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Caversham Bridge

No 724

www.cavershambridge.org

June 2025

Sixty years of service

by **Graham Lyke**

CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS (CGN) was started in 1965. Local GP Dr Beale knew some of his patients found difficulty attending his surgery, the hospital or collecting prescriptions. Local priest Rev Eastman had experienced an innovative scheme to help housebound people in his previous parish.

This idea was among several discussed by the Caversham churches at the time, as part of a drive to develop services in and for the community. A May Day conference provided the momentum for the creation of the Caversham Bridge newspaper, the Link Group providing services for isolated elderly people, and CGN.

[...link to the churches...](#)

It was always intended this independent voluntary organisation should be broadly based, and Bill Vincent, a lay Reader at St Andrews, was charged by the Rector with seeking the cooperation of all the churches in Caversham. Bill became the first Chairman of CGN, and the service continues its link to the churches by being based in Church House, in the centre of Caversham.

Providing transport to hospitals and surgeries, and collecting prescriptions, has remained at the centre of CGN's service, which also helps users to attend lunch clubs and social events. It has always been run by volunteers and largely funded by users' donations.

CGN was runner-up in the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2018. It was proud to keep working through the COVID-19 pandemic – for which the clients were very appreciative.

The present committee thank their predecessors for all their sound decisions, as well as all the volunteers who have given their time to CGN over the years. To celebrate our 60th anniversary, a Tea Party for the volunteers will be held at Caversham Golf Club on Wednesday 2 July. Thanks to them, we continue to thrive – and may we continue for another 60 years!

We are always on the lookout for more drivers. You can work when you wish, as often as you wish and help out lots of people – so why not try being a CGN driver?

Contact the office on 01189 483466.

For more information about CGN please see our website:

Cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk

Linking the past with the present...



From the Caversham Bridge – 1975 top, current below



Hemdean Road post box topper

photo O Badziak

by **Phil Chatfield**

OUR JUNE paper starts by looking back at sixty years of service to our community by Caversham Good Neighbours (left). In May, we remembered the end of the war in Europe in 1945. One local group, based at the Weller Centre, knitted a special post box 'topper' for the letter box on Hemdean Road opposite the library. A delighted reader sent us this photo, but sadly the 'topper' went missing within a day or so. If you can help track it down, please email us at editors@cavershambridge.org

Shortly after the end of the war, the Reading Düsseldorf Association was set up to foster friendship between the two communities. Many local people have been involved with the Association since then and it is still thriving (p13). The compassion which was at the heart of the establishment of the Association is a central part of the theme of our *Talking Point* from Alan Race (p2).

Our Local Scene painting this month provides a colourful look at Nood Stores on Church Street (p11). And the art theme continues with a new Art Hunt (p10) and *Creative Caversham* (p12), which features silversmith Machi de Waard. Other regular contributors include Les Cooper and the foxgloves in his garden (p10), *Happy Wanderer* exploring local links with South Wales (p7) and our wellbeing article from Ami Roy on the benefits of shared meals (p15).

The written word is highlighted in our book reviews and an article on journalism by a writer from Kendrick School (both p5), while writing well is central to submitting a successful job application (p14).

There is plenty going on in our area this month – do check our *What's On* information (p6) and articles on local environmental festivals (p9) and the Reading Amateur Regatta (p8).

We have had fine weather for the last two months. Let's hope this continues through June, although some overnight rain would be welcome for the garden! We hope you enjoy our June edition and look forward to your feedback and contributions. Contact us at editors@cavershambridge.org or by post at **Church House, Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX.**

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Worldwide Wisdom



Talking Point

by
Revd Dr Alan Race

PRIOR TO the 80th anniversary commemorations of VE Day, the actor and writer Sheila Hancock wrote: “Our beautiful planet is under threat in many ways. History shows that the solution is definitely not to be found in autocratic leadership. Let us aim to unite the available worldwide wisdom to tackle the global crises together. Time is running out”. I agree with her about ‘time’, but wonder where ‘worldwide wisdom’ might come from?

Hancock’s ‘worldwide wisdom’ actually resides in the religious and humanistic voices of many traditions. But the challenges we face are huge: (1) the rise of nationalist populism (Make Great Again); (2) climate science denial; (3) demonising immigrants and asylum seekers; (4) rising anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, (5) life-threatening disparity between the rich and the poor in this country and throughout the world, (6) stigmatising people of LGBTIA+ sexuality and gender self-recognition – the list could be extended!

Is it time for churches and faith-communities to raise their heads above the parapet? Recently my attention was drawn to a Christian community in the United States who are seeking to do just that. They are taking heart from the recognition that the religions of the world share the value of compassion as a motivating factor in both

personal relationships and the building up of public life. Here is a little taste of this church’s Declaration:

In the light of current government policies that are in direct opposition to the values and truths we hold as followers of Jesus, we align ourselves with all communities of faith and people of good will who feel called to publicly, humbly, and non-violently resist those government policies that:

- threaten the well-being and dignity of targeted populations and individuals
- endanger the well-being of our shared planet
- dismantle structures of our constitutional democracy as well as congressionally funded programs that provide important services to those in need

Recognising that compassion and care for the vulnerable are central to the beliefs and values of all spiritual traditions, we invite all communities of faith to join us in speaking up and resisting policies of our government that violate inherent human dignity and inflict suffering on the most vulnerable among us, including our shared earth’s plants, animals, water, and air.

This Declaration was crafted for an American context, but its force is capable of being adopted in many places around the world – even in this country!

Revd Dr Alan Race – Reading Minster

Announcing exciting new chapter for theatre group



JUST OVER A year ago, theatre group RABBLE, then based at The Stables at Caversham Court, found itself about to become homeless, having been part of our community since 2022. Fortunately, the nationally acclaimed theatre group have now found themselves a new base and have moved across the river from Caversham to South Street Arts Centre, using the offices upstairs for the admin side of their work in education as well as developing and putting on new drama in and around Reading.

RABBLE had some thrilling news at the start of this year with the announcement that Arts Council England will be investing £30,000 in the development of a new play, *William The Conqueror*, which RABBLE plan to take on a nationwide tour in time for the Conqueror’s 1000th birthday in 2027. More recently, the company revealed a launch event for the project will take place in one of Reading’s historic churches at the end of this June.

Once again written by Beth Flintoff, the new play, which is a prequel to *Henry I* – memorably performed in Reading Abbey itself in 2023 – will be part of celebrations in both England and Normandy

‘...**RABBLE plan to take on a nationwide tour in time for the Conqueror’s 1000th birthday in 2027**

coinciding with William’s millennium. RABBLE will be previewing the project on Saturday 28 June.

The preview event takes place at St Laurence – the magnificent church built in 1121 near to the Town Hall – with three performances on June 28, at 13:30, 16:00 and 19:00.

Introduced by RABBLE’s director Toby Davies, he will be joined by key team members: writer Beth Flintoff, associate director Hal Chambers, fight director Dani Mac, and movement director Gareth Taylor.

Electronic composer and DJ Benjamin Hudson with lyricist Sami Chokri will also be on hand to demonstrate the unique way sound is being developed for this production.

Find out more: rabbletheatre.com

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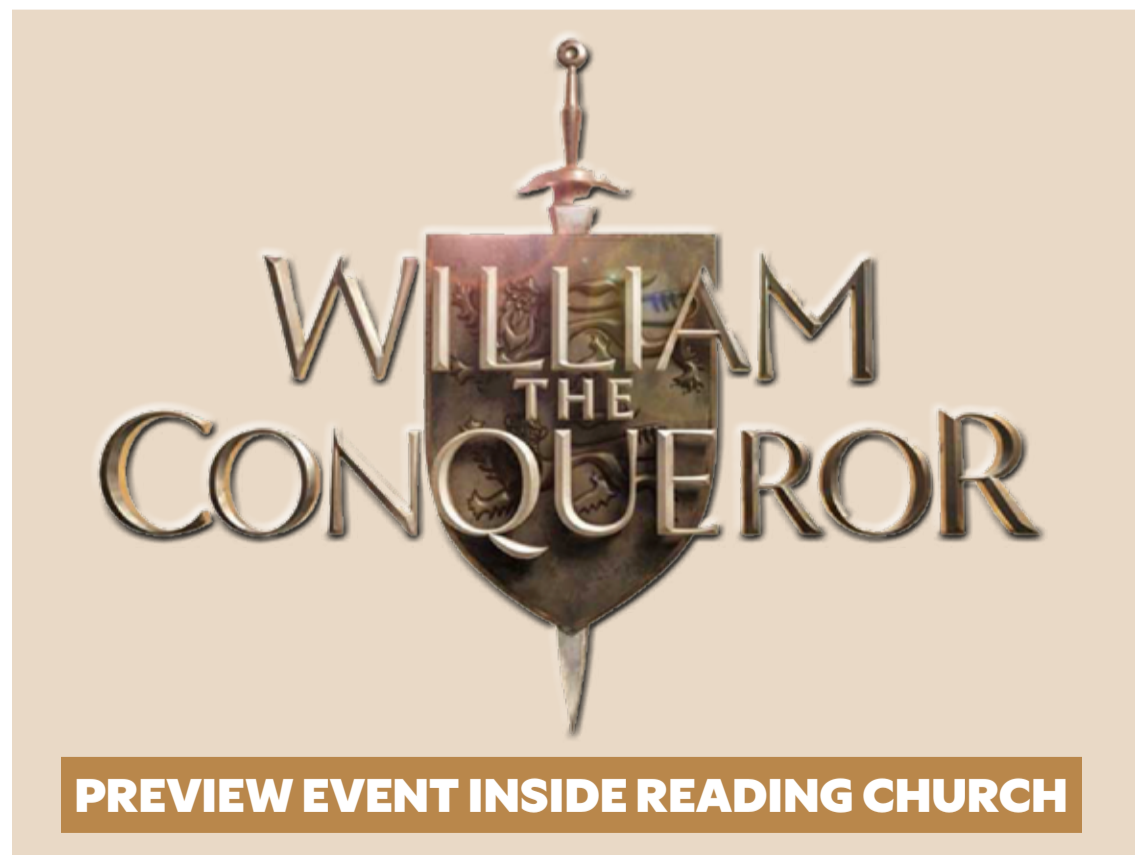
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PREVIEW EVENT INSIDE READING CHURCH

