

# LOOKING BACK ON 2009



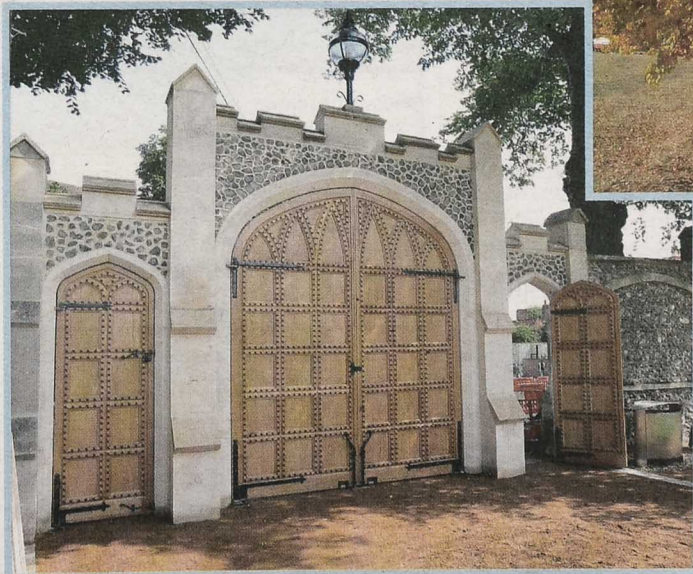
The Gazebo before restoration.



New building goes up at St Barnabas



Glorious Autumn at Clayfield Copse



The restored gates at Caversham Court.



Arriving at Caversham Court by Ferry.

WE WISH YOU A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

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## Caversham Clergy

### ANGLICAN

Revd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.  
Tel: 947 8239.

www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

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

www.standrewscaversham.org

Revd Alveen Thoresen, 25 Ilkley Road, Caversham,  
RG4 7BD. Tel: 946 4786

Revd Keith Knee-Robinson, 8 Hewett Close,  
Caversham, RG4 7ER Tel: 947 7868

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### CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Revd Margaret Dimmick, 12 Lowfield Road,  
Caversham Park. Tel: 947 0258

Heather Wilson, 15 Northbrook Road, Caversham  
Park. Tel: 947 5152

### METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

Rev Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road. Tel: 947 2223  
Deacon Becky Bawden, 1 Forge Close, Caversham RG4  
8BG. Tel: 948 2530

### BAPTIST

Paul Rhodes. Tel: 954 5353

### GRACE CHURCH (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Colin Gault. Tel: 948 4151

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

Fr Giles Goward, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue.  
Tel: 947 1787.

Deacon Mike Walker, Tel: 07786 836146

Fr Christopher Bester, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning  
Common. Tel: 972 3418

### NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Rev H R Gayle Tel: 945 3849 (contact)

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## TALKING POINT

by

Jenny Dowding

## Whose apprentice are you

I'm not a fan of the TV programme "The Apprentice" – on the odd occasion I've seen it, I find it difficult to identify with the aggressive and bullying behaviour of both the contestants and the judges. Apparently, I'm not alone. The programme has been described as "falsely linking success with being nasty, disloyal, greedy and selfish", and "full of vulgar, loud people who, for all the wrong reasons, *are setting each other up*".

However, the basis of the programme is interesting. Young ambitious people compete to become the apprentice to a successful businessman, to learn his skills, to follow in his footsteps, to become like him. Another word for apprentice is disciple. The writer Dallas Willard asks the question: "Whose disciple are you? You are somebody's disciple, somebody's apprentice. You learned how to live from somebody else." (*Dallas Willard in "The Divine Conspiracy" 1998: Fount Paperbacks*). We don't usually like to think of ourselves like this. In our individualistic culture, we tend to think we're independent, free-thinking, our own person. But we have each been influenced, often unwittingly, and for good or bad, by parents, teachers, friends, colleagues.

In the time of Jesus, rabbis would attract disciples – apprentices – who would seek to live so closely to their master in order to learn from him, that they would be covered in the dust of the rabbi. They were so committed to walking and living close to the rabbi, that the dust kicked up by the rabbi's feet would coat the clothes of the apprentice. It has been said that Christians are "apprentices in kingdom living". In other words, to be a Christian is to be apprenticed to Jesus, to want to learn from him, and to become like him.

The new year is traditionally associated with resolutions, decisions to put something right in our lives, make changes, turn over a new leaf, and so on. This requires us to think about 'living intentionally'. A lot of people live unintentionally, and they let life just happen to them. The new year is the opportunity to decide, or to decide again, whose apprentice I am. Will I let life simply happen to me, or will I choose to follow one who will enable me to become all that I was intended to be? Will I learn from the one who knows what it is to be fully human? Will I walk so closely to him every day that the dust of the rabbi will cover me?

Your life is not your project. It's God's project. Happy New Year!

*Revd Jenny Dowding is the Methodist Minister  
in Caversham*

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of the

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59 Church Street

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## Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the February 2010  
issue should be sent to St Peter's Parish  
Office by Tuesday 5th January. The date  
for the March 2010 issue is Tuesday 2nd  
February 2010.

Advertising copy for the February 2010  
issue should be sent to Mr A Wright,  
Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue,  
Caversham, by **Friday** 1st January  
2010. The date for the March 2010 issue  
is **Friday** 29th January 2010.

