

CAVERSHAM DROP-IN THIRD ANNIVERSARY

Myra & Sheila write:

Caversham Drop-In centre first opened its doors at Caversham Baptist Church in March 2007. It was the culmination of several years of planning by members of the churches in Caversham and we all had a tremendous sense of achievement and of prayer answered on that first Wednesday.

The centre is open from 12 noon to 2pm every Wednesday. When we started we offered tea, coffee, biscuits and home-made cakes but as time has gone by we have added soup and bread and a variety of sandwiches. Each session is run by two team leaders and a group of committed and enthusiastic volunteers who come from several churches in Caversham.

Our aim was to show the CCA vision of meeting practical need, increasing self-esteem and showing God's love to all our visitors. We imagined local people popping in for a snack and a chat and perhaps ordering furniture. Before Christmas last year our number of volunteers increased and we wondered why. Then after Christmas we realised that God was

preparing us for what was to come as the weather grew colder and the number of visitors increased. Sometimes there were as many as 17 or 18 people coming who were sleeping either on the streets or in makeshift tents or temporary accommodation. At least for a couple of hours they were able to feel warm and comfortable.

As the weather improved our Drop-In visitors became more varied – there were still some of the cold-weather visitors but we still had our regulars who come in for a chat with us and with each other. We have got to know each other and it's a friendly and happy place to be.

This is now the only Drop-In centre in Reading open during the day on a Wednesday offering free food and drink. The cold winter has meant our visitor numbers have increased and we have offered baked beans as well as soup and sandwiches. This has proved popular as some of our people have come in very hungry.



Volunteers and visits at the centre.

M Fowler

We held our third birthday celebration on 31st March
(Reproduced by permission of CCA)



A HAPPY
EASTER
TO OUR
READERS



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www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

Revd Nigel Jones, St Andrews Vicarage,
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www.standrewscaversham.org

Revd Alveen Thoresen, 25 Ilkley Road, Caversham,
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Revd Dan Tyndall, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
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TALKING POINT

by

Heather Wilson

WHO KILLED ARCHIE MITCHELL? - REFLECTIONS ON THE EMPTY PROMISES OF EASTER.

I have a confession to make to you all; I am an "Eastenders" fan. I admit that I was one of the 16 million people who tuned in to see who killed Archie. I couldn't believe it was Stacey; my money was on Bradley who heard that Archie had raped his wife (Stacey). In the storyline the police are in pursuit of Bradley, who attempts to escape via the rooftop of a house, but he dies after falling from the roof. Bradley shows his love for his wife by giving his life so that she can be free to get on with hers. The residents of the fictional Albert Square now believe that Bradley was the murderer, while Stacey, who is the guilty party, goes free.

The character of Archie Mitchell made lots of empty promises to those around him but he didn't deliver the goods, and left a trail of destruction and broken lives behind him. Many of you reading this will no doubt have had experience of the pain of empty promises. As we approach Easter, I would like to assure you that God can, and has, made EMPTINESS full of PROMISE. There are -

The empty cross. On their way to Jesus' tomb on that first Easter morning three women who were disciples of Jesus passed the empty cross. Jesus was dead, His body had hung on the cross. The cross was bloodstained, and only yesterday the women had seen Him die. The empty cross is the promise that our sins have been forgiven. The bad stuff we've said and done, which keeps us from a relationship with God, has been paid for on the cross. Jesus took God's punishment for us and we are forgiven.

The empty tomb. The women arrived at the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. They found that the stone covering the entrance has been rolled away, and that the body was not there. They found an angel telling them Jesus was alive.

If we are a follower of Jesus, the empty tomb is God's promise to us that we need not fear death, that we will have eternal life.

I read a story on the internet about a boy who was travelling in a car with his father. A bee flew in through the car window and the boy was scared in case it stung him because he had a severe allergy to stings and could die. The boy's father caught the bee in his hand, and then released it, showing the boy that he had taken the sting in his palm. The father told the son he needn't fear death because he had taken the sting away.

Jesus has taken away the sting of death and offers you a promise that has been fulfilled with no room for emptiness - will you receive that promise this Easter?

Heather Wilson is a Baptist Minister in Training at Caversham Park Church.

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Email:
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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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Lions run stopped but school still benefits

Following a donation by Goring, Woodcote & District Lions Club of a cheque for £2,000, Bishopwood Special School in Sonning Common is now half-way to raising the £40,000 they need to buy a new specially adapted minibus.

The photograph (below) shows Lions president Sally Bergmann with fellow local Lions Club members David Freear and Charles Slater presenting the cheque to headteacher Jenny Wager at the school.

Thanking the Lions for their donation, Mrs Wager said: "Our existing minibus is now over 11 years old and we use it every day. It needs replacing to take groups of children with their helpers and supervisors out and about on school trips, to go swimming and horse riding locally. This is a small school serving a large catchment area in South Oxfordshire and beyond, and it is quite hard to fund raise with only about 30 pupils and families."

The donation from the Lions was made possible despite having to cancel their annual 10k Road Run charity event in January for safety reasons due to the heavy snowfall that closed the single track roads used for the course. But, thanks to the generosity of more than 350 runners who pre-paid deposits when registering their entries and sponsorship from local businesses, the Lions were still able to raise around £3,000 for their charitable projects this year.