A launch for the new play will take place this June

image.rabbletheatre.com

Cycling for Science and Charity



Ready for the off

photo M Vijay

by Dr Edwin Raj

A UNIQUE CHARITY cycling event, Tribute Audax, took place in Caversham on 26 April. Themed as a tribute to science pioneers, the rides raise funds for local charities. Founded in 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, this year marked the sixth edition of the event, supporting Launchpad Reading and Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

The event is organised under the regulations of Audax UK, the Long Distance Cyclists' Association, which oversees non-competitive endurance cycling events across the country. There were three themed routes:

- **A Tribute to Alan Turing: A 200km ride to Bletchley Park (Milton Keynes) and back through the Chilterns, honouring the father of theoretical computer science and artificial intelligence**
- **A Tribute to Robert Boyle: A 100km ride to Oxford, where Boyle, the father of modern chemistry, lived from 1655 to 1668 and discovered Boyle's Law**
- **A Tribute to Johnson and Matthey: A 50km route around the Chilterns, passing the Johnson Matthey Technology Centre in Sonning Common, celebrating the metallurgical pioneers and founders of the 200 year old British speciality chemicals company Johnson Matthey Plc, Percival Johnson and George Matthey.**

Over 175 cyclists took part this year, collectively covering more than 12,900 miles in a single day.

The Parish of Our Lady & St Anne's in Caversham

has supported the event since it started, providing a welcoming venue each year. Its proximity to Reading's well-connected station makes it accessible to riders from across the country, including this year participants from London, Bristol, and Nottingham. Riders were rewarded with a delicious home-cooked curry, prepared by women chefs from the Reading Tamil Catholic Community.

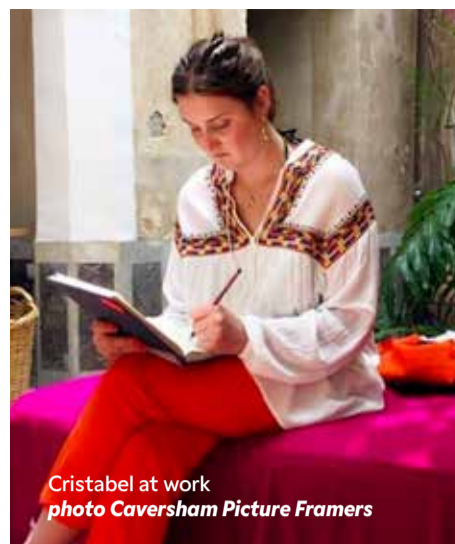
Over the past six years, Tribute Audax has raised more than £16,000 for its chosen charities. Our thanks go to riders, volunteers, staff from Launchpad Reading, and everyone who helped make the event a success.

Tribute Audax will return next year on Saturday, 25 April.

For more information, visit www.TributeAudax.uk.

New drawing class at Picture Framers

by Elestr Lee



Cristabel at work
photo Caversham Picture Framers

FOLLOWING HER successful exhibition at Caversham Picture Framers at the end of last year, artist Christabel Forbes got into discussions as to how else she could get involved. 'The logical answer was for me to set up a drawing course, using the new Print Club space. It will be for a small class (maximum 10), and for people at any level, and I will be helping them to gain confidence in drawing,' Christabel explained.

'The two-hour classes will run for four Thursdays through July, and we will go outside – not far, but to draw from observation, and we will also spend time in the studio. We will use mixed media and colour and, once people find a subject, they will learn what they can do with their observations, in a friendly supportive class.'

Christabel's drawing class is a new addition to the activities now on offer due to the opening of the new space behind the Framers. 'The Print Club is going really well,' said Lydia Gledhill, from the Framers. 'The Wednesday evening taster sessions are becoming popular with groups and individuals coming to give etching a try.'

Find out more:

Drawing with Christabel Forbes

18:30-20:30 Thursdays in July – 4 sessions ends July 24.

See cavershampictureframer.co.uk for booking details.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS – A REMINDER



Renewing subscriptions

£7 for 2025-6

ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS were due on 1 March this year. At the time of writing, around 170 have yet to be renewed. A significant proportion have been paid by bank transfer, which makes things so much simpler for our volunteer deliverers. We would like to thank all who have already paid and to remind those who have yet to pay of our bank details.

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Wendy Howell outside St Barnabas Church

Our **Kind** Community

text and photo Caroline Gratrix



Celebrating Kind Community Champions: Wendy Howell

WENDY HOWELL has spent decades quietly shaping and supporting the community of Emmer Green with tireless dedication, compassion, and an extraordinary gift for bringing people together.

Since moving to the area in 1996, Wendy has become an integral part of parish life at St Barnabas Church. She is a member of the church choir, contributes to the church's flower arranging team, serves on the parish council, and plays a key role in organising three major fundraising events each year, as well as the regular Tuesday morning craft group.

...open to everyone...

These include the popular Household and Handyman Sale on 3 May (garden tools and home goods, excluding clothing), the Summer Garden Party on 12 July – complete with traditional games, raffle, and strawberry cream teas – and the festive Christmas Fayre on 6 December, offering seasonal items and handmade preserves. All events are open to everyone in the community.

In addition to her work within the parish, Wendy is widely known for her beautifully curated hampers. Her enthusiasm for giving back is matched only by her commitment to community spirit.

Wendy also serves as the current Chair of Reading Family Aid, a Charity supporting disadvantaged children in the Reading area. Many of these children

face difficult circumstances, including poverty, abuse, disability, or homelessness. Wendy's leadership continues to bring hope and joy to families who need it most. To find out more about Reading Family Aid, please feel free to visit their website: www.readingfamilyaid.org

A former computer programmer, Wendy brings sharp organisational skills to everything she undertakes. She describes herself as 'very sociable' – but those who know her would say she brings much more than sociability. She brings heart, energy, and kindness.

To explore events and activities at St Barnabas, visit:

www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

A Handy Sum

CONGRATULATIONS to all involved in the annual Handyman Sale at St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green on 3 May. With everything from books and crockery to plants and tool sharpening, the sale raised over £1500 which will be used to support St Barnabas' two overseas charities. These are Education for Life in Mombasa, Kenya and Masiphumelele School in Cape Town, South Africa.

The Editors



St Anne's first group of pilgrims since refurbishment

photo M Thomas

A local pilgrimage

by Margaret Thomas

THE CHURCH of Our Lady and St Anne's welcomed its first group of pilgrims since the refurbishment of the Church on 12 April. During the warm, dry spell we had then, a group from Our Lady and St John, Goring and Christ the King, Woodcote visited. Most of them walked from Goring whilst enjoying the glorious day. Mass was said by their parish priest, Fr Kenneth McCabe, in the small chapel of Our Lady of Caversham within the church. After enjoying tea, coffee and packed lunches, and a visit to our parish shop, they set off for home. We enjoyed their visit and are looking forward to welcoming another group very soon.

