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# THE CHAPEL OF ST MARY OF CAVERSHAM

Another look back into history this month – back to the Middle Ages. The Chapel of St Mary, granted to Nutley Abbey in 1162, was a place of pilgrimage, said at one time to rival Walsingham in its importance – and presumably to rival the other great place of pilgrimage across the river, Reading Abbey.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, Dr John London, agent of King Henry VIII, noted that pilgrims were still arriving as his men were pulling down the statue. He reported back to London: “I have pulled down the Image of Our Lady at Caversham, whereunto was great pilgrimage . . .”

The building materials of the chapel were carted away for use elsewhere, and before long people forgot where the chapel had stood. Some thought that it must have been near to St Peter’s church, and others confused it with the Chapel of St Anne and the Holy Ghost Chapel which stood by Caversham Bridge. Even today we cannot be certain where the Chapel of St Mary stood.

By now you may well be wondering what all of this has to do with a photograph of a patched-up old wall. This wall was part of one of the barns of Dean’s Farm, which were demolished when the new houses went up. What struck me as being odd about it were those blocks of dressed limestone. The stone must have been brought from a distance, and must once have been part of a much more prestigious building than a barn. Could it be a pointer to the whereabouts of the Chapel of St Mary, otherwise known as the Chapel of Our Lady of Caversham?

There are lots of other bits of evidence to suggest that the Chapel was near Dean’s Farm. There is some field-name evidence, and then there is the grant by King Henry III of oak trees to build a ferry to carry pilgrims between Reading and Estthorpe – the East Thorpe. This was the old name for Lower Caversham. At the time, the pilgrims could have crossed the river on Caversham Bridge, but the ferry would have provided a short-cut between St Mary’s Chapel and Reading Abbey. You would have been able to see the one from the other.

As you approach Dean’s Farm today, it is obvious that the road is on an artificial causeway, raised up above the surrounding land, and the farm itself stands on a raised area. Some have suggested that the raised area may have had a moat around it and that the precursor of Caversham Park may have been there.

And then I can’t help remembering the lead baptismal tank, dating from Romano-British times, discovered near Dean’s Farm in 1988. Could this area have been a centre of Christian worship, all those centuries ago? And could Caversham have had two centres, one of them here near Dean’s Farm, and the other near St Peter’s Church and the bridge?

I’m aware that I’m just scratching the surface of the subject of medieval Caversham, and if you want to find out more, then you cannot do better than to consult “Oxoniensia”, the journal of Oxfordshire history, 1981 and 1995. There are copies in the local studies section at Reading Central Library.

*Happy Wanderer*



## INSIDE

Good Neighbours .....	page 2	Diamond Wedding .....	page 8
Talking Point .....	page 3	Environment .....	page 9
Ex Libris, Caversham 100 years on .....	page 4	Clubs .....	Page 10
Churches .....	pages 6, 7	Miscellany .....	Page 11

DLEX 175814915

## Caversham Clergy

### ANGLICAN

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

www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

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

www.standrewscaversham.org

St Peter, St Margaret, St John  
Revd Dan Tyndall  
The Rectory, 20 Church Rd, Caversham RG4 7AD  
Tel: 947 9505

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

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

Revd Graeme Fancourt  
18 St Peter's Avenue, Caversham RG4 7DD  
Tel: 947 8450

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

### CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Revd Margaret Dimmick, 12 Lowfield Road,  
Caversham Park. Tel: 947 0258  
Heather Wilson, 15 Northbrook Road, Caversham  
Park. Tel: 947 5152

### METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

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

Deacon Becky Lovatt, 1 Forge Close, Caversham RG4  
8BG. Tel: 948 2530

### BAPTIST

Church Secretary Tel: 947 9772

### GRACE CHURCH (formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)

Colin Gault. Tel: 948 4151

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

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

Deacon Mike Walker, Tel: 07786 836146  
Fr Christopher Bester, 18 Peppard Road,  
Sonning Common. Tel: 972 3418

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## Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the June 2011 issue should  
be sent to Caversham Thameside and  
Mapledurham Parish Office by Tuesday 3rd  
May. The date for the July 2011 issue is  
Tuesday 31st May 2011.  
Email address as above.

Advertising copy for the June 2011 issue  
should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor,  
Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, by  
Friday 29th April 2011. The date for the July  
2011 issue is Friday 27th May 2011.

# GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Have you ever wondered about the generous people who work at the forefront of volunteering? **Julia Bohanna** introduced **Caversham Good Neighbours'** volunteer driver Stuart Sutcliffe, who is responsible for taking people to and from vital hospital appointments:

### Stuart, how did you first discover Caversham Good Neighbours?

It was at Reading Volunteer Centre, looking to see what voluntary work was available. I've been with them now for about two years.

### What skills from your life experience do you think you bring to the job?

I was in the Forces and then worked in Lancashire, Inverness and London during my last job - this meant meeting many different people. My mother suffered from mild dementia for her last few years - which gave me an insight into the problems old age may bring.

### What are some of the best things about what you do?

Meeting a variety of retired people and chatting with them about the past and present. We seem to develop a 'relationship.' We are friends - I am not just a taxi-driver. It also gets me 'out of the house' - I could be quite happy 'playing' on my PC!

The main incentive was the fact that my elder son has to go to a hospital near Gatwick - he lives in Inverness. He travels to Reading and I take him to the appointment, whilst down there I met other volunteer drivers - usually 'hospital drivers' - some travelling from as far as Manchester and Hull.

### What kind of people do you encounter on your visits?

The people using Caversham Good Neighbours are a cross-section of society; I have met a retired school-teacher - who has written a history of Caversham, an ex-colonial officer, who probably met my father in East Africa, former factory workers who talk about conditions during wartime and someone who was a long-distance driver in Canada. Almost all like to talk, making the journeys interesting and enjoyable.

### What is your opinion of society and the way we care for our elderly and vulnerable?

One of the main problems now, in my opinion, is that the old 'family group' has been lost. In my case I live in Reading, my son is in Inverness and my parents lived in Blackpool. When I was young (sorry...trying NOT be old-soldierish!) almost all my relatives lived within walking distance. I think this fact leads to an 'out of sight, out of mind' attitude; it's easier to rely on local authority services. This is not helped by the ultra nanny state: they want to show that they can do it all but forever keep adding rules and regulations. I know that many of them are needed but also some regulations make life very difficult for staff to operate properly. My 'pet hate' is that more emphasis is put on management rather than on 'service providers.' Too many managers and not enough nurses!

**Thank you Stuart.**

Caversham Good Neighbours can be reached on 0118 948 3466

## SUNDAY SERVICES

### ANGLICAN

#### St Peter's, St Peter's Hill

8.00am Holy Communion  
9.45am Parish Communion  
6.30pm Evensong

#### St John's, Gosbrook Road

10.00am Parish Communion

#### St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

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

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

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

#### St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.00am Parish Communion

### CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP Meeting at Caversham Park School

11.00am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)  
Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)  
All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

### CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

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

### GRACE CHURCH Old Peppard Road

10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church  
6.30pm Prayer Meeting

### THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road  
9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am and 6.30pm

#### Gosbrook Road

10.30am and 6.30pm

#### Woodcote Parish Church

9.45am (second Sunday)

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

#### Our Lady and St Anne's, Southview Avenue

Saturday 5.30pm,

Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm

Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

### SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)

#### Church Street, Reading

10.30am

(House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

### NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

#### Church Street, Caversham

9.30am Sunday School

11.00am Divine Worship

6.00pm Evening Service

The newspaper produced by the members of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Caversham and Mapledurham for the local community.

EDITORS: Mr Eric Chappell, Mr Alan Bradbury, Mr Philip DeVillie, Mrs Myra Emerson, Mrs Rhona Flower, Mrs J. Offord, Mrs Pat Williams.

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The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board.

The Editors also would like to bring to readers' notice that the inclusion of advertisements in this paper does not mean an endorsement of the products or of the services offered.

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# TALKING POINT by Jenny Dowding

## Famous, rich and in the slums

I wonder if you saw the two BBC programmes which followed four famous people living for a week in one of the world's worst slums? The four – comedian Lenny Henry, presenter and journalist Angela Rippon, Radio 1 DJ Reggie Yates, and Eastenders' actress Samantha Womack – agreed to swap their lives of privilege and luxury for a week living and working in the shanty town of Kibera, on the edge of the Kenyan capital Nairobi, reportedly Africa's largest slum. The documentary was made in connection with Comic Relief, and the four volunteers were stripped of all their possessions and money and left alone to live, work and survive in Kibera, where prostitution, infant mortality and deadly diseases are an everyday reality.