In addition to helping Bishopwood, the Lions have donated money to the local Scouts and Guides, Frontiers Group, Langtree School, Woodcote and Kidmore End primary schools.

Through LCIF (Lions Clubs International Fund) Goring, Woodcote & District Lions Club have also contributed funds to disaster relief efforts ongoing by the local Lions in both Cockermouth and Haiti.

Every penny raised from the public by Lions is used in community projects and none is taken up in administration costs. With your help Lions can make a difference. For more details call your local contact Jon Solman on 0118 947 1970 or view www.lions-gwd.org.uk

For more information about the school and its fundraising activities visit www.bishopwood.oxon.sch.uk.



Girlguiding Caversham District celebrates World Thinking Day

On a rather chilly day in February, 200 Rainbows, Brownies and Guides came together at St Anne's to celebrate World Thinking Day. This was created in 1926 when it was decided that there should be a special day when Girl Scouts and Girl Guides all around the world think of each other and give thanks and appreciation to their "sister" Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. 22nd February was chosen as the date for Thinking Day because it was the mutual birthday of Lord Baden-Powell, founder of the Boy Scout Movement, and his wife Olave, who served as World Chief Guide.



Photos Catharine Sharmar

The Caversham Thinking Day this year was a celebration in dance. The girls had the opportunity to try Irish dancing, line dancing and show dancing and there were crafts to make, songs to sing, biscuits to be decorated as flags and then carefully taken home or simply scoffed on the spot. The afternoon finished with everyone joining in singing Guiding songs both old and new.

Thank you to St Anne's Church and Primary School who gave the venue for free.

If you can give any time to help Girlguiding in Caversham, Emmer Green or Caversham Park then please contact cavershamguides@hotmail.co.uk

Caroline Smith

New Venue for Food Co-op

The True Food Co-op, which has been at the Mapledurham Pavilion for some time, has moved to 61 Grove Road Emmer Green, opposite St Barnabas Church. From being open on Monday evenings only the Co-op now occupies a shop which is open daily Mondays to Saturdays (late night on Mondays).

Fairtrade sales on the rise

Fairtrade sales in Britain rose to £800 million in 2009, a 12% increase on 2008, despite the recession. This was revealed at the launch of the recent Fairtrade Fortnight. While the global economic downturn made 2009 a difficult year for the world's poor, seeking a fair deal for their produce, more people in Britain bought Fairtrade.

"2009 was a tough year for everyone, but a desperate year for many poor communities and small farmers in developing countries", said Harriet Lamb, chief executive of the Fairtrade Foundation, at the launch. "For millions of growers and their families and communities, Fairtrade was able to make the difference that has helped them survive a difficult year".

The theme for Fairtrade this year is SWAP. We are encouraged to swap from non-fair trade to Fairtrade products. A recent poll found that over 70% of people say they are willing to swap one or more products to Fairtrade.

There is a good choice. The website www.fairtrade.org.uk, reveals, for example, that 145 Fairtrade ground coffees are now available. Some of these you can buy in Caversham, and there are more at the Reading International Solidarity Centre, 35-39 London Street. If you are spoilt for choice, try the delicious Machu Picchu, which is organic as well as Fairtrade.

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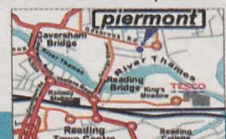


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From The Lookout Post

Sites and Detailed Planning Policies

The final consultation on the allocation of sites for development or for protection closes 2 April 2010. Full details and maps can be found on <http://www.reading.gov.uk/consultations/2010consultations>. Some of the development sites in Reading remain controversial. North of the river, the only site earmarked for development is at Lowfield Road for 21 to 34 houses with the proviso that it should take account of the potential for contaminated land and should not have a detrimental impact on important landscape nearby. Following detailed work by local associations, many of the green spaces around Caversham are identified for protection. Many thanks to everyone who worked hard to achieve this.

The other part of the consultation covers detailed policies for dealing with planning applications and may be of interest if you are concerned with or about a planning application near you. A significant change is the provision for much needed affordable housing. Developments of five or more units will be required to provide a percentage of affordable housing within the scheme, which will be greater for larger schemes. Schemes for less than five units will make a financial contribution towards affordable housing elsewhere.

Tree Strategy

RBC has published a draft tree strategy for Reading and would like to receive comments, if possible by 2 April 2010. The strategy recognises the importance of trees and sets out a number of policies and priorities for protecting, managing and enhancing Reading's tree cover. These include identifying the locations for prioritising the protection and planting of trees and replacement of trees that have been removed. An overall target of an increase of 10% of the tree canopy area in the Borough is proposed. You can view a copy of the draft tree strategy at the Civic Centre, public libraries or online at www.reading.gov.uk/treestrategy

Development around Reading Station

RBC has also published a draft Reading Station Area Development Framework and would like to receive comments by 2 April 2010. The Framework covers an area bounded by the River Thames, Friar Street, Caversham Road and Forbury Road. The Framework outlines broad development principles covering both residential and commercial redevelopment. It provides illustrative layouts and views of how the area should be redeveloped. It includes proposals for the use and development of individual sites, the public realm and new transport infrastructure. This is an exciting and major project for Reading which because of its height will be visible from parts of Caversham. You can view a copy of the document at the Civic Centre, public libraries or online at www.reading.gov.uk/saf.