For more information about group visits, please see our website at www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk

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For your bookshelf...

by Alex Forbes

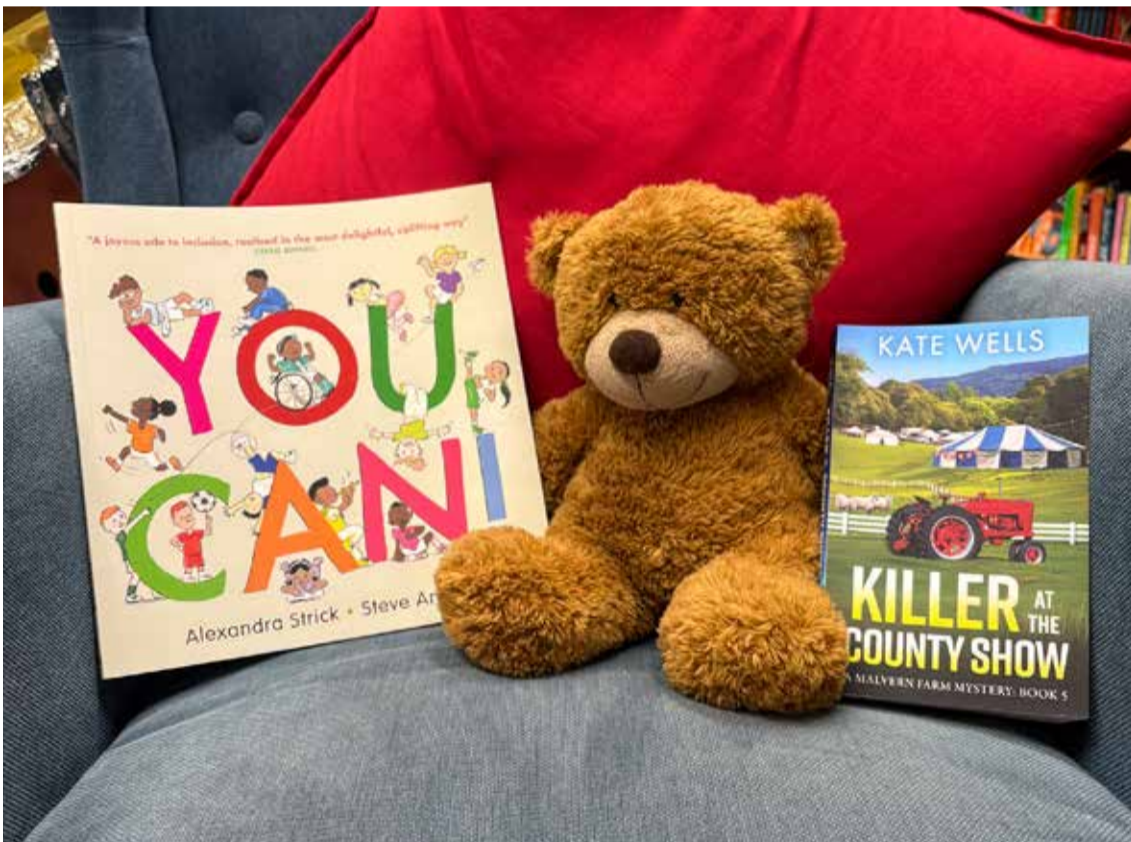
Welcome to our monthly article where we chat about books we've enjoyed in the last month.

SOUND THE 'Kate-Wells-New-Book' Klaxon! We were delighted to see a new Kate Wells book *Killer at the County Show*. For those unfamiliar with the series, it centres around Jude, who owns a farm in Malvern, and attracts dead bodies and murder investigations. Jude is at the Three Counties Show, where she is showcasing her sheep, and one of her neighbouring farmers turns up dead. Of course, it wouldn't be a murder investigation in Malvern if Jude didn't get involved. I think this is one of my favourite Malvern Farm books to date. As I have mentioned before, because we are so familiar with the characters it allows Kate to really flex her creative muscles in building on the solid foundations she has created in previous books. We see new farms and meet new farmers as well as the County Show itself providing a different location. It's good for Jude to get away from time to time. We can't wait to see where this series goes next.

Our children's pick is *You Can!* by Alexandra Strick and illustrated by shop favourite Steve Antony (of *Rainbowsaurus* fame). *You Can ...be brave, challenge yourself, overcome your fears, be kind, be brilliant... be YOU!* Come on an amazing journey with 14 children as they grow from birth to 18 years old, learning new skills, exploring new worlds, standing up for their own and others' rights – and following their dreams. Created with real children, who sent messages of empathy, reassurance and hope, *You Can!* will inspire young people of all ages to be empowered and believe in themselves. It's a joyous book celebrating the superpowers of humans. We were lucky enough to see Alex and Steve tour a few schools with this, and it was very inspiring.

Happy reading, whatever book you are enjoying at the moment.

www.fourbearsbooks.co.uk



The Bear Can!

photo A Forbes



Aspiring journalists with Andrew

photo A Roche

Inspiring Young Writers

by Evie Porter

We are always pleased to have contributions from younger writers. Evie has written for the Caversham Bridge before, this time reflecting on a career in journalism.

ON THURSDAY 3 April, Reading and Wokingham Today journalist, Andrew Batt, visited Kendrick School in Reading to talk about his experiences in journalism, the current landscape of local news, and to advise Kendrick's aspiring journalists.

Andrew spoke about his career pathway, starting at Emmbrook School, Wokingham, when, as an avid supporter of his local football club, he took photos at each of the matches. He was noticed by a local newspaper, who asked to publish his photos. This moment catalysed a lifelong dedication to journalism.

Over Andrew's decades-long career, journalism has changed in immeasurable ways. As a generation growing up in a digital age, it was fascinating to learn about the complexities of photojournalism without mobile phones. It takes milliseconds to snap a photo now, but during the early 90s, while Andrew was a trainee photographer, he used film. This meant waiting to develop photos before viewing them. While on the job he had no clue how his work would turn out! His collection of historical newspapers was another example of how reporting has evolved. We saw a 1930s newspaper, with dense text printed with back-to-front letters on metal blocks (the phrase 'hot off the press' makes more sense now!), and a wartime newspaper with only four pages due to paper rationing. For those used to receiving news instantly on mobile apps, this was completely alien.

...all sides of every story...

Andrew also gave us tips on how to get into journalism. From stressing how a good knowledge base contributes to confidence during interviews, to researching all sides of every story; his advice was invaluable. He placed great emphasis on making a habit of writing regularly.

'Do you think the development of AI has impacted journalism, and, if so, in what ways?'

Of the questions I sent to Andrew before he came in, this was the one which I was most excited to hear about. In a time of constant background noise about the threat AI poses to the job market, his opinion was refreshing. He suggested the role of a journalist is to create content, which AI insatiably consumes in order to power its database. He argued that journalists are crucial to AI's functioning. I thought this was a thought-provoking response, particularly after reading how AI has begun to produce and consume its own content and the fears about quality and reliability which come with this.

The Kendrick Journalism Club is very thankful to Andrew Batt for being so generous with his time, and we look forward to expanding our journalistic horizons.

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What's On

IF YOU have an event planned, please send details to whatson@cavershambridge.org. We need to receive these no later than the 10th of the month before the event for inclusion in the printed paper. Later submissions can be included in our online What's On, which is updated regularly. To see what has been added check: cavershambridge.org/archives/category/around-caversham

Please note, a listing of baby and toddler groups can be found on page 14.

Caversham Library – 09:00-17:00 Tuesday and Friday, 13:00-19:00 Thursday and 10:00-15:00 Saturday. Regular events include:

Rhymetimes for the little ones – popular, so please book first! Every Tuesday at 10:15 and 11:15.

Games Club, Friday mornings 10:30-12:00. All adults welcome – refreshments!

Sit and Stitch 17:30-19:45, on 2nd and 4th Thursdays every month. Refreshments – come and be inspired. Tel: 0118 9375103 or see reading.gov.uk/leisure/all-libraries/caversham-library

Geo Café – Artists Against Homelessness, an ongoing and changing exhibition of art by local artists at Geo Café, Prospect Street. For each sale the artist makes a donation to Launchpad Reading. Open every day.

Mondays – Caversham Park Bridge Club – at the Milestone Centre, 19:15 for 19:30 start. Phone Lin 0118 334 8195 for further information. bridgewebs.com/cavershampark

Tuesdays – Rivarate Choir – Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. 19:30 in term time. Enjoy singing together. For details see rivarate.com

Wednesdays – Caversham Writers – Welcoming enthusiastic hobbyists and aspiring authors alike. Meeting weekly in person or via Zoom. Free to all. For details: meetup.com/CavershamWriters or @CavershamWriter on Twitter (X)

Wednesdays – Light on the Hill Café – 19:30-21:30 at Grace Church, 119 Peppard Road, RG4 8TR. A wellbeing café for adults 18+. Come as you are for tea and a chat. Please see: www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk

Thursdays – Friendly Over-60s Social Club – 10:00-13:00 at Milestone Centre, Caversham Park Village. Hot lunch, quizzes and the chance to chat. Contact Cheryl at 07964 750182 or Trina at 07477 570541

Thursdays – Weller Centre Craft Group – 13:00-15:00. Be creative with friends. For details contact Pam Chatfield at pamch32@gmail.com Mobile 07986 905784 or Weller Centre 0118 947 5828

Thursdays – New Caversham Heights Bridge Club – 14:00 at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. For details contact Duncan Knight on 0118 9475544 or email duncan.knight@googlemail.com

Fridays – Warm Welcome Space – 10:00-13:30 at Caversham Baptist Church, South Street, RG4 8HY. All welcome, just drop in for free refreshments, including hot soup from 12:00. Tel: 0118 954 5353 www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