I must admit my respect for the four increased enormously, as they moved into tin shacks next to open sewers, and tried to earn enough money for food. There was something Christ-like about their willingness to enter the lives and share the experience of people living in such impoverished conditions – a reminder of how God entered human life in Jesus.

Lenny Henry describes Kibera as a hellish place, where more than one million people are crammed into an area measuring no more than 1.5 square miles, with no sanitation, power or running water. In spite of his previous visits to some of the poorest and most challenging places in Africa, this experience clearly rocked him to the core and had a profound effect on him, as it did on the other three volunteers. They were all distressed at the conditions people live in, and deeply moved by the courage and fortitude of the people who befriended them. Sam Womack wondered how she could possibly return to her own life with its trivial preoccupations and concerns. Reggie Yates spoke of how lucky the experience has made him feel for what he has in life. Angela Rippon, like the other three, felt a real wrench at returning home, leaving behind her new-found friends living in appalling conditions with almost no opportunity of escape to a better life. I believe all four have since revisited Kibera of their own accord, to maintain contact with their friends and to provide material assistance where they can.

But as well as my respect for the volunteers, I was struck by the amazing people they met – the hairdresser who also acts as

the community health worker; the teenage boy who cares for his orphaned brothers and sisters; Patrick, who every night manually empties the over-used public toilets in order to pay for his children's education. My respect for these people is beyond measure, and what the moving documentary did was to remind me again that world poverty is about real, human beings, with normal human needs and aspirations, in families and communities, who struggle against overwhelming odds just to survive each day. As the programmes unfolded, the residents of Kibera were no longer an anonymous mass, but became people with names and faces, each one a unique personality, and with extraordinary stories.

I know I so easily forget that, behind the headlines of the natural and human disasters in our world, there are real people like you and me. Equally, it's too easy to think that I, as an individual, cannot make a difference. Perhaps you know the story of the starfish. Once there was a little boy walking down a beach littered with thousands of starfish. As he threw one starfish after another into the water, a man approached and asked what he was doing. "I'm saving the starfish," he replied. "There are too many," the man said, "you can't possibly make a difference." "You may be right," said the boy, as he threw another starfish into the water, "but for that one I just did."

If you are not already involved, I'd like to commend the child sponsorship programmes of a number of charities, such as World Vision. For around £20 per month, you can make a difference to one child and the child's family. If that is too much for you to spare, get together with a few others and sponsor a child between you. You will know you're making a difference when you receive letters from the child, and reports from the local project, explaining how your gift has helped lift a child out of real poverty, and give to a family and a village that priceless gift – hope.

Tony Campolo wrote: "You're not really a true follower of Jesus until Jesus invades you and creates within you that intensive caring, that intensive concern, that intensive love until your heart is broken by the things that break the heart of Jesus."

*Jenny Dowding is the Methodist team leader in Caversham*

## Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid Week 2011 takes place from Sunday 15 May to Saturday 21 May.

The annual Christian Aid Walk is on Saturday 21 May over the 5, 10 and 15 mile courses starting from Bix Village Hall at 8.30am. These country walks are suitable for all ages, and full details and application forms are available from your Christian Aid Representative or from Keith Stephen-Evans (947 3619).

The Christian Aid service this year will be at St Barnabas Church on Sunday 15 May at 6.30pm. There will be a guest speaker from Christian Aid.

The Caversham area street collection 2010 produced a small increase on 2009. Please help as a collector in this very important work if you can by contacting your church Christian Aid Representative.

## PROBLEMS IN PRAYER?

On Saturday May 8 at St Stephens Church in Upper Basildon (near Pangbourne) the Open Bible Trust is sponsoring three seminars on prayer.

These will be run by Michael Penny, Chairman of Churches Together in Reading, and will deal with such issues as ....

Unanswered prayer? What should we pray for? Can we expect to ask and receive? Should we keep on praying?

The afternoon runs from 2.30-6.30 pm. Refreshments are provided and there is no charge. Further details 01491-671357 or email [admin@obt.org.uk](mailto:admin@obt.org.uk)

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# Ex Libris

## BY THEIR FRUITS...

May is a busy month for gardeners and politicians.