## 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 Eucharist
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#### St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

8.00am	The Eucharist
10.00am	Parish Eucharist (Sung)
	First Sunday, Family Eucharist
11.30am	The Eucharist
6.30pm	Evening Prayer (as announced)

#### St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

8.00am	Holy Communion
9.30am	Family Communion (apart from 2nd Sunday)
9.30am	Family Service (2nd Sunday only)

#### St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.00am	Parish Communion
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### 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

10.30am	South Street
3.45pm	Hymn Café (3rd Sunday)
6.30pm	Usually at 191 Kidmore Road

### 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 and 6.30pm

#### Gosbrook Road

10.30am and 6.30pm

#### 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

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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# GIRLGUIDING THANKSGIVING SERVICE

It's not often that Guiders do something just for themselves, but that's precisely what guide leaders from all over Berkshire did on Sunday 15 November. As one of our Centenary Celebrations, a thanksgiving service was held at St Mary's in Reading, to give thanks and praise for the dedication of guiders past, present and future.

The service was taken by Rev Mary Harwood, herself a Guider, and the Bishop of Reading spoke eloquently of the impact Girlguiding had on his

life, and his spiritual journey. Many of the mayors from boroughs across the county were also present, as was Theresa May MP, who is one of the county's vice-presidents for Girlguiding UK. There were readings from the county commissioner, our County president, and the choir was provided by the Trefoil Guild singing circle.

Each division (representing a part of the county) carried its standard, and was accompanied by the flag from one of their Guide companies. Caversham was well represented here, with Margaret Pearson of 4th Caversham Brownies carrying the standard, together with two girls from 2nd Caversham Guides, chosen because, at over 90 years old, it is the oldest unit in Reading Abbey division.

The union flag, world flag and county standard led the procession, and, again, Caversham was in on the act, with three Caversham guiders, Catharine Sharman, Claire Pawley and Debbie Tarrant, carrying and escorting the union flag.

Floral decorations throughout the church were provided by local guiders (yes, Caversham was in there too), with beautiful displays depicting various aspects and sections of Girlguiding.

Our Centenary celebrations will continue throughout 2010 and we aim to bring news of our activities. If you would like to get involved, however limited your time, please contact us via our e-mail [cavershamguides@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cavershamguides@hotmail.co.uk)

Catharine Sharman



Margaret Pearson of 4th Caversham Brownies and two guides from the 2nd Caversham Guides, with their Standards.



Claire Pawley, Catharine Sharman and Debbie Tarrant with the Union flag.

Photos courtesy Catharine Sharman

## Caversham Bridge

Would contributors please note that, following changes in the opening days of the St Peter's Parish Office, it has become necessary to alter the time when material should be submitted for publication. The latest day in the relevant week will accordingly be the Tuesday and not the Wednesday. We will continue to publish monthly in this paper the two following months' latest submission dates.

It has also been necessary to alter the latest dates for submission of advertisements, which will normally be the Friday preceding the Tuesday date mentioned above. The two following months' submission dates will similarly be published each month.

The editors hope these changes will not inconvenience contributors or advertisers.

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# Ex Libris

**CHRISTMAS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE**

Christmas 2009 is now in the past but as I write it is still in the future and for most of you it is probably still 'this Christmas'. I am not going to embark upon a discussion concerning the paradox of time. Rather I thought I would look at some very practical issues that came to light in the run up to 'this Christmas' and which will certainly figure in most people's lives in the coming year. And I haven't even mentioned the general election; well now I have.

**EDUCATION AND TRANSPORT**

These are two of the most contentious issues, along with planning, that seem to dominate local debate.

Over the last year I, and others, have reported on the problems and changes that education in Reading is facing.

Early in November CADRA held a meeting featuring speakers from the council who gave a most comprehensive analysis of the current situation. It would take several pages of this paper even to begin to outline the issues. However Maggie Buckley and Kevin McDaniel, head of the education management team, first summarised the salient problems and then took questions from the 50 or so people at the meeting. It should be noted these included several of our local councillors, including the Mayor, Cllr Fred Pugh.

Both in Reading as a whole and particularly in Caversham, the problem is one of numbers and places. We are faced with a rising birth rate combined with a decline in outward mobility from the area. In 2006 we enjoyed a 20% surplus in primary school places, by 2009 this had declined to 4% and the statistics indicate that the trend will continue.

Various means of addressing the problem have been looked at; some even have gone to public consultation. Indeed of the 297 replies received by the council to its consultation in June 2009 over 50% came from the RG4 area.

This showed an overwhelming rejection of the plan to build a new primary school on the Mapledurham playing fields and there was an equally negative response to the idea of a primary school on the Highdown site. Other solutions such as expanding existing primaries and encouraging more co-operation between Highdown and Chiltern Edge are being explored. Caversham's historic close connections with South Oxon are confirmed by the fact that 30% of the intake into primaries in the adjacent area of South Oxfordshire is drawn from the RG4 postcode.

Maggie Buckley emphasised the difficulty in planning for unborn cohorts of children. Some sort of 'flexiplan' is required in response to the emerging demand. However, even if both the money and the political will were readily available, Reading faces another problem: its size. As a very small education authority there is little spare land. Indeed, although it is acknowledged that we need another secondary school, this requires eight hectares and the council just doesn't own that much land.

The latter part of the meeting consisted of a question and answer session. It was quite clear that many people had some challenging questions as to how we had arrived at this state of affairs. One problem is that the National Office of Statistics' own figures, which inform planning decisions, for 2006+ in the Reading area, were significantly wrong. Further discussion also took place over the status of the Mapledurham playing fields, though politically this would appear to be off the agenda at the moment.