Saturdays – Keep Caversham Tidy – A local charity dedicated to eliminating litter and improving public spaces in Caversham. Free to join and no ongoing commitment. Families welcome! Email Keepcavershamtidy@gmail.com, FB [Keep Caversham Tidy](https://www.facebook.com/KeepCavershamTidy)

Sundays – Caversham Artisan & Farmers Market – Caversham Precinct, 10:00-15:00. See www.facebook.com/CAFMarket

Sundays – Nordic Walk (or just walking). Free to all. Tel: 07931 754096 or email Pat at Wirralbird@hotmail.com

Sundays – Redifolk Song and Music Club – 20:00-22:30 in the Community Hall, Watlington House, RG1 4RA. £8 admission for performances, £3 on singing nights. See www.redifolk.co.uk

Until Saturday 28 June – Exhibition of paintings on wood panels by Nick Syfret – Caversham Picture Framer, Church Road – for details see cavershampictureframer.co.uk/events

Tuesday 3 June – Caversham Women's Institute – 19:30 at Church House, Caversham. www.thewi.org.uk or Tel: 0118 947 5176

Wednesday 4 June – River Kennet and Sulhamstead Bannister (SU633703) 6.75 miles – 10:30 Pang Valley Ramblers. A circular walk south of Theale along the lakes of the Lower Kennet Water Park to farmland and meadows around Sulhamstead. One of a programme of regular walks in the area – see prramblers.org.uk/walks-programme

Friday 6 June – Chazey Women's Institute – 14:30 at St Andrew's Church Hall. Tel: 0118 947 0964, or e-mail rowena@primology.com

Friday 6 June – Bereavement Café – 14:00-15:30 at St. Barnabas, Emmer Green. A safe place to find others who have had their own loss and can appreciate something of your experience. For further info Tel. Gill at 0118 947 8772

Wednesday 11 June – Rosehill Ladies – 14:00 at St Barnabas Hall, Emmer Green. Tel: Sue 0118 947 7570 or email suegreen@hotmail.com

Wednesday 11 June – 'Bird, Bins and a Brew' (bird watching in the garden), a talk by Alisa Clybourn – 19:30 Caversham Horticultural Society. Caversham Baptist Church (opposite Waitrose). £3 for non-members. Light refreshments post talk. For details, see www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk

Saturday 14 June – Artists & Makers Fair – 10:00-16:00 at Caversham Methodist Hall, Gosbrook Road. Local artists and craftspeople display their work for sale. Free entry. Lobby café. For further information phone Jean at 07808 966928 or visit www.cavershamcrafts.co.uk

Saturday 14 June – Sunday 15 June – Reading Amateur Regatta and Vintage Fayre – Caversham Court Gardens. To learn more about the Regatta, visit their website at www.reading-amateur-regatta.org For information about the Vintage Fayre, visit www.angelbar.co.uk/events

Friday 20 June – Elgar's The Dream of Gerontius – 19:30, University Great Hall, Reading, RG1 5AG. A joint concert with Reading Festival Chorus and Johanneskantorei Dusseldorf. Tickets on the door. Details www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk

Saturday 21 June – Indian Food and Arts Festival – 12:30-17:00 The Milestone Centre, Northbrook Road, Caversham Park Village, RG4 6PF. For details and to book, www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/78385

Saturday 21 June – My Spirit Sang All Day – 19:00. Caversham Baptist Church, South Street, RG4 8HY. The Tamesis Chamber Choir present a programme packed with beauty – from Finzi and Whitacre to Mr Blue Sky and Bridge Over Troubled Water. Details tamesischamberchoir.com/eventer/my-spirit-sang-all-day

Monday 23 June – The Work of the South Central Ambulance Service – 14:00 at Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading, talk to Reading u3a by former Mayor of Reading Tony Jones. Non-members welcome, free entry. See www.readingu3a.org.uk

Saturday 28 June – South Chiltern Choral Society Summer concert – 18:00 (time to be confirmed) Highdown School, Emmer Green, RG4 8LX. Join them and experience nostalgic melodies and timeless tunes. For more information and tickets see www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk

Saturday 28 June – Mostly Mozart – the CinC Ensemble – 19:30, St Andrew's Church, Albert Road RG4 7PL. Concerts in Caversham present the Flute Quartet in A major, the Piano Quartet in Eb major and the Clarinet Quintet in A major by Mozart and Ravel's Introduction and Allegro for string quartet, flute, harp and viola. Details and booking: concertsincaversham.littleboxoffice.com

Coming Up in July

Saturday 5 July – Reading Haydn Choir summer concert – 19:30, St Andrew's Church, Albert Road RG4 7PL. The repertoire will be a mix of European sacred music, opera choruses and settings by Finzi of poems by Robert Bridges – something for everyone. Further details www.haydnchoir.org.uk

Saturday 12 July – Bach Christ lag in Todesbanden, Caroline Shaw To the Hands and Entr'acte and the Telemann Viola Concerto – 19:30 Reading Bach Choir with instrumentalists from Concerts in Caversham at Douai Abbey. Tickets £18 / Under 18's £5, via the website www.readingbachchoir.org.uk or on the door.

CADRA Planning Bulletin

A summary of planning and transport matters affecting the RG4 area, provided by Caversham and District Residents Association www.cadra.org.uk

At Gravel Hill Cottages, Blagrove Lane (PL/25/0574), rear and side extensions are proposed to an unspoilt Edwardian semi. At **2b Kidmore Road** (PL/25/0209), plans to fell two protected yew trees were refused due to their visual and environmental value.

At **Atterbury Gardens** (PL/24/1659) the biodiversity net gain assessment for the proposed new houses fails to meet the 10% biodiversity net gain requirement for habitat improvement. As there is no scope on the site to rectify this, off-site compensation will likely be required to achieve it.

In **Emmer Green, Surley Place** (PL/25/0649) tree works including the removal of a Douglas Fir near the Conservation Area. **Harvey's Nurseries, Peppard Road** (PL/25/0548), seeks a Certificate of Lawfulness to increase on-site caravans from 96 to 115.

At **Caversham Court Gardens** (PL/25/0649), proposals for essential conservation to the listed eastern boundary wall, including careful repairs, improved drainage, and paving. Work on the **Holm oak in Caversham Precinct** was approved (PL/25/0141).

The refusal of five townhouses at **George Street and Gosbrook Road** (PL/24/0900) is now under appeal. Nearby, a proposed digital ad screen at the **Thames Valley Service Station** (PL/25/0468) has raised road safety concerns, including from the Council's Highways team.

The major redevelopment at **2 Norman Place** (PL/24/0958), proposing 11-storey residential and mixed-use blocks, remains under review. The application explains why connecting to a district heating network is unfeasible.

See www.cadra.org.uk for links to these planning applications.

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The best community stories, the most exciting local events

Happy Wanderer on **Crawshay, Courtenay & Tredegar**

IN EMMER GREEN we have three street-names connected with collieries and ironworks in South Wales, which seems curious. These names were allocated at different times between the 1930s and the 1960s.

The connection between the Crawshay family and Emmer Green is well known. The family were ironmasters of Cyfarthfa Castle near Merthyr Tydfil, who purchased Caversham Park in 1838. Here they had clean air, extensive views over the Thames Valley and, once the railway to Reading had opened in 1840, easy access to their London offices and warehouses. The story of the burning down of Caversham Park in 1850 is also well known; Mr Crawshay is supposed to have told his servants, 'Let it burn! I'll have it rebuilt with iron'. There is a Crawshay monument in the churchyard of St Peter's Church, and in the 1890s Mrs Florence Crawshay was a great benefactor of the Catholic Church of Our Lady and St Anne.

The name of Crawshay Drive first appears in the local papers in 1954. It runs from Kidmore End Road to Courtenay Drive, which had first appeared 20 years earlier. It was early in 1934 when Courtenay Charles Evan Morgan had died. He had been a member of a very wealthy family who owned estates in what was then Monmouthshire, with coal and ironstone below. The Morgan family don't seem to have owned or run the firms which mined the coal or smelted the iron on their land.

● **Mr Crawshay is supposed to have told his servants, 'Let it burn! I'll have it rebuilt with iron'...**

Courtenay Morgan inherited his grandfather's title, Baron Tredegar, and was made Viscount Tredegar in 1926. He had been educated at Eton, and served as a Captain and then a Major in the Monmouthshire Royal Engineers, seeing action in the Boer War. In 1913, he bought a steam yacht, the Liberty, with the intention of setting out on a world cruise, but his vessel was requisitioned by the Royal Navy on the outbreak of war. It was used as a hospital ship, and, during the early part of the war, the owner, now a Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, was in command. After the armistice, he was able to fulfil his original ambition.

...fortunes squandered...

Quite why, soon after his death, he was commemorated by a street name in Emmer Green is not obvious. The name of Tredegar Road doesn't appear in local papers until 1965. It's not near Courtenay Drive, but runs from the roundabout where St. Barnabas Road, Highdown Hill Road and Surley Row meet, running eventually down to Hemdean Bottom. The family fortunes of the Morgans were squandered by later generations, and Tredegar House now



You say Crayshaw and I say Crawshay... let's call the whole thing off!

photo Happy Wanderer

belongs to the National Trust. Cyfarthfa Castle is a museum and Art Gallery owned by the Merthyr local authority.

