique setting since the city's location on the Rio Grande river, and its unusually

clear and steady wind patterns, make it an ideal location to hold balloon races.

After giving a brief history of hot air ballooning from its origins in Paris in 1783 up to modern times Paddy then talked about the Albuquerque festival. It begins before 6am when small balloons are sent up to test the wind speeds. If they are stormy or exceed 15 miles per hour then it is deemed unsafe to launch any of the 800 balloons that are there to compete. These 800 balloons come from around the world, although most are from the USA, and are divided into different classifications. Judging from the pictures used to illustrate the talk the balloons range from quite sedate and normal to the completely bizarre and wacky - typical of the brashness associated with certain aspects of American society.

Some long distance balloons can travel up to between 1500 and 2000 miles across the USA; some hardly make it off the ground and others end up in the Rio Grande! Surprisingly, about 80% of the hot air balloons around the world are made in the UK while most of the rest come from Brazil. All are made from different strengths and sizes of nylon and are stitched together very carefully. A large number of members enjoyed this unusual and colourful end of season talk.

The 2015-16 season begins in September. Interested new members who wish to find out more about the Society should consult the Society's chairman either by telephone to 0118 959 5307 or via email to irishjill@southcote.net.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

The Guild turned to the past in May with Catherine Sampson's presentation on Georgian cookery.

Chris Walton gave an interesting talk about jewellery to the Social Studies group.

Many of our members enjoyed afternoon tea at the Boaters cafe overlooking the marina at Caversham.

The scrabble club and luncheon club met as usual. The ambling club had a bluebell walk and an ever popular coffee morning was held.

We look forward to our next meeting on June 18th, which will be our 54th Birthday party taking place at Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, Highmoor Road.

Thirtieth Birthday Party for Inner Wheel of Caversham!

Over thirty members and their guests met at Caversham Heath Golf Club for a thirtieth anniversary charter lunch to celebrate the founding of the club in 1985. That was the year Margaret Thatcher defeated Ted Heath to become the first female Leader of the Conservative Party and Manchester United returned to the Premier Division. It was also the year Fawley Towers was first shown on BBC2 and the year of P.G. Wodehouse's death. The guest speaker was Inspector Mark Harling of Thames Valley Police, who gave a highly engaging and informative talk on a day in the life of a busy police station. Mark then took questions from the floor. His talk, and his answers to the questions put to him, underlined the vital role the police play in the lives of all who live in the Thames Valley.

The President of the Club, Libby Lowry, welcomed all the guests and Margaret Groom, District Chairman, lit the candle of friendship which, by tradition, opens every meeting of Inner Wheel. Margaret also presented the club with a framed certificate of recognition of thirty years of Inner Wheel in Caversham. Grace was said by Gwen Bowman and the vote of thanks to the speaker was made by Vice-President, Katie Armitage. Katie will take over as President from Libby after the AGM and Katie was assisted in organising the anniversary lunch by Rosalie Pulleyn, the secretary, and by Barbara Baxendale, the treasurer. The thirtieth-birthday cake was cut jointly by Anne Long, the inaugural President in 1984, and by Libby. The yellow and blue symbol of Inner Wheel, crafted in icing, was prominent on the top of the cake.

Although this year's Inner Wheel of Caversham charity is the Reading based children's charity, Daisy's Dream, a cheque for two hundred and fifty pounds has been donated to the national, Inner Wheel response to the tragedy in Nepal. Inner Wheel in Nepal is a growing, women's movement.

Inner Wheel is one of the world's largest women's voluntary organisations.

In many countries which are male dominated, it is one of the few ways a woman's voice can be heard. This year's international theme is Light the Path and was chosen by Abha Gupta of the Delhi Central club who is this year's International President. Inner Wheel has been a growing force for good in India for sixty years.



Anne Long and Libby Lowry cut the birthday cake.

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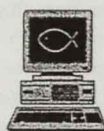
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