Solutions may lie in arranging more flexible catchment areas. Kevin McDaniel said that despite the figures given above, Caversham as a whole should have sufficient capacity for the next few years.

One final thought, however, is that this is the year of a general election.

**TRANSPORT**

The upgrading of Reading Station will have several repercussions on Caversham. I went to one of the exhibitions organised by the council following planning approval in September. According to the council 'the new building and facilities will extend across Station Approach and will include a large pedestrian area, which will mean the closure of Station Approach which is currently used by buses, taxis and cycles. This means roads located around the station will need to be reconfigured with bus, taxi, cycle, coach and drop off interchange facilities in the area reorganised.' It will also entail some changes to bus stops and bus routes to Caversham. Most affected are those routes which currently come into Caversham via Caversham Bridge.

I also asked about Crossrail. I was told that this is now more likely than before to be extended to Reading from Maidenhead. The original reasons against it coming were the extra cost of electrification and limited capacity at Reading Station. Both issues are being addressed so the extension is now more probable.

I never like ending on a downbeat but it should be noted that although the money is in place for the actual rail network extension and the main station, unfortunately this is not the case for the wider station area where private funding will be required.

**THE MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS MARKET**

For the last several years part of our family's routine has been to visit the Mayor's Market. This year there wasn't one. Why?

Who better to ask than the mayor himself? Cllr Pugh was more than happy to discuss the matter. First of all he stressed that, despite its name, the Mayor's Market really had little to do with the mayor or his charities. It was run by a committee which did not involve the mayor and, as any visitor to it will know, it consisted of a series of stalls raising money for their own charities. As the cost of running these stalls, including the Hexagon's fees, has increased, so the money raised for charity has decreased. For these reasons the committee decided that this year it would call a halt.

By way of compensation for the disappointed charities, and the people who enjoyed the Mayor's Market, Cllr Pugh negotiated four free days at a cabin in the Oracle Christmas market. Four lucky charities each had a day selling their wares at this event which has now become a regular feature of Reading's Christmas season.

**A TIME FOR GIVING**

Finally, talking of charities, it still isn't too late to take part in Lindsay's quiz. It only costs £2 and of course some generous people make an extra donation. This is now a traditional feature of the Christmas season in Caversham. It has been running for nearly a quarter of a century and has raised thousands of pounds for various local charities.

This year the quiz is in aid of Age Concern Reading and the money raised will go towards outings for elderly people who would not otherwise be able to afford them.

The quiz is available from WordPlay in Prospect Street and from several local churches.

If you would like to find out more, look up the website [www.lindsaysquiz.co.uk](http://www.lindsaysquiz.co.uk)

You have until the end of January.

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## Remembrance and Poppy Appeal in Caversham

On Sunday November 8th, Caversham had one of its biggest ever parade and services for Remembrance Sunday. Over 700 people attended the service at Caversham's War Memorial in Christchurch Meadows.

As always, the police accompanied the parade from Christchurch Meadows as members of various local organisations paraded from Westfield Road to the memorial where the service was conducted by the Legion's branch chaplain the Rev. Derek Chandler, from St. Barnabas Church, Emmer Green.

This year, emphasis was made on the relevance of Remembrance. The present day conflicts meant that increasingly people wanted to remember and think about the human sacrifice that all conflicts cost.

The service was made even more poignant because of the loss of a local boy, Cyrus Thatcher, in Helmand Province earlier in 2009. His parents, brothers, relatives and colleagues from his regiment were at the service and laid wreaths in his memory.

After raising money from local residents and businesses the names of Caversham's Fallen from World War II were added in 2005. One panel was left blank in the hope that it would for ever stay that way. It is blank no more. The name of Cyrus Thatcher has been added and Caversham has one more war dead to remember.

The name was added by AB Walker & Son, who also did the engraving of the World War II fallen. The bill was paid from the war memorial fund but Mr. Julian Walker immediately made a donation to the Poppy Appeal of the same amount - in other words his company did the work for nothing. It is generous gestures like this that really bring home the deep sense of gratitude that people feel when they donate to the Appeal.

At the time of writing the people and businesses in Caversham had already donated over £35,000 to 2009 appeal.

On Wednesday the 11th November Caversham came to a standstill - at 11am. Service standards were lowered and two minutes silence was observed.

## Prison appeals for volunteer teachers

The Young Offenders Institute at Huntercombe, Nuffield, is seeking volunteers to work with young people on a one to one basis.

One to One is a scheme within the prison through which volunteers help young men aged 15 to 18 with their literacy, language and numeracy, in an attempt to give them the

skills and confidence to access learning opportunities. The scheme has been running for approximately ten years and there are currently 40 volunteers who are managed by one full-time co-ordinator. The scheme fits around and supports the other types of literacy and numeracy provision in the prison.

Working as a volunteer is a challenge, but all sorts of people accept this challenge. It is not necessary to have previous teaching experience, as training is given. A volunteer tutor needs to have a good level of education, be positive, committed and a good listener.

Prospective volunteers are interviewed before being accepted and also have to undergo a security check. All volunteers attend a four-day training course. A Co-ordinator provides help and support and the prison authorities are able to reimburse travel expenses.