I well remember, probably in the late 1990s, watching in disbelief as a workman was up a ladder fixing lettering to a new

block of retirement homes in Caversham, which would spell out CRAYSHAW COURT! Should I tell him he was probably fixing the letters in the wrong order? I kept silent and stalked away. Maybe Crayshaw had been intended?

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Puzzle Corner

The Challenge by Rachel

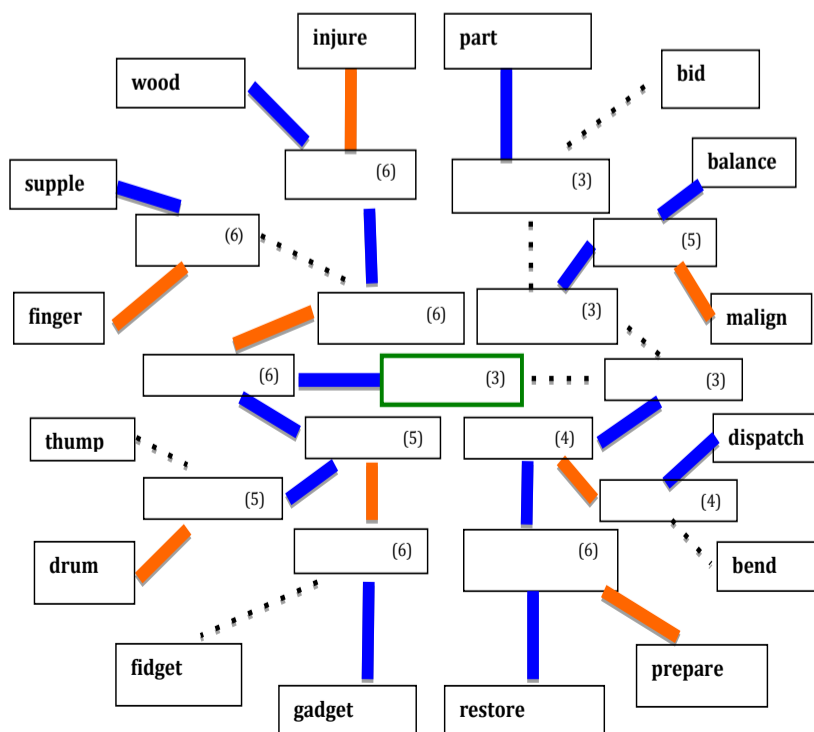
WORD PUZZLE

Find the word that has the same meaning as the clue; or rhymes with; or has one letter that is different. For example: *tingle* has 6 letters, rhymes with *shingle* and means *thrill*.

Rhyme ———

Letter change ·····

Meaning ———



Answers on page 14

BRICKS AND MORTAR

Can you find 23 builders' terms in the grid?

C V B M O R T A R A F T E R
Q O R R R O O F T I L E V U
G S N D E M T G B R I C K C
H F P C N D M R Q B K I Y C
I L O I R A D X T R O W E L
D E S U R E S A W I N D O W
O T C S N I T T L C Y T A Q
O T A F C D T E I K O S E P
R O F F E U A L B P E I F L
F N F Y M K W T E L G O R A
R T O K E W B A I V O J O T
A I L J N A Z P C O E C G E
M E D L T H D E V K N L K I
E P Z E N I L B M U L P R P

Airbrick

Brick

Cement

Concrete Block

Door Frame

Fletton

Foundation

Frog

Hawk

Joist

Ladder

Mortar

Pit Sand

Plate

Plumb Line

Rafter

Roof Tile

Scaffold

Spirit Level

Tape

Tie

Trowel

Window

Our Village: Taking a Leaf From Mitford's Book



text and photo Roslyn Weaver

...anyone walking through Christchurch Meadows in the summertime can enjoy various organised and impromptu games

RECENT NEWS reports of outrage over a certain bakery/coffee shop chain opening new stores in various parts of England included background about how they choose new locations. Apparently, a computer algorithm identifies desirable postcodes using criteria such as transport links, schools, churches, parks, farmers' markets, local butchers and bookshops. Unsurprisingly, the media coverage focused mostly on residents who felt the absence of exactly that bakery/coffee shop chain in their town made it desirable to live in. It should be noted Caversham does not seem to have made that chain's list (yet), something that may fill you with disappointment – or gratitude.

Beyond business decisions, it prompts the question of what factors we each use, even informally, to decide somewhere is desirable to live. Maybe it includes the above criteria, or independent cafes, good pubs and restaurants, theatres, sports, an active live music scene, library, or something else. Most of us would probably add a strong sense of caring community.

...hard to look past...

As far as ideal villages and towns go, it is hard to look past the writing of Mary Russell Mitford in the early nineteenth century. Mitford's *Our Village* includes pieces loosely based on her time living in Three Mile Cross, and *Belford Regis* is based on Reading.

Mitford's picturesque descriptions of village and town life might seem long gone now but perhaps not. No coffee shops in sight, but other aspects are still to be found, ranging from butchers and farms, grocers and gardens, craftspeople and churches, and everything in between. Her 'A Country Cricket Match' piece is a delight to read, and anyone walking through Christchurch Meadows in the summertime can enjoy various organised and impromptu games of not just cricket but football, frisbee, and any number of other activities.

A criticism of Mitford's work is avoiding unpleasant elements of town and village life, but that might be its strength. Choosing to focus on a location's positive elements not its negatives, and building a strong community, is probably something Mitford would heartily support – and something no business algorithm can predict.

Making a splash

by Meena Arch

THE READING Amateur Regatta (RAR), one of the UK's oldest and most prestigious rowing events, returns to the River Thames for a two-day celebration of sport and community. First held in 1842, the regatta welcomes top rowing clubs, schools, and future Olympians. On Saturday 14 June, they compete on the river's fast-paced 1,500m course, with a shorter, 1,000m course in use on Sunday 15. This year, for the first time the Regatta includes novice events.

While the rowing takes place on the Thameside Promenade side of the river, this year the Caversham side will also spring to life! Angel Bar and Feeling Crafty are teaming up with Hub Cap Promotions to host a vibrant vintage market, in Caversham

Court Gardens, with garden games and delicious food and drink available.

Market stalls include Caversham's own Fanny's Antiques, Sheabutter Cottage and Georgina's Vintage Couture, with many more, offering something for everyone.

Also it's the perfect way to spend Father's Day weekend (Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 June)— take a riverside stroll, soak up the racing action, and enjoy festive family fun in a beautiful riverside setting.

For more information on Regatta Vintage Fayre, or to register to get a reminder of the event nearer the time, sign up to our Newsletter or check out further event details at www.angelbar.co.uk/events.

To learn more about the RAR, visit their website at www.reading-amateur-regatta.org where you will find the programme of events and information on the history of the Regatta.

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EcoTip

by **Tricia Marcouse**



Blackbirds at risk of virus

photo R Stallard

Water hygiene in the garden

WITH OUR weather patterns changing, the risk of 'foreign' diseases coming into the country increases. The Usutu virus has moved gradually across Europe from South Africa, carried by mosquitoes. It infects birds and humans and has been found in dead blackbirds in Greater London since 2020.

There's a £1.15 million project *Vector-Borne RADAR* running until 2026 looking at the emergence and transmission pathways for zoonotic mosquito-borne viruses of wild birds in the United Kingdom. West Nile virus has been detected in mosquitoes in the Netherlands, and it's thought to spread in the same way as Usutu and through the same bird species as hosts. This virus can be a killer for humans, and we must assume that it will get to the UK in the coming years.

We can't stop mosquitoes expanding their range as weather patterns change, but we can reduce the numbers breeding around the home through better water hygiene. A mosquito breeding cycle is 1-2 weeks, depending upon temperature and species, and they need standing water. Bird baths, flower-pot saucers, pet drinking bowls, helpful shallow saucers for bees to drink from, uncovered water butts or other containers, any bromeliads sitting outside for the summer, abandoned toys and blocked gutters can all provide a mosquito with a breeding site. Empty these once a week or, better still, clean out the drinking bowls to reduce the spread of other infections, and you'll break the cycle. Ponds tend to be fine because loads of pond creatures love to feast on mosquito larvae.

The second thing you can do, if you have blackbirds in your garden, is to take part in a survey run by The British Trust for Ornithology over this summer. They want to determine whether the drop in blackbird numbers of 30% in the 2022 Breeding Birds Survey, and even more in Greater London, is due to Usutu or other environmental change.

See their website for details

www.bto.org/our-science/projects/blackbirds-gardens

Wild About Festivals

A ROUNDUP OF environmental events in Reading this June:

The **Reading Climate Festival** runs from Saturday 7 June until *Show Your Stripes Day* at the University on 21 June. There are talks, workshops and the Big Lunch in the Forbury Gardens on 14 June with vegan food stalls, help with grow-your-own and activities for children. There's a school's day at Whiteknights Park, and a workshop for small and medium-size enterprises.