A Vision for Caversham

Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA) have been active in helping the re-establishment of the Caversham Traders Association, now known as the Caversham Retailers Association. This momentum has been enhanced by the helpful assistance of local MP Rob Wilson who recently held a meeting of interested parties. The meeting heard about the successful concepts of the Business Improvement District adopted by Reading and the Town Centre Manager in place in Woodley. These are longer term possibilities and an obvious starting point for Caversham is to address with the owners the state of the precinct pavements and buildings and the issue of unmonitored parking.

Our Rubbish, Our Streets

This is the title of the presentation to follow the brief formal business at the Caversham and District (CADRA) AGM on Wednesday 21 April, 7.45pm in the Baptist Centre, Prospect Street. Oliver Burt, Project Manager from the Re3 recycling partnership and Pete Thompson, Street Care Manager, Reading Borough Council will give an insight into where all our rubbish goes and the programme of work to keep our streets clean, cared for and free of graffiti. Did you know that every area has an 'Environmental Visual Audit' which local people are welcome to join and feed in detailed information and concerns?

Non members are welcome at the meeting and can join on the night for just £3.00 p.a. for the household. See www.cadra.org.uk

Neighbourhood Action Groups

Since the introduction of neighbourhood policing, there have been parallel groups considering policing and safety issues. For Caversham this has meant the Safer Caversham Forum, which has been supported by Reading Borough Council staff as well as a Neighbourhood Action Group for Lower Caversham including Caversham Centre and another for North and West Caversham which both relied on voluntary resources.

Across Reading, it has been proposed that Safer Forums and NAGs

should merge to avoid duplication on areas of overlap and ensure that all groups have some formal support. The Council proposed that there should be one amalgamated group for all of Caversham. Local associations and Caversham's Inspector Penny Mackenzie raised concerns that it would be impractical for a single group to address detailed problems across such a wide and diverse area. Following their representations, it was agreed that provided there was demonstration of community involvement, the Council would support two groups for Caversham.

Inspector Mackenzie and the local associations worked together to publicise the open meeting at Highdown School. This was well attended and those present took part in establishing the key priorities for North and West Caversham. These include burglary, road traffic and environmental issues which contribute to crime and cause concern locally. An open meeting will also be held in Lower Caversham and key priorities established there. The job of these Neighbourhood Action Groups is to identify the areas which cause problems for local people and try to tackle these issues with the help of the police, local Councillors and Reading Borough Council. RBC will provide logistical and financial support but each group will be chaired by a local resident. The groups can help make Caversham a better place to live but they do need local support. One way you can help is to ensure that any crime, no matter how minor, is reported to the police.

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CHURCHES

HIRAETH AND CWTCH ABOUND AT ST DAVID'S DAY SERVICE

St Barnabas Church was again the venue for the annual St David's Day Service for the Reading and District Welsh Society at which the Revd Judy Davies, chaplain to the Duchess of Kent House in Reading, was both leader and special preacher. This bilingual service, much appreciated by Welsh expats, rounded off a St David's Day weekend and followed a dinner the previous evening.

Judy Davies confessed with pride to her Swansea origins and built her message around two Welsh words originally used in her family home and clearly designed to make those present feel at home. There is no direct

English equivalent to "hiraeth", the nearest being homesickness or the place where you belong, where there is a nostalgia for or an appreciation of things Welsh. "Cwtch" means the type of hug or cuddle that envelops you like a Welsh woollen blanket: the idea of being kept safe and cared for.

Both were related to the two readings: the 23rd Psalm, read in Welsh by Mrs Alwena Thomas, and the parable of the Prodigal Son, read by the president, Mrs Gwlithyn Bartlett.



O. Jewiss

We were reminded of the prodigal son coming to his senses with a feeling of hiraeth when he was at his lowest; the father looking out and searching for his son, running and embracing him, a cwtch moment, just as God's love looks out, searches for and is ready to embrace us. The older son in the parable, who remained at home, was just as lost and the father went out and brought him in. Archbishop Desmond Tutu once said, "In God's family there are no outsiders" and the parable captures that statement. The challenge to us as Christians is to show to others the same welcome in Christ's name. God

breaks down barriers through the cross so that we are one family, one fold, the hiraeth where God enfolds us in a cwtch.

The hymns, in Welsh and English, and the refreshments that followed, the barra brith and the daffodils gave a feeling of hiraeth and the warmth of the fellowship was as good as a cwtch.

The Revd Judy Davies is pictured with the president, Mrs Gwlithyn Bartlett, and the Revd Derek Chandler after the service.