You can contact One-to-One on: 01491 643315 or e-mail patricia.ryman@hmpr.gsi.gov.uk or write to: Patsy Ryman, One to one, HMYOI Huntercombe, Nuffield, Henley on Thames, RG9 5SB



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## To Be - Or Not To Be

Should the priest at Caversham be re-housed? Or should his present dwelling place be improved? These were the questions that plagued some people in the village for many years. In fact from 1804 until 1844 when the matter was finally resolved. The story of those forty years of arguing and changing of plans is all set down in correspondence belonging to Christ Church, Oxford, where I spent two mornings in their archives.

It begins a few years after the death of Caversham's priest, the Revd Peter Vaas, in 1800. There was obviously a discussion about the new incumbent's living accommodation, for a letter, dated 1804, states that Peter Vaas had lived in a property once held by the Brighams.

A little aside here on the Brighams. Thomas Brigham was Cofferer to Henry VIII. After the dissolution of the monasteries, Henry handed all the Notley Abbey lands in Caversham to Christ Church, Oxford. The Brighams almost certainly held, as tenants, the former Notley Abbey lands at Cannon's End (now Cane End), where they built a house or extended the farm buildings which were the monks' grange. Cane End was formerly part of Caversham parish and only in the eighteenth century taken away to help form the new parish of Kidmore End. The Brigham family plaques can be seen in the Brigham chapel in St Peter's church. The first house they lived in was burnt down around 1703 and the present one, Cane End House, arose from its ruins. It is also possible that the Brighams had some Christ Church land at Buckside, near the church, for Peter Vaas may have lived in a cottage there. It is certainly mentioned around 1840/1841.

Now, back to 1809, when a letter from Caversham to Christ Church asks if they would consider buying two adjoining cottages for the priest. Back came the reply that a recent fire at the college had caused a great deal of expense over repairs and it was not possible to do anything for the present. Time passed and the poor incumbent's house was in a bad way. Dry rot had got into the living room and was rapidly consuming the wainscot. According to a letter, it would soon spread into the beams. The cost of dealing with this matter was estimated at fourteen pounds. In fact it proved greater.

Again the months went by, the years rolled on. Then early in 1837 a new idea was suggested from Caversham. Could the tenants of The Priory, also a Christ Church property, be given notice and it be used for the curate while a new house was built or the old one repaired? The Priory tenants were two Miss Cowslades. Another year elapsed when in May 1838 the Dean and Chapter received a letter from the Revd Richard Roberts, curate of Caversham, asking, "Is the proposal to repair or rebuild the parsonage given up?" He went on to say that he had heard nothing of the kind was now going on and that if the scheme was abandoned he would have to give up the parish.

The letter from poor Richard Roberts seems to have got things moving again. His house was examined and Christ Church told that new gutters and tiles were needed for a room and the chimney needed repairs. A new beam was required to support the ceiling in one room. All windows and wainscots 'which were numerous' would need replacing. The cost of the operation was to be in the region of two hundred and seventy pounds! In September a local builder, Mr Johnson, inspected The Priory. He did not think the cost of restoring it worthwhile, it was damp and inconvenient. He suggested patching it up for fifty pounds and letting it on a long lease, or pulling it down and rebuilding it.

Things began to happen! A letter from the Dean and Chapter on November 12 stated they intended to rebuild The Priory, presumably for use as a parsonage. Then came a letter from Caversham (June 1839) saying that Christ Church had fixed the rent for the Priory too high for the Revd Richard Roberts. He only had a stipend of seventy-five pounds yearly and to pay a rent of sixty from it was unthinkable. Back came the reply. The Priory was actually worth a rent of seventy-five pounds per annum! However Mr Roberts could have it for sixty. It was suggested he could let his present abode for fifteen pounds when he moved to The Priory thus giving him thirty pounds a year to live on!

By September it had been suggested that the rent should be raised to eighty pounds! The letter from Oxford said there was a good supply of water to The Priory but as yet no water closet! One might be added! The house, they wrote, was not quite finished.

A very irate letter the next month said the property was not yet fit for occupation. There were no grates, the chimneys were not yet built and a large heap of rubbish from the alterations was in the grounds. The writer was the Revd H Poyntz and he indicated he was no longer interested in the curacy. Within a few weeks yet another cleric, the Revd Latward, had also declined the living. By 1840 the present curate of Caversham had resigned and by April The Priory was still empty and the privies unusable.

The old Christ Church cottage at Buckside was once again inspected with a view to improving it for the incumbent. However the material was of little use; the walls were only one brick thick and the foundations were of flint. It was now 1841.

Finally in January 1843 it was stated "that the Dean and Chapter

had no alternative but to present to the living a cleric who would be compellable to erect a suitable house". That cleric was the Revd Joshua Bennett, a Perpetual Curate of Christ Church. Two house plans were drawn up. One was plain, square and of red brick and for a further one thousand pounds all rooms in this house could be made a foot larger each way. The other was a design in Gothic style, no doubt to complement the Gothic-inspired residence of Mr Simonds, Caversham's lay rector, who lived nearby.

It is interesting to note that several times in correspondence from Caversham to Christ Church, there was mention of curates coming forth from Reading to 'hold the fort' between 1809 and 1837. Perhaps the trio of musicians, who also came from Reading to play at Sunday services, helped keep up the spirits of the congregation during these rather uncertain years.

The last heard about the arrangement was that Joshua Bennett's mother-in-law, Mrs Eykyn, was advancing half the cost of building the Rectory, provided the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church put up the remainder. This appears to have happened for in October 1844 the new house was completed. Sighs of relief must have been breathed in Caversham!