The Draft Climate Action Strategy and Plan for Reading will be open for consultation after a talk in the council chamber on Tuesday 10 June, and there is a fascinating talk on the misinformation circulating about climate change, which will take place in the Town Hall and on zoom on Wednesday 11 June. Other Zoom talks include heat pumps, identifying UK butterflies

by **Tricia Marcouse**

and House Martins. All activities are free, and more details are on the What's on in Reading website or readingcan.org.uk

Wild about Reading runs from Thursday 26 to Sunday 29 June, with walks and talks throughout the town from morning rambles to evening bat walks. All the walks are free of charge, but you do need to book so walk leaders are not overwhelmed with participants. Full details are on www.wildaboutrg.com

Saturday 28 June also sees **Waterfest** on the Forbury and Kennet footpath, with umpteen stalls to visit. Finally, if you'd like to learn more about **hoverflies and bees**, there is a workshop organised by BBOWT volunteers on 28 June, bookable on www.bbowl.org.uk/events



Starting them young

image by readingcan.org.uk

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Les Cooper



rows and then wonder at the poor results.

There is something great about taking your own cuttings. It is easy and it makes you feel good. If you select non-flowering shoots from your pinks or carnations, they should root readily. If you haven't any in your garden, why not a buy a decent sized plant and take cuttings to have a good display later.

...moan and groan...

I really enjoy sowing foxgloves now, and there is such a wide choice to grow. You often get lots of seed in a packet and the instructions advise sowing thinly. I never manage, and usually finish up with a clutch of tiny seedlings clinging together for comfort. I moan and groan as I attempt to prick them out. But I will let you into a secret, the seedlings don't care, as long as they have decent soil, light and water later.

I would like to write that, having done all these things, you can now rest in the sun. But the weeds are coming up in the wrong places, plants need watering, and you need to watch out for those vine weevils. There is no such thing as a rest time for gardeners!



Foxgloves in Les's garden

photo E Cooper

No Time to Rest

ONE OF THE silly things I do is spending too much time watching the local weather forecast. I have spent hours waiting for the rain to come, just because the Met Office predicted a 40 percent chance of a shower. If I actually went out into the garden and did something, rather than stand around waiting, then my garden would be perfect. Well perhaps not, but it might be better. I believe that forecasts should be more positive and tell us, for example, there is a 60 percent chance it will be dry.

We all know one of the secrets of good

gardening is doing the right things at the right time. Weather forecasts do warn of threatening weather. There is nothing worse than going out and realising the gusty wind which kept you awake during the night has blown over those lovely hollyhocks or the beautiful delphiniums. Be prepared and, if you haven't done so already, get busy staking. Three canes to a plant, with string around to allow the spikes to sway, but not blow over, will do nicely.

Planting out sweetcorn now will do nicely too! Make sure you arrange the hardened-off plants in blocks to ensure pollination. I have known folk grow them in



Mushroom Art!

Art Hunt Comes to Caversham

text and photo Michelle Edmunds

GAME OF SHROOMS is a yearly world-wide art and seek event, created in 2019 by Daniel 'Attaboy' Siefert. Artists all over the world hide original, mushroom-themed artworks in public places and leave clues on their social media for people to find and keep for FREE, creating an art-based Easter egg hunt that celebrates the spirit of unexpected surprises. Anyone of any age or ability can take part. The only rule is 'Don't be mean-spirited'.

The 2025 event takes place on Saturday 14 June and, at the time of writing, two Caversham-based artists have signed up to take part: Michelle from Evangeline's Emporium, and Natalie from Pick n Mix Creations. There is still time for more artists to sign up and join in - the more art, the more fun! And don't be put off by the word 'artist' - anyone can

create, so long as the theme is mushrooms. If you want to sign up, go to yumfactory.com/projects/gameofshrooms and fill in the Artists Pin submission form, which will add you to the map. Have a read of the hints and tips for hiding, then from 00:01 on June 14, hide your art, drop clues on your social media account and enjoy people finding your artwork.

Those who wish to hunt for art should check out the website for the artists' approximate locations and to find links to their social media accounts, where they will be leaving clues to the specific locations. Once you've found an artwork, show your appreciation and let the artist know by tagging them on your social media, or by sending them a message. Be kind to other hunters and respect the spirit of the event by only taking one artwork from each artist.

It is a Leave No Trace event, so any art that isn't found should be collected by the artists at the end of the game day. Have fun and Happy Hunting!

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NOOD Stores



Drawing by Janina Maher

www.janinamaher.artweb.com

CAVERSHAM OWES a lot to Jodie Anderton and Claire Anderton-Bell, two entrepreneurs who have helped to add new enterprises and character to our shopping streets. It's great that Caversham has so many individual and interesting shops and cafés, in contrast to the chain stores and fast-food outlets of Reading.

Janina Maher's drawing this month is of Nood stores in Church Street. Jodie and Claire opened the shop in 2021, taking over the lease from the Caversham Emporium, which was full of vintage and 'arty' items. Prior to the Emporium, the premises, which date from the 1960s, were a dry-cleaning business for many years. Jody and Claire wanted a permanent outlet for their eco-lifestyle products, which they had already been selling in various street markets in Berkshire for some time. Their contacts and experience of the market scene led them to have the vision to set up the Caversham Sunday market, which has proved so popular and has become a regular outing on a Sunday morning for many of us. The market opened in November 2017, which timed well with the revamp of the St Martin's Precinct.

The fun title of Nood, indeed a pun on nude, reflects the basic natural nature of the products on sale, made with pure

and simple ingredients. Skin and hair products that can be replenished, fragrances, jewellery, gifts, stationery, and much more fill the shelves. The shop is festooned with wonderful plants and flower arrangements on sale. Jodie and Claire also manufacture their own products for skin care under their Nood brand. The shop is always welcoming and the manager, Maddy Carson, and her staff provide a friendly service.

However, things did not stop there, as in December 2024 the energetic entrepreneurs joined with Amanda Adlem (owner of the Hilton Skin and Body Clinic) to take over the premises that had been the Card Shop, and opened Spill, a stylish and contemporary venue that offers speciality coffee, craft cocktails, fine wines, and on some evenings has live music.

One wonders what Jodie and Claire have in mind next?



A stroll through Caversham

Janina's illustrated book, which is available at Fourbears Books on Prospect Street.

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Creative CAVERSHAM



All that glitters...



Award-winning silversmith **Machi de Waard** will be showing her stunning designs at the Whiteknights Studio Trail this June – and Reading has a special place in her story, as she explained to **Elestr Lee**

“I’M DUTCH BUT only lived in the Netherlands for a few years. In fact, I grew up in Reading, Pennsylvania, living there for 12 years. I visited London, expecting to be there only a short while, but instead I was to meet my future husband, who had a house in Reading, Berkshire. I’ve now been living in Caversham for 24 years – I just don’t seem to be able to get away from Reading!” she joked.

Machi’s love of art and craft stems from her childhood, surrounded by a family who

loved making things. “But I was also very good academically, so I ended up with a Masters in linguistics, and studied at Oxford. I ended up working at OUP in Oxford, but then I attended a jewellery making course here at Reading College – and announced to my husband that I had found what I really wanted to do!”

Since 2007 Machi has been concentrating on doing what she loves – designing and making jewellery and ‘small works’ (small items made in silver), as well as teaching



With John Ball at the Goldsmiths’ Awards **photo J Skupny** • Machi’s prize-winning entry **photo R Valencia**



her craft to others. “I have also written a book, with jeweller Janet Richardson, *Silver Jewellery Making*, which was published in 2021, which has been very successful,” she added.

Machi’s modernist designs, based on simple geometrical shapes such as circles, spheres and ovals – “I have a thing for circles!” she laughed – are created using silver, gold and occasionally gemstones. “While sterling silver has been around for thousands of years, I prefer to use argentium silver, which has only been around since 1990. It has a higher silver content, and tarnishes less,” she explained.

...musical response...

In 2023, Machi gained a Masters in Jewellery and Metal from the Royal College of Art, and in May this year she was honoured to be made a Freeman of the Goldsmiths’ Company in London. At the Goldsmiths’ Craft and Design Awards (the Oscars for jewellery designers), she won awards both in 2024 and again this year. When we met, she was excited to be reunited with her 2025 prizewinning entry and explained the story behind it as she opened the parcel and set it up for me to see. “I became involved in a collaboration with a Dutch musician,” she told me. “His name is Frans de Waard, which happens to be the same name as my father. Because of his name I kept coming across him online, so I sent an email to Frans to ask him if he would be interested in collaborating, and he replied, ‘That’s the weirdest email I ever got!’”