FISH, FRIENDS AND FUN

This best describes the major social event in the calendar at St Barnabas Church. As many as can be squeezed into St Barnabas Hall enjoyed a fish and chip supper, followed by a miscellany of home spun musical and humorous entertainment from members of the congregation and friends from Caversham Park Church. Interspersed with the jocular patter of

churchwarden Walter Williams, as Master of Ceremonies, the evening proceeded in a seamless manner to the pantomime performed by the young people. This year a word perfect cast from 8 to 19 years of age delighted us for half an hour with Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. To accommodate the large cast some degree of dramatic licence prevailed, with the inclusion of other members of the dwarf family, some of the dwarfs themselves having grown excessively large. It was generally agreed that this was the best pantomime yet, and that was in no small measure due to the talents of the adults who produced and costumed it. While it is invidious to single out individual acts during the evening the duet by the churchwardens is always something to behold and the vicar, shortly to depart on sabbatical, provided a lumberjack theme as a foretaste of where he would be spending it. This event epitomises the enjoyment and talent there is in the church community at play.



O. Jewiss

The Dwarf family in an animated routine.

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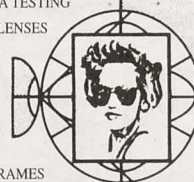
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CHURCHES

VICTORIA CROSS

A large crowd filled the church of Our Lady and St Anne in February to hear a fascinating talk entitled For Valour, on the history of the Victoria Cross. The talk was given by Michael Naxton, one of the world's leading experts on the subject and the curator of the Ashcroft Collection of VCs, which is the largest in existence.

Michael first summarized the background to the institution of the award. The development of the electric telegraph meant that news from the battlefield in the Crimean War could reach London within a couple of days and the public quickly became aware of the bravery of the troops. Queen Victoria and her consort, Albert, were foremost among those determined that this bravery should be recognized. After two years of deliberations the Victoria Cross was instituted and awarded to men who risked their lives to save their comrades in the presence of the enemy.

The medal, in the form of a Maltese cross, was made of bronze from Russian cannon captured in the Crimea. Later, when all the original metal had been used, captured Chinese cannon were used.

The first VCs were gazetted in the London Gazette in 1857 and the first presentations were made by Queen Victoria in Hyde Park when 62 men were invested. Chronologically, the first award was won early in the Crimean War by Charles Lucas but the first to be presented went to Henry Raby who was nearly killed when the Queen pushed the long pins holding the medal's ribbon into the man's chest instead of into his shirt.

Originally, a man had to survive to receive the medal but, after one action in the Boer War, three men were recommended for the VC and three awards were made even though one of the men died soon after the recommendation but before confirmation of his award.

Following this, and in response to much public pressure, Edward VII granted six more VCs posthumously for the Boer War. It was not until the Royal Warrant of 1907, however, that the medal could officially be awarded posthumously.

It is a little known fact that if a VC holder was found guilty of committing a crime later in life his medal could be forfeited along with his life pension. Only eight forfeitures took place and this shameful practice was dropped in 1920.

Michael said that 1356 Victoria Crosses have been awarded in total, while other medals for bravery have been instituted at various times, including the George Cross which was introduced in 1940 to reward



Victoria Cross

J Shaw

civilians when modern warfare no longer only involved just servicemen. He then went on to describe some of the incidents of extreme bravery that have merited the award of a VC. It would be invidious to pick out any one from the many he was able to tell us about.

Some facts indicate the extent of that bravery. During the Crimean War 111 Victoria Crosses were awarded. Seventy-eight VCs were awarded during the Boer War. Eleven were given for the famous Rorke's Drift action in the Zulu Wars. Twenty-four were awarded on one day - but for different actions - during the Indian Mutiny (now known politically correctly as the Indian War of Independence) and four civilians received

medals during this conflict as did the first black man to earn a VC. A total of 626 were awarded during WW1 including one to Billy Leefe Robinson who was first to shoot down a Zeppelin over England. Between the World Wars, five were awarded in India including the first one to be won by a Sikh. There were 181 winners in WWII.

Three men have won the VC twice. A New Zealander was the only fighting soldier among them, the other two being doctors who treated men on the front line. The youngest VC - a 15-year-old boy - won his medal in China in 1860. Jack Cornwell, popularly thought to be the youngest, was 16 when he won his medal in 1916 while serving in the Royal Navy at the Battle of Jutland.

After answering a number of questions, Michael received an appreciative round of applause for such an interesting and informative talk and all retired to the Cenacle for refreshments. Three people made themselves known as direct descendants of VC holders. A raffle was held, one of the prizes being a book about the Ashcroft Collection signed by Lord Ashcroft himself.

The net amount raised for the Church Building Fund was £657.

Chocolate Feast

The Lenten Groups are meeting on Thursday 15th April at 7.30pm at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church for an informal get-together when members of the different groups will have the opportunity to meet and talk about the strengths and weaknesses of their recent course. This will be a post-Easter celebration and each group is being encouraged to take something chocolate to assist the convivial mingling. The organisers hope that this event will encourage ecumenical friends to work together more closely in the future.



Michael Naxton holding a replica Victoria Cross.