MK

### Licensing of Anna Knaggs as lay minister at Reading Deaf Church

On Saturday Nov 7th, Anna was licensed at Christchurch Cathedral in Oxford. The service was interpreted into sign language, and Anna was supported by a group of 40 family and friends from the Deaf Church. Reading Deaf Church presented her with her lay minister's scarf, and arranged for everyone to enjoy lunch together afterwards at Oxford Deaf Centre.

Anna will minister to deaf people in St Mark's Chapel in the Deaf Centre at Cardiff Road. Anna is hearing, and it is unusual for a hearing person to be a lay minister in a deaf church. Deaf people are very pleased she is now a lay minister serving the Deaf Church.

We wish Anna and Reading Deaf Church every blessing in their ministry together.

OM



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## CHURCHES

## The Parish Church Bells at Our Lady and St Anne

The north tower and the original fitting of bells in our church was about 1904.

There are four bells: Robert Mott of London, the forerunner of the Whitechapel bell foundry, cast the tenor which was the largest in 1597. The bell is 30 1/2 inches in diameter and is recorded as being hung in the church of St Mary Breadmus Canterbury. It is next recorded in 1887 in the church of St Andrew, also in Canterbury, and finally moved to Caversham in 1904.

This tenor bell was rung for many years by the Visitation Sisters to call out the Angelus, morning, noon and evening, using the Sally behind the North door.

The other three bells (cast by Charles Carr Ltd Smethwick) were originally rung by means of a small keyboard connected to the bells by a series of weights and wires. There is no record of when this system fell into disrepair.

**THE ANGELUS BELL** is soon to be refurbished thanks to the generosity of one of our parish ladies, in honour of Our Lady of Caversham for her Golden Jubilee, and in memory of her husband.

The process of enquires, estimates and variations and approvals has taken from the beginning of April until now and the Whitechapel bell foundry will carry out the works. The work will be in three elements, electrical, the coring out of the crown staple, measure for the new Iroko (hardwood) headstock, and supporting iron work. The second visit will be to re-hang the bell with its associated fittings and electric control unit. There will be no work carried out to the remaining three bells, which are all out of tune. The offered scrap value would not equate to the removal costs, therefore they will remain with the minimum of maintenance.

The Angelus bell and the hours will chime daily. The bell will be silent through the night.



## CAVERSHAM GROUP CONFIRMATION

The Bishop of Reading, the Rt Revd Stephen Cottrell, confirmed candidates from St Andrew's, St Barnabas', St Peter's and St Margaret's Churches at the annual service held this year on 22 November in St John the Baptist Church. Our picture shows Bishop Stephen with the newly confirmed at the end of the Service.



## News from the Parish of Our Lady and St Anne

Parishioners from Our Lady and St Anne's Church, Caversham, and from St Michael's Church, Sonning Common, got together in November, for a game of skittles. About 50 people met at the Gardeners Arms in Caversham for a relaxing, social event.

As they arrived, each person was allocated to one of four teams and, when all were present, play began. Two games were played, with cheers for every miss and even louder cheers for every strike. A spread of food was laid out during the second game which brought the game to a temporary halt. During refreshment time, raffle tickets were sold for a selection of prizes and £110 was raised which will be sent to the Don Bosco Shelter for street boys in Mumbai. The game soon went on again and Team A came out overall winners.

A final "killer" game was played when everyone had one ball and was eliminated if they didn't knock a skittle down. The next person then aimed at whatever was left standing. The second and subsequent rounds followed in the same way with only the successful players bowling each time. The excitement grew, as did the noise, until only two young ladies battled it out. Sarah was the last one left and was declared the Killer Queen.

Everyone was pleased to meet members of the other parish and, in particular, to have names put to faces frequently seen but not previously identified.

## Quiet Day

Our Quiet Day was held in the Visitor's Wing at the Community of St Mary the Virgin, Wantage in October. After the 10.0 am Eucharist, Sister Barbara Clare joined us and led each of three short sessions, in a lovely sunny room. She told us about the lives of St Francis de Sales and St Jane de Chantal, both saints of the 16th century, who tried to lead simple lives following Jesus' example. She explained how relevant they are to our own lives; we too could follow their example by living each event with patience and forbearance always remembering Jesus' and how he lived his short life here on earth.

We had plenty of space to be quiet and were free to walk in the garden and orchards. We also had the use of two very comfortable, warm sitting rooms and a well stocked art room. We came away refreshed and encouraged in our own attempts to live the Christian way of life.

Janet Soden



For the last 5 years I have taken a group from St Peter's and St Margaret's Mothers' Union to the CSMV Community at Wantage where I have been an Oblate for over 20 years. This year I opened it to St John's and the congregations of the churches in general. Twelve of us drove over the downs to Wantage and found peace, refreshment and inspiration. I could have doubled the number this year, which is encouraging and shows just how much people are looking for a space in their lives to reflect and come closer to God.

Please contact me if you would like to talk about Quiet Days, Retreats etc. T. 0118 9475834 or marionpyke@holycow.freeserve.co.uk

I have been asked not to wait another year but perhaps arrange another Quiet Day around Lent - watch this space!

Marion Pyke



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## WHY ARE THE FLOWER BEDS ALL DIFFERENT?

This and many other questions about the plants and trees at Caversham Court were answered by Emily Waters, the head gardener, as she took groups of Friends of Caversham Court Gardens on 'plant safaris' on beautiful October afternoons. The trees looked glorious in the autumn sun as many had already turned from green to gold.