The initial idea has resulted in both artists creating a response to each other’s work. “I recorded the sounds of me making jewellery, which I sent to Frans. Then he turned this into a musical track. His piece of music lasts 44 minutes 44 seconds long, so in response I have made a silver box based on 12 octagons (which are very difficult to make!). Everything about the box relates to the figure four, and it builds up in layers, like the sounds of Frans’ music. An image of my design will then be on the cover of Frans’ album when he releases it. It was great to win bronze at the Craft and Design Awards for this piece!”

...completely transformed...

As well as creating her own designs, Machi enjoys taking commissions and collaborating with her customers, especially when they wish to recycle old pieces of inherited jewellery. She showed me how, in one case, she was presented with rings belonging to her customer’s parents which she was able to melt down, and rework into a beautiful modern new piece. “I like to turn old jewellery into something new,” she commented. “Most silver these days is recycled, and it can be completely transformed.”

As well as designing and making both small works and jewellery, Machi loves teaching her craft to others, and offers classes in various venues including at Maiden Erleigh in Silverdale Road, Reading, as well as at the centre for silversmithing skills at Bishopsland, which has recently moved to its new home at the Buscot and Coleshill

Machi’s work includes mini pod pendants (left) and this gold-plated slim bangle **photo M de Waard**



I recorded the sounds of me making jewellery, which I sent to Frans. Then he turned this into a musical track...

Estate near Faringdon in Oxfordshire, in partnership with the National Trust.

Together with other local artists, Machi will be delighted to show her work as part of this year’s Whiteknights Studio Trail, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Other local artists crossing the river with Machi to be part of this year’s trail include Gloria Pitt, Nina O’Connell, and Lou Jessop.

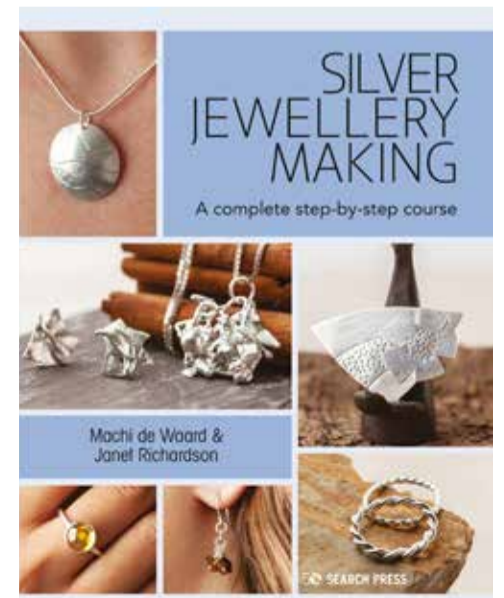
Find out more:

**Whiteknights Studio Trail:
Saturday 7 June
and Sunday 8 June**

11:00-18:00 both days

48 artists will be showing their work at 33 venues in the University of Reading area.

machidewaard.co.uk



Machi de Waard and Janet Richardson’s book is published by Search Press



The Reading runners after the race

photo M Hawkins

Düsseldorf and Reading Links

by Melanie Crawford



The Reading Düsseldorf Association (RDA) is a voluntary association established in 1947 devoted to developing and promoting the friendship between Reading and Düsseldorf. On this page we report on recent and planned sporting and cultural links.

ON SUNDAY 27 April, five runners from Reading participated in the 2025 Uniper Düsseldorf Marathon. They were among 16,000 runners in the first marathon in Düsseldorf since 2019.

All five completed their chosen half marathon distance (21.1km) in glorious sunshine while soaking up the vibrancy and electrifying atmosphere of Düsseldorf. Olga Toušová, 21, Charlotte Bridger, 19, and David Barnett, also 19, are students at the University of Reading; Andy Towse, 44, is a local teacher, and Tom Hawkins, 32, a freelance creative born and bred in Reading.

Charlotte and David completed the race in 1 hour 35 minutes and 1 hour 36 minutes respectively, and both commented on the beauty and warmth of the city. Tom said, "There was such a great buzz around the city – I couldn't figure out if it was the race, the nice weather, the football, or whether this is just what Düsseldorf is like every weekend!". He was very happy with his time of 1 hr 52 minutes.

After the race, the German hosts arranged a visit to the Rhine Tower, a 168m-high landmark with views across Düsseldorf, followed by dinner in the picturesque old town for a chance to relax and experience first-hand the warmth of connection between the twin towns.

Andy said, "We've been looked after wonderfully here in Düsseldorf. We enjoyed a traditional German meal at an historic brewery dating from 1632. We were also joined by the runners from Chemnitz, another of Düsseldorf's twin cities, and it was really interesting to chat with them".

The RDA works to promote the historic friendship and shared the opportunity to participate in the marathon. Anke Ueberberg, vice chair of the RDA, says, "Düsseldorf regularly invites Reading sports people to participate in its events, including the under-14s Tennis Friendship Cup and the Düsseldorf Judo Open U16 (female). Connection through sport is a fantastic way to bring people and communities together. Last year, juniors at Reading Rowing Club also met juniors from two visiting Düsseldorf clubs during the Reading Amateur Regatta. It would be fantastic to see more of Reading's sports clubs establish links with our twin town". To discuss such opportunities, please get in touch with the Association for information or membership.

For details visit www.reading-dusseldorf.org.uk or to find out about recent activities visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ReadingDusseldorfAssociation

Choirs join forces to celebrate 80th anniversary of Reading's oldest choir

by Thomas Wall

READING'S OLDEST choir, Reading Festival Chorus (RFC), is celebrating its 80th anniversary in style in June with a grand concert in the Great Hall of Reading University, joined by choirs from Reading's twin town of Düsseldorf.

Founded in 1945, RFC has performed with many international stars over the years, including Yehudi Menuhin, Kathleen Ferrier, and John Shirley-Quirk. To this day, RFC remains a dynamic, friendly choir, performing a wide range of music, spanning from the Renaissance to contemporary works. It is celebrating its anniversary with a performance of Elgar's Dream of Gerontius (which itself is turning 125 this year), joined by its twin choir, the Johanneskantorei Düsseldorf, as well as a youth choir from Düsseldorf.

Almost as old as RFC, the relationship between Reading and Düsseldorf began in 1946 as an act of post-war reconciliation and friendship. The link was

formalized as a twinning in 1970 (in Reading) and in 1988 (in Düsseldorf). In 1987, RFC performed a 'twinning' of its own, performing Verdi's Requiem in Reading with the Düsseldorf choir Kantorei der Kreuzkirche. Both choirs went on to perform together in Reading and Düsseldorf for many years. In 2006, the musical twinning was renewed when RFC joined forces with the Düsseldorf choir Johanneskantorei. This bond is still going strong today, and sees the choirs come together for joint concerts, alternating between Reading and Düsseldorf.

...cultural bond...

The combined forces of RFC, Johanneskantorei and the Düsseldorf youth choir will celebrate this anniversary year with two concerts: the first in Düsseldorf (25 May) and then in Reading (20 June). For the Reading concert, the choirs will join forces with the British Sinfonietta, as well as a great line-up of professional soloists to perform Elgar's mighty oratorio. The concert promises to be a wonderful evening celebrating 80 years of music-making, as well as the enduring cultural bond between Reading and Düsseldorf.



Reading Festival Chorus – celebrating its 80th anniversary photo R Paton

The concert will be performed in the **Great Hall of Reading University (London Road, RG1 5AG) at 19:30 on Friday 20 June.**

Further details of RFC, including the Anniversary Concert and information on joining the choir can be found on the choir's website:

www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk

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First Impressions Matter

Decoding Job Descriptions:

The Secret to Application Success



by
**Laura
Harmsworth**

AS A CV WRITER who has helped hundreds of job seekers transform their applications, I've noticed that many people miss crucial opportunities by skimming job descriptions. These aren't just lists of requirements - they're treasure maps leading to application gold!

Anatomy of a Job Description

Most job adverts follow a similar structure - knowing what to look for in each section will help you craft a winning application:

"What You'll Bring" or "Requirements" Section

This contains the must-haves. Look for required technical skills, qualifications, or experience levels, and address these explicitly in your CV and cover letter.

When reading this section, look for priorities. Words like 'essential' or 'must have' are non-negotiables, while 'desirable' simply gives you an edge. Notice repeated themes - if 'collaboration' appears multiple times, teamwork is clearly crucial for this role.

"What You'll Do" or "Responsibilities" Section

This outlines your daily responsibilities. Pay attention to the order - tasks mentioned first are typically priorities. Ensure your CV highlights experiences that match these key duties, using similar terminology.

Benefits and Company Information

The benefits section reveals what the company values. Flexible working options suggest work-life balance is important, while training opportunities indicate they value development. Refer to these values in your cover letter to demonstrate cultural alignment.

The language reveals workplace culture too. 'Fast-paced' and 'dynamic' suggest an environment suited to those who thrive on pressure, while 'supportive' and 'structured' indicate a steadier workplace. Match your application's tone accordingly.

The 'About Us' section provides valuable clues about company

values. Referencing these shows you've done your homework and genuinely connect with their mission.

Tailoring Your Application Strategy

For your CV: Lead with experiences that match the top responsibilities listed. Highlight required technical skills prominently, and show the personal qualities they've emphasised through specific achievement examples.