J Shaw

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EASTER SERVICES IN CAVERSHAM

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Holy Week

Monday	7.30pm	Service of Penitence (with Holy Communion)
Tuesday	7.30pm	Stations of the Cross
Wednesday	7.30pm	Taizé Service
Maundy Thursday	7.30pm	Last Supper Eucharist (includes meal - needs to be booked)
Good Friday	11am	Children's Service (and hot cross buns)
	2pm	Liturgy of the Cross (with Holy Communion)
Holy Saturday	8pm	The Easter Liturgy
Easter Day	10am	All-Age Eucharist

St Barnabas

Maundy Thursday	8.00pm	Dramatic Eucharist with Foot Washing, Vigil to midnight
Good Friday	10am - 12noon	Children's Good Friday Workshop. (Prior Booking necessary with the Vicar)
Good Friday	2pm - 3pm	Reflections Around the Cross: (Music and Readings)
Easter Day	5.45am 8am 9.30am	Dawn Eucharist Said Communion (BCP) Sung Family Communion

St Peter's

Maundy Thursday	8pm	Sung Eucharist
Good Friday	12 noon	Three Hour Service (with John Pritchard, Bishop of Oxford)
Easter Day	8am 9.45am 6.30pm	Holy Communion (BCP) All Age Communion Choral Evensong

St Margaret's

Palm Sunday 11am

Good Friday 11am

Easter Sunday 11am

St John's

Palm Sunday 10am

Maundy Thursday 10am

Good Friday 2pm

Easter Sunday 10am

Caversham Park LEP

Palm Sunday 11am

Easter Sunday 11am

Roman Catholic

Our Lady & St Anne

Passion Sunday 10am

6.30pm

Maundy Thursday 7.30pm

Good Friday 12 noon

3pm

7pm

10.30am

Morning Prayer

Solemn Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday 10am

6.30pm

Mass

Mass

Mass of the Lord's
Supper

Children's Stations

Liturgy of the Passion

Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday 10.30am

Morning Prayer

Solemn Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday 10am

6.30pm

Mass

Mass

Mass of the Lord's
Supper

Children's Stations

Liturgy of the Passion

Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday 10.30am

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Mass

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Mass of the Lord's
Supper

Children's Stations

Liturgy of the Passion

Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday 10.30am

Morning Prayer

Solemn Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday 10am

6.30pm

Mass

Mass

Mass of the Lord's
Supper

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Easter Hymn Singing

Churches Together in Caversham are holding a Hymn Sing for Easter at St Martin's Precinct on Easter Saturday, 3rd April at 10.30am. It is being organised by Caversham Park Church and will last for about 45 minutes. They will welcome help from singers and those willing to assist as stewards to give a cheerful greeting, hand out notices and Easter eggs.

Thanks are due to the Precinct managers at St Martin's for giving permission to hold this event.

Methodist

Caversham Heights

Palm Sunday	10.30am	Rev'd John Ogden - Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Rev'd Jenny Dowding
Maundy Thursday	6.30 pm	Passover Meal with Holy Communion
Good Friday	10.30am	at Gosbrook Road)
	7.30pm	Easter Meditation (at Gosbrook Road)
Easter day	8.00am	Holy Communion - Rev'd John Ogden
	9.00am	Easter Breakfast
	10.30am	Holy Communion - Rev'd Jenny Dowding
	6.30pm	Deacon Becky Bawden

Gosbrook Road

Palm Sunday	10.30am	Rev'd Jenny Dowding
	6.30pm	Rev'd John Ogden
Maundy Thursday	6.30pm	At Caversham Heights (qv)
Good Friday	10.30am	United Service (Methodist and Baptist)
	7.30pm	Easter Meditation (led by Deacon Becky Bawden)
Easter Day	9.00am	Easter Breakfast
	10.30am	Holy Communion (Deacon Becky Bawden/ Rev'd John Ogden)
	6.30pm	Stephen Appiah

Grace Church

Palm Sunday	4.30pm	Short Afternoon Service (for families with young children)
Good Friday	10.30am	Good Friday Service
Easter Sunday	10.30am	Easter Celebration

New Testament Church of God

Good Friday	11am	Service
Easter Sunday	11am	Service



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TRIBUTE

DOROTHY EMMA GILLINGS

28 October 1915 – 17 February 2010

Dorothy Gillings (née Wilson), the daughter of a pharmacist, was born in Camden; the family moved to Hampstead when she was three years old. She was educated at Camden School for Girls and Berridge House, where she qualified as a Domestic Science teacher. She started working with London County Council as a supply teacher at a number of schools. When WWII broke out the children were evacuated out of London and the provincial authorities suddenly needed more teachers. As a result Dorothy found herself teaching at Stanway, near Colchester. About the same time her near neighbour in Hampstead, David Gillings, was posted to Salisbury in Wiltshire. Romance blossomed even at a distance and Dorothy and David married in April 1943.



which she also represented on the Diocesan Synod.

Dorothy was an accomplished needlewoman, enjoying sewing, knitting, embroidery, tapestry, lace making, and even soft furnishings. At St Barnabas she led a small group of the Mothers' Union members in making the embroidered banner that is still in the Church today. She also enjoyed painting and for many years attended an adult education class; her watercolour flower paintings had a realism that could outshine even a professional illustrator. Calligraphy was also among her many skills; she was the original scribe for the early entries in the St Barnabas' Book of Remembrance to which her own name will now be added.