The history of the location and the soil determined what has been planted in each area.

- The viney bed near the refreshment kiosk had a stunning display of indoor plants reflecting its history as a recreational greenhouse where visitors would have been able to admire the plants as well as the fish in the pond. The current plants will not survive the winter so the bed has to be cleared and only the box hedge left over the winter. Emily and her colleagues are already planning an even more stunning display for next summer.

- The east border, which can be admired from both the main lawn and the Long Walk, is a Victorian-style herbaceous border reminiscent of the 19th century when the Simonds family lived in Caversham Court. The border has bloomed constantly all summer. Emily described how she felt when faced with planting up the whole bed with a detailed plan in one hand and hundreds of small plants in 9cm pots. Each pot had to be placed accurately before the planting started and then they had to work carefully so that they did not stand on any of the tiny new plants. The plants are cut back gradually as they fade – the plan is to leave them as long as possible to benefit the wildlife. In spring we will see bulbs flowering before the herbaceous plants grow up again.

- The old beech and other trees cast a shadow on the west border. Therefore it is planted with box hedges and ornamental plants reflecting the more formal garden of the era of the Loveday family, who lived in Caversham Court in the 18th century. All the box hedging has been transplanted from the top terrace where the house footprint now is. Although the plants spent a winter in the allotment area virtually all of them survived. Amazingly the old wisteria has also survived the rebuilding of the wall on which it grows. It was cut back hard and laid on the ground, but despite this treatment it is really flourishing.

- Underneath the causeway, the bed is very shallow: about one foot of soil on top of the foundations for the causeway wall but the white Geraniums, macrorrhizum White Ness, have flowered well and will be green all winter unless it is a very severe one. The box hedge on the causeway itself will be grown to the height of the stone benches -



Colour in the garden

Courtesy Friends of Caversham Court

hopefully providing a disincentive to people hurling themselves off the wall. This winter Emily and her staff are planting a hedge of pleached lime trees. They will be trained on trellising and trimmed like a hedge on stilts. This hedge will give the allotment

holders some privacy and screen off Reading Canoe Club.

- The steep bank between the house footprint and St Peter's churchyard is poor soil: chalky and stony with lots of building rubble underneath. It is also very sunny and really dry. The lavender plants there will be clipped so that they grow into blocks of colour. The line of dwarf box shows the continuation of the line of the house – look for the bay window. Here the transplanted box is struggling to survive as it is too hot and dry and so the plants are to be replaced during the winter.

- The back wall behind the lavender bank and the beds beside the steps have been planted for autumn and winter interest as at this time of the year many of the Caversham Court visitors are 'commuters' cutting through on the way to the station or the Caversham shops. Some of the plants are scented – look out for one in April that smells of chocolate!

Emily's two top tips for gardeners were how to deal with the sap of the Weymouth pine and her best tree for an urban garden. The Weymouth pine next to the refreshment kiosk has stunning pine cones but they drip with sap which is not water soluble. So if you inadvertently stand underneath, use alcohol-based antiseptic hand wash to remove it from your hair! Her recommended tree for a small garden is the Amelanchier (specimen tree, not the shrub form) with its small white flowers in spring and lovely autumn colour. It never grows really tall. Look for the one on the lower lawn near the rectory garden.

Would you like to join tours and other Friends' activities (and support FCCG in its aim of publicising and preserving Caversham Court)? If so, please contact: Philip Darlow, Treasurer FCCG, Kalewa, The Warren, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7TQ - Tel: 0118 947 2205 / E-mail: FriendsofCavershamCourt@googlemail.com. The subscription to December 2010 is £2.00.

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## ENVIRONMENT

## HOPS

Before being used to flavour a drink called beer, hops were used in this country to induce sleep, and it appears that the town of Reading played a part in helping to popularise the hop pillow.

Addington Road and Addington House (in London Street) commemorate Dr Anthony Addington, who set up his medical practice about 1744. He soon built up a high reputation, especially in the treatment of mental illness, and the house next to his in London Street became a private asylum.

Eventually he moved to London, where his patients included some of the most famous people in the land.

His son, Henry Addington, became Prime Minister to George III, and also became Viscount Sidmouth. The king was suffering from chronic insomnia (among other things), and his physicians had so far failed to effect any improvement. His Prime Minister, however, remembering his father's remedies, recommended that His Majesty tried sleeping on a pillow stuffed with hops. This did the trick, and hop pillows became widely used after that.

I seem to remember that, in the 1960s, the Sunday papers often carried advertisements extolling the effectiveness of hop pillows. This no longer seems to be the case.

There is a hop growing in my garden – a cultivated golden variety, which every spring shoots up the neighbour's down-pipe and invades the gutters if I'm not quick enough. Unfortunately, it is of the male gender, and produces no hops, this being one of those species which have their male and female flowers on separate plants. The

essential oils are concentrated in glands in the papery scales which form the seed-heads of the plant, and which grow from the female flowers and look like little papery pine-cones.

So the present photograph, showing a female plant with lots of papery cones, was taken not in the garden, but beside a hedgerow in Blewbury, on a warm and sunny November morning.