For your cover letter: Reference the company's culture, explain how your approach aligns with their values, and describe instances where you've excelled in similar environments or tasks.

When in Doubt, Reach Out

If something's unclear, it's perfectly acceptable to contact the employer for clarification. This shows initiative and genuine interest - qualities most employers value highly.

Treat job descriptions as more than checklists. By reading between the lines, you'll submit applications that resonate with what employers are truly seeking.

You can follow Laura on:

www.facebook.com/CavershamCVWriting

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www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth

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The Caversham Bridge is a community newspaper produced by Caversham Bridge News Ltd



Future editions:

Contributions for the July issue

should be submitted by 1 June and for the August edition by 1 July. These should be emailed to:

editors@cavershambridge.org

Dates for advertising copy

are 1 June for the July issue and 1 July for the August issue.

These should be emailed to:

advertising@cavershambridge.org



For the youngest members of our community

LISTED BELOW are regular term-time events for toddlers, babies and their carers. All are free of charge, although donations towards costs are welcome.

Mondays - Little Lambs and You - Caversham Baptist Church, South Street, Caversham RG4 8HY 10:00-11:30. Baby and toddler group. Numbers are limited, so there is an online booking system. See

www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk/Groups/382970/Little_Lambs.aspx

Mondays - Busy Bees - Parish Centre, St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green, RG4 8RA - 14:00-15:00, including half terms. Contact Debbie children@saintbarnabas.org.uk for more information

Tuesdays - Babies and Toddlers - Gosbrook Road Methodist Church, RG4 8EB. 10:00 - 11:30. Refreshments available. All welcome.

cavershammethodist.org.uk/baby-toddler-group

Tuesdays - St. John's Baby and Toddler Group - Caversham Hall, St. John's Road, RG4 5AN. 09:30 - 11:00. All welcome.

Thursdays - Toddler Thursday - St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green, RG4 8RA. 8:45-10:00. Friendly group for preschoolers and parents/carers, refreshments available.

www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on

Thursdays - Baby Massage with midwife Katie - 12:15-12:55 at the Weller Centre during term times. Suitable for babies from 6 weeks to crawling. 50p donation towards costs, refreshments available.

Fridays - Tiddlers for Babies and Toddlers - St Andrew's Church, Albert Road, Caversham Heights. RG4 7PL. 9:30-11:00. All are welcome, refreshments available.

www.facebook.com/groups/209815529592564

Fridays - Baby and Toddler Group - Church House, Church Road, Caversham, RG4 8AX. 9:30 - 11:00. Step-free access at the back.

See www.ctmparish.org.uk/stpeter for details

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Wellbeing with Ami Roy

Shared Meals

RESearch HAS revealed that the more often people eat with others, the more likely they are to feel happy and satisfied with their lives.

The importance of sharing meals is recognised across cultures, from the Jewish Shabbat meal to the fast-breaking Iftar meals during Ramadan. The known link between food and social relationships is ancient. The English word companion, the French copain (friend), and the Italian compagno (partner) come from the Latin cum and panis – literally ‘with-bread’. The Chinese term for companion/partner stems from a similar term, which literally translates to ‘fire mate’, a reference to sharing meals over a campfire.

Not only do countries where meal sharing is more

common tend to report higher levels of wellbeing, but this is true even when comparing people who live in the same country.

With every passing year, many of us are dining alone more often, particularly young adults and the elderly. Those who eat at least one meal with others report higher levels of happiness and lower levels of stress, pain and sadness on that day.

When dining alone, people may be more likely to opt for convenience foods or skip meals altogether. Eating together encourages older people to consume healthier meals, as shared mealtimes often involve a wider variety of food options. It helps to foster an environment where individuals are more likely to try new foods and diversify their nutrient intake, which will, in turn, help improve overall nutrition. In addition, people who eat together are more likely to have regular eating patterns, reducing the likelihood of skipping meals, or relying on unhealthy snacks.

Enjoying mealtimes together can affect physical health¹ positively in several ways. Adults tend to eat more slowly when dining with others, which aids digestion. This

in turn can help with promoting mindful practices, like savouring the flavour and texture of food, which can lead to better digestion.

In a world where loneliness is increasingly recognised as a public health issue², rethinking how we gather around the table, and how often, could provide practical solutions to reduce social isolation and raise wellbeing.

The connections that are built when sharing a meal, whether it is with family or with others, are powerful. Food is not only meant to sustain and nourish us, but it is also meant to fulfil us. It is intended to be pleasurable and enjoyable and to offer social connection.

So, as we sit down for dinner, whether with family, friends, or colleagues, I hope that we are all able to savour both the flavours on our palates and the connections we are building.

1. www.abbeyfield.com/blog/the-benefits-of-eating-together-for-older-adults
2. www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/nov/16/who-declares-loneliness-a-global-public-health-concern



Local Clergy and Church Services

ANGLICAN

Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Ministry

St Margaret, St Peter, St John

Rev'd Mike Smith,

The Rectory, 20 Church Rd, Caversham RG4 7AD

Tel: 0118 947 9505 rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810

penny@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Rachel Ross Smith Tel: 07884 371688

rachel@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Dr Catherine Radcliffe Tel: 07740 475697

catherine@ctmparish.org.uk

Contact: admin@ctmparish.org.uk or 0118 996 8836

Correspondence address: Church House,

59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX

Current services

St Margaret's Church

Mapledurham – 11:15. 1st, 2nd, 4th Sunday Holy

Communion, 3rd Sunday Service of the Word.

St Peter's Church

1st Sunday of the month: 9.30 All Age Service of the Word, with music group and choir

18.30 Holy Communion with prayers for healing, with choir

2nd and 4th Sundays: 8.00 said BCP Holy Communion

9.30 Holy Communion with choir and activities for young

people, primary and secondary age

3rd Sunday: 9.30 All Age Holy Communion in a shorter

format, with choir – 18.30 Choral Evensong

Wednesday: 9.30 said Holy Communion

All services live streamed on Zoom. For Zoom details go

to www.ctmparish.org.uk/services/online/

St John's Church

Gosbrook Road Sunday services

8:00 Online CTM Youtube channel (stays available to watch anytime)

9:30 1st and 3rd Sunday Holy Communion, 2nd All Age

Worship, 4th Service of the Word

Sunday Club for children on 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays

St Andrew's

Rev'd Nigel Jones, St Andrew's Vicarage, Harrogate Road.

Tel: 0118 947 2788 www.standrewscaversham.org

Current services

St Andrew's weekly services are Sundays at 8:00 and

10:00. The 10:00 is also livestreamed on the St Andrew's

YouTube channel. Prayer Book Communion at 11.30 on

the first Sunday of each month. More info on the parish

website. www.standrewscaversham.org/services

Compline: 8.30 on Mondays during BST (in church)

St Barnabas, Emmer Green and Caversham Park

Rev'd Kevin Lovell, vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk

Church Office Tel: 0118 947 5214

Current Services

Sundays: 8:00 BCP Holy Communion (1st Sunday only)

9:30 Parish Communion (Service of the Word on

2nd Sunday)

11:15 All Age Worship (Café Church or Family Communion)

Wednesdays: 10:30 Midweek Communion

Morning Prayer: Tuesdays 8:30 in church; Mon/Weds/

Thurs 8:00. online at

www.facebook.com/StBarnabasEmmerGreen/live_videos

Full details at www.saintbarnabas.org.uk/whats-on

METHODIST CHURCH

The Methodist Church Caversham

Rev'd Jeongsook Kim Tel: 0118 947 2223

Rev'd David Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

www.cavershammethodist.org.uk

Current services

Caversham Heights Methodist Church

Highmoor Road

Sunday – 10.30 – Also available on YouTube.

Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

Current services: Sunday – 10:30

New Testament Church of God

Rev'd Dr Garrick Wilson

Tel: 0118 946 3009

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

United Reformed Church, Caversham Park

Contact: Dr Alison Johnston

Tel: 0118 947 5152 www.cavershamparkurc.com

Current services

Sunday – 11:00 – Livestreaming on YouTube

Details on their web site at:

<https://cpurc.org.uk/live-stream>

BAPTIST CHURCH

Caversham Baptist Church

Pastor: Colin Baker

Church office Tel: 0118 954 5353

Email: secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

Current services

Sunday worship 10:30 each week, including groups for children and youth

Sermons are recorded and uploaded to

www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

Hymn Café 15:00-16:00 on the last Sunday of each month

Grace Church (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Elders Nick King and David Steed

Tel: 0118 947 4529 www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk

See their web site for details:

www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk

Riverside Church (Reading)

www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne

Fr Joe McLoughlin, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue

Tel: 0118 947 1787 www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk

Current services

See their web site for services at:

www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk

St Michael, Sonning Common

(including Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village)

Fr Colin Blayney, The Presbytery, 18 Peppard Road,

Sonning Common RG4 9SU – Tel: 0118 972 3418

<http://saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk>

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