On her doctor's advice, Dorothy took up golf, taking part in local competitions. When in later years she found the full eighteen holes were too much she joined the like-minded 'Top Holers' who would enjoy playing nine holes or less.

In the late 1990's, David's health began to fail; Alzheimer's disease was later diagnosed. Increasingly Dorothy found caring for him more and more difficult to the extent that her own health began to deteriorate. Andrew began to spend more time in Emmer Green to support his parents, but it became obvious that they needed professional care. David and Dorothy moved into The Oaks and St Luke's Residential Home in 2003. David died of a stroke in 2005 and in 2006, after a short spell in hospital, Dorothy moved to Beacher Hall Nursing Centre where on 17th February she had a heart attack and died in hospital later the same day.

Dorothy was a lady of so many talents who brought much to church and community and typified the generation that brought up their family with confidence in the decades following the Second World War: a person of conviction and good humour who is remembered with affection. She is survived by her two sons, Richard and Andrew, to whom readers of the *Caversham Bridge* extend their condolences.

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ENVIRONMENT

The Butcher's Broom

Do you remember the kind of butcher's shop that had sawdust on the floor? I'd never seen it before I came to Reading in the 1960s, and I thought it decidedly

old-fashioned. At the establishment I'm thinking of, the butcher never handled money. This was looked after by a lady in a pay-box, a bit like a box-office at the cinema. By contrast, this seemed a decidedly modern and hygienic idea. The lady I remember was rather stout and grey-haired, and looked like someone's grandmother. When the butcher called out, "Your price, Miss, three-and-tenpence," or something similar, as he handed over my bit of liver, it made me want to giggle.

In the past, butchers apparently did use this plant to brush the sawdust from their floors at the end of each day. Some writers say they used it to brush their chopping-blocks, in order to remove any particles of meat. The spiny ends to the leaves would have made them suitable for this purpose. Other writers say that butchers kept a twig handy to chase off, if not to impale, flies hovering round the meat, and others say that butchers on the Isle of Wight traditionally stuck a sprig of the plant with a berry into each joint of beef to make it look more appealing.

The English name of the plant was recorded as long ago as 1562, so it has been associated with butchers for a very long time.

I also seem to remember butcher's broom appearing in

florists' shops around Christmas, dried, and covered in paint, gold, silver, white, and a strange, unnatural blue colour.



Over the years, the bristles of brooms have been made from all sorts of materials. Now you have a job to find one with "proper" bristles in it. Holly, heather, birch twigs, gorse, and of course broom itself have all been used. People of my parents' generation used to speak of using a bass broom to sweep the yard. According to The Oxford English Dictionary, bass was originally made from the inner bark of a lime tree, but I don't for one moment think that the brush we used had been made from real bass.

In Great Britain, butcher's broom grows only in the south, so it was a joy for me to see it for the first time, growing in a wood above the River Thames, not far upstream of Caversham. It likes to grow under and near trees, and is probably not as uncommon as most people think, if they have considered it at all. It's just that it grows in shade, in out-

of-the-way places, and often looks a bit dusty. When you're out looking for primroses and violets in the woods, you may well come across this curious plant.

It flowers about now, but the whitish flowers are so tiny that it's strange to think that the botanists have classified it with the lilies. Flowers are fairly easy to find, but the bright red berries that follow them much less so.

Happy Wanderer

FRIENDS OF CLAYFIELD COPSE



Children from Caversham Primary School who helped plant the young pear trees.



Photos J Oliver

The Chazey Road entrance hedge work at Mapledurham Playing Fields.

Along Green Lane, which borders Blackhouse Woods, is an old boundary bank, and on that bank, leaning over the lane is a wild pear. [How wild? we have someone investigating for us. If it is wild then it is a very rare tree, if it's just feral, well not so special] However it has lovely blossom but few pears lately. This could be the mild winters [they like cold winters] or it may be needing another pear. So we found a local specialist in native trees and bought two sapling wild pears. With the help of children from Caversham Park Primary, these were planted in February, one on the bank nearby, the other one at the entrance to Green Lane. Surprisingly they are rather prickly!

On the same day **CRoW** a local mid week conservation group were clearing the area around the old pear to ensure it has space and maybe it will straighten itself up with a little more light around it.

The **Sunday Clayfield Friends** group spent their time clearing brambles from the bluebell area and by the time you read this the bluebells should be well up and flowering. There will be a walk but the date is not fixed. Phone 9484454 at beginning of April or check out the website www.econetreading.org.uk

The March task is clearing brambles and laying some woodchip in the area around the dragon.

Friends of Mapledurham Playing Fields met in January to clear the Chazey Road entrance footpath which was blocked with blackthorn and ivy which the snow and ice had brought down and in February they were building a dead hedge with the brash and 'laying' one or two of those tall hawthorn into the hedge, making the pathway lighter.

Several people pass by and say 'You are doing a great job' and we are happy for the acknowledgement for what we do, but don't be afraid to ask 'Is there anything I can do?' because the work can be done at any level of physical energy and full instructions, gloves, and tools are provided.