In fact the wild hop is native in the southern part of Great Britain. It becomes less common north of

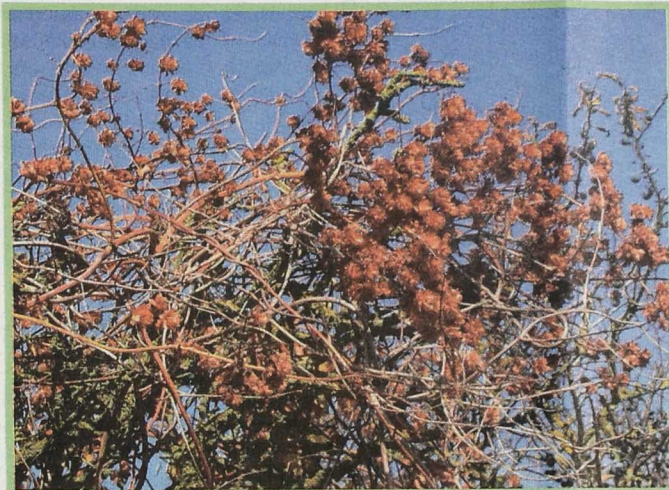
the Humber, and almost non-existent north of the Solway. Because it has been cultivated widely for the production of beer, the hops we see scrambling in hedgerows may well be the descendants of cultivated plants.

Perhaps it seems strange now to think that "beer" is a foreign word, and that the barley

brew of Old England was ale – which was sometimes flavoured with other plants, but not with hops. In the time of Henry VIII, the adulteration of ale by adding hops was seen by some as pernicious, and to be resisted. It might be all right for Dutchmen in the Netherlands, but it just wasn't English. As time went by, it was discovered that besides flavouring the beer, the addition of hops also increased its keeping qualities, so that it could be stored longer in the barrel before it went "off", and beer eventually won the competition and ousted ale altogether.

Perhaps, one of these years, I'll get round to gathering some wild hops to stuff a pillow. In the mean time, I'll just keep taking them in liquid form!

Happy Wanderer



## CHURCHES SUPPORT MESSAGE FROM READING TO COPENHAGEN

At the time of going to press it seemed likely that the Copenhagen climate change conference would not deliver the hoped for binding treaty in succession to that delivered at Kyoto but would be an important staging post to that effect. However, the people of Reading sent the Prime Minister to Copenhagen with a strong message through the Greater Reading Environmental Network. This message, was signed by 52 groups in the town with a concern for the environment. Among these were a number of churches, including some from Caversham and the Caversham One World Week Group.

The message was passed to Martin Salter MP, for onward transmission to the Prime Minister, at the end of a packed meeting at the Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) in mid-November. The earlier part of the meeting had been informed about the present climate change situation and the predictions of its future effects by Professor Jonathan Gregory of the Department of Meteorology at Reading

University and the Hadley Centre of the Met Office in Exeter. Phil Thornhill from the Campaign Against Climate Change spoke passionately about the urgency of individuals and nations taking action to mitigate the effects of climate change and the potentially serious consequences of not doing so. Martin Salter spoke about the political situation, the international inter-relationships, particularly on less developed countries and the likely consequential effects on the developed nations. He was dismayed at the results of a recent poll that showed that a large percentage of the population were not convinced by the scientific evidence, particularly in regard to the anthropomorphic causes of climate change. He enthusiastically accepted the responsibility of passing the message on to the Prime Minister and applauded the organisers of the meeting for this initiative and for the informative meeting, which was ably chaired by Tim Clewer of Reading Community Church.

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## St Peter's Wives Group

We enjoyed a very interesting evening at our November meeting. Our speaker, Mr John Hutton, came to talk to us about three large country estates in south Oxfordshire – Greenlands, home of W H Smith for a considerable time, Wyfold Court, later Borocourt Hospital, and Joyce Grove (now the Sue Ryder Home), part of the Fleming family's Nettlebed Estate.

Whilst at University College London, Mr Hutton became interested in the history of this country covering the last two hundred years and the huge changes which occurred after the Industrial Revolution. With the repeal of the Corn Laws, and the resulting importation of cheap food, the land-owning classes found they could not compete with the new manufacturers and many were forced to start selling their estates. Some of these country estates were sold to the new manufacturers and entrepreneurs, amongst whom were W H Smith of the stationery business, who bought Greenlands (now the Henley Management College) and Hambleden village, which has recently been sold to a Swiss banker. Wyfold Court was built by a Lancastrian cotton magnate for week-end visits and was later given to his daughter and son-in-law, Herman Hodge (who later became Lord Wyfold). In 1932 it was sold and became Borocourt Hospital for seventy years. It has since been converted into flats. The Fleming family, who founded a large investment bank in London, bought the Nettlebed Estate in 1903 from the owners of the Stonor estate. A large house, called Joyce Grove, was part of the estate and as none of the family particularly liked it, was given away to St Mary's Hospital and used as a nurses' home. It has since become the Sue Ryder Home.

It was interesting to learn about the history of these familiar landmarks and the families who lived in them, amongst whom were Ian Fleming, the famous author of the James Bond books, and his brother, Peter, an explorer and author, who married the actress Celia Johnson.

John Hutton is a fountain of knowledge, with a phenomenal memory and we hope to invite him back in the future for another of his fascinating talks.

Our next meeting will be at Church House, Caversham on Tuesday, 19 January 2010 at 8.00pm, when our speaker will be Mrs Shirley Longstaffe, talking about her life as a magistrate.

New members are always welcome.

## Rosehill WI

Mrs Brenda Caborn the president, welcomed members and visitors to the November meeting.

After conducting the business part of the meeting Brenda introduced the speaker from Make-a-Wish charity.