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Rosehill WI

President Mrs Brenda Caborn welcomed members to the February meeting.

At the conclusion of business she introduced the speaker Mrs Pauline Allen who is a teacher of Tai Chi.

Pauline started with a demonstration of some of the movements which are extremely graceful and done slowly. She then explained how all the different movements act on various organs of the body. These are very beneficial for improved posture, balance, co-ordination, and give an enhanced physical, mental and emotional well-being.

After this, members who were able to stand did the exercises standing and the others remained seated and joined in. Pauline gave an explanation of what each exercise was doing to various parts of the body.

Members learnt a lot about Tai Chi and really enjoyed taking part. Margaret Seal gave a vote of thanks.

The next meeting will be April 7th when Erica Scott from Wyevalle Garden Centre will be talking about planting containers. The meeting will be as usual at St Barnabas Church Hall starting at 2pm.

Visitors are very welcome.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

In January members held a lunch at the Toby Carvery and a gardening meeting when Mrs Brenda Strong told us of her years with the Women's Land Army, hard work but great fun and much enjoyed in spite of the dark times. The discussion group tried to solve the problem of our enormous national debt, ways and means of saving money and this made for a lively though good humoured debate.

At the February meeting, Mrs Helen Holloway gave a talk with slide show on her visit to Iceland. This was enjoyed by everyone present. Mrs Audrey Preston gave a vote of thanks.

A coffee morning, outing and a strawberry tea, as well as the annual garden party, are events to look forward to in warmer weather and in April Una Waters will start our new year off with a talk on 'Pompeii'.

St Peter's Wives Group

At the February meeting Mrs Hazel Blackburn, one of our members, talked about bee-keeping and honey. She brought some hives, which she took apart, to show the different layers. She also brought along a skep, originally a bee-hive used by monks in the Middle Ages, which is used nowadays by bee-keepers for collecting swarms from inappropriate places. These swarms are used for starting new hives.

We were fascinated to hear about the life-cycle of bees and the queen, whose sole purpose in life is to lay eggs. By May there are usually between 50,000 and 60,000 bees in a hive. A mesh queen excluder is used to keep her in the bottom of the hive, but the smaller worker bees are able to go back and forth unhindered. The hive is gradually built up to make more honey.

Hazel no longer keeps bees herself but has become a judge of honey at agricultural shows and local fetes. She told us about the points she looks for when judging.

The talk and the honey tasting at the end were enjoyed and Hazel was thanked for a most interesting talk.

The next meeting will be at Church House on Tuesday, 20 April at 8.00pm when Chris Goode will speak on 'Coach Tours of Britain'.

Chazey WI

'The Royal Collection - Scale Model State Coaches' was the theme of Peter Smith's talk to Chazey WI at their February meeting. Described as only one of a kind, his scale models have been exhibited countrywide for many years. Of the 26 created from the originals housed by the Royal Family, he displayed a 1902 state landau, the Scottish state coach, the Queen Alexandra state coach, Irish state coach, Prince Philip's park drag, and many more.

WI members and their visitors were able to inspect all the models on display and listen to the fascinating history of these coaches, beautifully constructed in perfect miniature.

Chazey WI meet on the first Tuesday of each month (7.45pm) at the Methodist Church Hall, on the corner of Highmoor Road and Woodcote Road, Caversham. Visitors and new members are always made very welcome.

Caversham Community Association

After a rather disjointed programme in December and January due to the weather, members were pleased to get together in February. The month began with the usual games evening,

followed the next week by a quiz and fun evening.

The last two weeks were devoted to romance with a Valentine's party. Everyone wore red, listened to some romantic music, played a few games and enjoyed a delicious bring and share supper. This was finished off with the delayed Christmas cakes made by Wendy Colton. The competition for a Valentine poem was won by Muriel Waite. The month ended with a Valentine bingo session with mostly chocolate prizes going to the lucky winners.

Caversham WI

Members were pleased to welcome in February Mr Alan Copeland with his slides and commentary from the late Doug Noyes on the changing face of Reading. Southampton Street and the Oracle area have changed considerably over the years.

Mrs Sue Taylor gave the vote of thanks and the speaker judged the competition for home-made biscuits. Miss Margaret Cameron was declared the winner. Concern was expressed that Joyce Roberts was in hospital after a major operation and the treasurer Sylvia Myzsor was also ill. Business details were given and the raffle ended an enjoyable evening.

Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club

On Wednesday 14th April, Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club are having a fun evening with Jackie Watson, who will show how to make gorgeous hanging baskets. Her 'Hanging Baskets- Have-a-Go' demonstration promises to be a very enjoyable time, when members can try their hand at making a basket. The fun starts at 7.30pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Rd., Caversham, doors opening at 6.45pm. Entrance £4.50 for visitors. Refreshments and a Sales Table will be available.

On Friday 30th April, the Club will be going on a day trip to RHS Wisley. The coach leaves Caversham Heights Methodist Church at 9.30am and returns at 5pm. For further details on any of the above, contact Berna Macdonald on 0118 9477400

British Legion

After a busy time in November collecting for the Poppy Appeal, things have quietened down - well just a little!