Although members may have heard of the charity few knew what exactly it did. They learnt that the charity was started in 1986 and from very small beginnings 5600 wishes have been granted to seriously ill children and teenagers. It depends entirely on money raised by collection, sponsored events and a lot of assistance from large organisations such as Cadburys, Harvesters and many others.

The wishes range from I wish to meet, wish to be, wish to own and wish to go.

One such wish was a little girl who wished to spend the day with Snow White. This was arranged with Hedingham Castle in Essex. The little girl and her family were transported in a limousine, met at the gates by Snow White and spent the day with her.

Another wish was a three year-old boy who wanted his bedroom made into an Indiana Jones scene. The family were taken to a nearby zoo and had lunch. When they returned the bedroom was full of stuffed monkeys and other animals and had murals on the walls.

Mrs Rosemary Weekes thanked the speaker for a very informative talk.

Mr Bob Whelton who had given a talk in 2007 was

invited back and had a lovely display of chocolates for sale which were very popular.

The meeting closed with a cup of tea and the raffle.

Meetings are held at St Barnabas Church Hall on the first Wednesday of the month starting at 2 p.m

## Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild met in November to hear a fascinating talk on Fungi, given by Gordon Crutchfield. We learnt that fungi cause rust, blackspot, mildew and were behind the Irish Potato Famine and Dutch Elm disease, being transmitted by fungi-carrying beetles. Fungi work for good too, breaking down our rubbish to make good compost. One needs to know, without any doubt, which are edible and which are poisonous as there are no rules in nature. Mr Crutchfield dispelled many myths and old wives' tales. It is thought that there are about one and half million different sorts of fungi, much more difficult to identify than wild flowers and they are unique in their lifecycle. Fungi are needed to make bread, beer, wine, marmite, milk and cheese to name but a few. They gave us the first breakthrough in discovering antibiotics, medicines used to stop rejection of organ transplants, and statins. We were also informed about fungal diseases and the many gruesome ways one may die through eating poisonous fungi. Mr Crutchfield is an excellent speaker, full of interesting facts delivered with humour and enthusiasm.

Members are looking forward to events in 2010, within both the Guild and Federation. Our next meeting is on Tuesday 12 January, 7.30pm at St Barnabas' Church Hall, Grove Road, Emmer Green, when Chris Chadwell will speak on "Paradise on Earth – The Beautiful Flowers of Kashmir"

## Chazey Women's Institute

When Inspector Penny Mackenzie was telephoned with a few days' notice and asked if she could speak at the November meeting, she did not hesitate. The original speaker, due to give a talk on Cottage China, had cancelled and Chazey WI had to act quickly.

Penny Mackenzie came prepared and gave a fascinating talk about her role as a neighbourhood police inspector, and with latest crime figures to hand she was able to assure members that Caversham has now become the safest place in Reading to live.

She explained the role of the neighbourhood policing team and the newly revitalised Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) and said that following a local survey, aimed at highlighting the most pressing issues for Caversham residents, a series of public meetings will be held in the New Year to set the agenda for policing in the area.

Crime prevention packs were handed out and Penny was congratulated on a lively and interesting talk.

Chazey WI meet on the first Tuesday of every month (7.45pm) at Caversham Heights Methodist church. New members are always welcome.

## Caversham WI

It was a quick hop 'over the border' for members at the November meeting when Mike Channer spoke on 'Walking in Oxfordshire'. The excellent slides showed the lovely scenery of our neighbouring county plus many literary connections. Mrs McGregor, a keen walker herself, gave the vote of thanks.

The speaker was asked to judge the competition – a Christmas decoration – and declared Mrs Myszor the winner with Miss Cameron second. After a welcome cup of tea, reminders were given of Christmas activities and the raffle ended a most interesting evening.





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Now based at the RAF helicopter station at Benson, the move has been a saving factor: maintaining the aircraft the biggest saving, but public visits are no longer possible for security reasons. The type of helicopter has changed from the EU105 to the faster EU135 carrying 2 pilots, 2 patients or passengers and 2 medics (who fly in their own time as do doctors). Nowadays the helicopters are on lease from B.O.N.D which includes 2 pilots and saves on office work and insurance. Servicing is done at 200 and 450 hours flying.

Paramedics are ground operators who, with further training in diagnosis, navigation and radio for 2 years, become 'air paramedics', in fact, almost doctors.

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Probus members were able to ask questions and make observations such as 'where do you land in Reading?' Well not at the Royal Berks as the helipad was not costed in the development! The nearby school playing fields were used but Health and Safety stopped that. The Madjeski Stadium is used (not Saturday and

Sunday). With an average of 4/5 sorties a day, costing £500 to £600 each, the question of funding was raised. Balance in hand was maintained to cover for 1 month. Income is from public support such as the 'AA' Lottery, sponsors, street collections, sales, public presentations at clubs and legacies. The meeting concluded with an auction of a 'collector's model' of a EU105 (given by a member) which raised £50.

Any retired men who want a 'life in life' should contact the secretary Raymond Head on 0118 941 1445 for information on Probus.

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### Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club

To allow time to recover from the Christmas festivities, Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club are taking a break, and so no meeting will take place in January. The first meeting of 2010 will be the AGM on Wednesday 10th February, followed by a talk entitled "A One-Woman Cottage China Business" given by Rita Beck. The AGM starts at 7.30pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Rd., Caversham. For further details contact Berna Macdonald on 0118 947 7400

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