So far the total for the Poppy Appeal, collected in Caversham, is just over £36,000 and rising all the time with donations - all the money collected for the Appeal is sent to the national 'pot' where it is spent on welfare cases.

A very enjoyable Christmas party was held for members at the Caversham Working Men's Club and since then members have enjoyed our 'Round the World' in Caversham Supper Clubs and trips to Portsmouth and the Wey & Arun Canal with lunch of Irish stew enjoyed in a pub close by the canal.

The monthly socials are still proving very popular - these are held at the Caversham Working Men's Club and there are usually 50 - 60 present. The Branch charges £1 and the evening includes a quiz, supper, a raffle and bingo!

Our local welfare work has increased with many requests for help from ex-service people or their families.

The Branch takes their purpose seriously but combines it with social events and fund-raising which raise quite a bit of money but in a very friendly, unpressurised way.

If you think you might like to join the Royal British Legion in Caversham to help or for company contact Ron Jewitt on 0118 948 1147.

Reading and District Probus Club

It was 'any moans and groans' time again, otherwise known as the AGM with the usual review of the year. There was no need to remember last year's AGM as the secretary had circulated the minutes to all members (a crib sheet as an aid to memory).

The main item on the agenda was the election and the installation of the new President David Fulbrook, by the outgoing President, Charles Tucker, who both warmly thanked the committee, especially the Secretary, Treasurer and the retiring Speakers Secretary, after which a block vote put the previous committee back in (the President only asking for those against to stand up and nobody did!).

In the months to come speakers will cover a variety of subjects: tuberculosis, a new threat of the old disease; nuclear power; women and their part in the SOE; cricket in South Africa and cartoons.

Probus is for retired men but their ladies and guests are invited twice a year in June and December (this answers their question 'what do you do at Probus?'). Any eligible men can find out more by ringing the secretary Raymond Head on 0118 941 1445 or visit the Club's website www.readingprobus.talktalk.net



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**THE GUILD OF ST RAPHAEL**

The Guild of St Raphael is a Christian Healing Organisation founded in 1915. Raphael means 'God heals'. The main aim of the Guild of St Raphael is to promote and practise Christ's healing ministry as an integral part of the life and worship of the Church. I first became a member about 10 years ago after hearing a talk about the work of the Guild by Norman Kent – the secretary at that time at St Andrews in Caversham. As an aromatherapist I have always felt my work to be a kind of healing ministry where God can work through me and so it made sense to belong to a healing group.

It is evident from past records that a branch of the Guild of St Raphael has been in existence at St Andrews since 1955. It was founded by the Revd Derek Eastman and Hilda Hodges was the first secretary, a position she kept for 20 years. There is now a trust fund in her name which is used for assisting where extra expense may be incurred during illness. We feel proud that our branch of the Guild is still going strong after 55 years, but it seems that it is little known. Many people I speak to have never heard of it, which is sad because it is such a worthy organisation. It originated from the Anglican Community but now includes many other denominations and has branches both in this country and overseas.

Prayer for healing is at the heart of the Guild's work as are the sacraments of healing – anointing and the sacramental act of laying on of hands. There is a half yearly periodical called Chrism in which many different facets of the healing ministry are explored. I particularly like the fact that the Guild works in close co-operation with the medical profession and others engaged in the work of healing.

St Andrews has a monthly service with prayers for the sick, with communion followed by laying on of hands and anointing with oil for any who want to receive it. You don't necessarily have to be ill to receive healing. In truth we all probably need healing in some aspect of our lives even if we're not aware of it! Anyone can come to these services – you don't have to be a member, but as a member you are committed to praying daily for those on the sick list and trying to attend the services when possible. The services are quiet and reflective, sometimes with music, and give a real sense of peace. Two to three times a year we have a general service within our Sunday morning service and it is really encouraging to see so many come up for healing.

Last year at the Guild's AGM held at St Katherine's, Marylebone, I decided to stand for the council. One of my aims as a council member is to try and raise the profile of the Guild – hence this article. I would be very happy to talk to anyone interested in joining the Guild of St Raphael or having a branch in their church. Anyone will be very welcome at our monthly meetings which are held on the first Thursday of the month in the St Andrews Church, Caversham Heights.

Leslie Maynerd

Caversham
Horticultural Society

The society's first talk of 2010 is intriguingly entitled "Skulduggery in the Shrubbery". Stefan White will recount the fascinating story of John Tradescant the 17th century entrepreneurial plant collector, gardener and collector of rarities. He was the founder of Britain's first museum and his story includes a dodo, pirates, the princess Pocahontas, witchcraft and a scheming shift lawyer who did the family out of their collections of curiosities.

Find out more about this fascinating man by coming to this talk which will be held at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road on Wednesday 21st April starting at 7.45pm.

Reading
Gardeners

The last meeting in the winter programme is the Annual General Meeting and Plant Sale with refreshments.

This will take place on April 24th in Caversham Primary School.

Anyone wishing to become a member in order to take part in the summer programme of visits should contact Gill Betts 0118 9477125 Email gillmbetts@yahoo.co.uk
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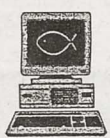

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