In the garden it is a month of blossoms and new beginnings, a time not just for reviewing the previous year with its successes and failures but to plan for the next. It is a time for sowing, possibly for experimenting with new ideas. Certainly it is a time to take decisions based on whether the fruit of last year's crop is what one hoped for or expected, or what the seed packet promised.

My relatives, who are involved in politics, also have a busy time in May. It is the traditional month for elections, for canvassing and sowing the seeds for the next political year. Every few years we enjoy that bumper spectacle of a general election with all the excitement that brings to our lives. This year we have a referendum.

By the time most of you are reading this, the way we select our future governments will have been decided.

If my decisions on the types of vegetable to grow will determine my diet for the next year, then the results of these elections will have far longer reaching consequences for our lives in Caversham, let alone in Reading or our nation.

By their fruits you will know them. I bought some onion sets two years ago which purported to be 'red' onions. They came up as white onions. Needless to say I didn't buy that brand again.

## MY WORD IS MY BOND

It always someone else's fault. Caversham is going to be the poorer over the next few years. The council is having to implement a financial squeeze to help central government balance the nation's books.

Goodbye free green bin collections. Actually they weren't free were they? We were given the choice of having a green bin for a promised one off payment of £20. Can I have my money back? According to one newspaper report the answer is no. I think of my red onions.

Goodbye day-long free bus passes for those who have reached a certain age. Am I wrong in recalling a pre-election promise to keep full free bus passes? Oh well perhaps my memory is clouded; but I am most certainly reminded of the famous Seven Commandments in Animal Farm or more especially their 'slight' amendments which turned the farm world upside down.

Would it be right to apply my gardening criteria for choosing onions sets to which political party to entrust with one's vote? That,

reader, is your choice. But I shall cultivate my allotment for I know my onions.....

## CAVERSHAM ARTS TRAIL 2011

Looking for a good news story for Caversham I read about our local artists' group and the planned Arts Trail this month. So I wrote to the organisers who kindly supplied the following information.

*Not all art is tucked away in galleries or museums, some of it is being made right now in Caversham! You have the chance again to see the work of over 30 artists and craftsmen, in their own studios throughout the town.*

*Some work has a practical use, other is purely art, in either case we hope you will find something you like.*

*On offer this year are Jewellery, Sculpture, Pottery, Découpaged Furniture, Literature, Watercolours, Baskets, Ceramics, Photography, Woodwork, Handweaving, Collage, Oil Painting, Prints, Chinese Brush Painting, and Stained Glass.*

*As well as the broad range of artwork, you may also enjoy some tea and cake in the garden at certain venues, as well as demonstrations of making various things. Some venues also have live literature and poetry readings by local writers. What could be nicer? We feel this has all the ingredients of a pleasant day out, and since it is spread over two weekends you have plenty of time to contemplate the artwork!*

Caversham Arts Trail takes place 7 & 8 and 13 - 15 May 2011, opening hours are 11am - 5pm. Please see the website for further details: [www.CavershamArtsTrail.co.uk](http://www.CavershamArtsTrail.co.uk)  
Email: [info@CavershamArtists.co.uk](mailto:info@CavershamArtists.co.uk)

I highly recommend a visit to one or more of these activities and do have a look at their website.

## Caversham 100 Years On

The first event of the programme in Thameside School Hall was well attended. Sarah Stuffs from BBC Monitoring and Brian Rotheray, author of 'A History of Caversham Park' set out the trials and the successes of the various owners of Caversham Park over the centuries. They then recounted the development of the BBC Monitoring Service and its move to Caversham Park.

You can read Brian's History on line via a web link on the Local History page of the project's website (see address below) and the BBC are contributing material for one of the mobile exhibitions.

After a very brief CADRA AGM, Helen Lambert set out an introduction to the programme. The programme of events is coming together with plans for

- a Caversham Writers event focusing on writing personal memories
- a Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group event on Caversham Industries
- a WEA one-day seminar on the changes around 1911
- a new week long Caversham Festival in July with a major event in Christchurch Meadows 10 July
- an Edwardian themed Garden Party in Caversham Court, Saturday 10 September
- an Open Evening hosted jointly by CADRA, EGRA and WADRA on 9 November which is the anniversary of the enactment of the Reading Extension Order.

The mobile exhibitions are working towards completion and will include a wealth of photographs both old and new. The possibility of an oral history project is being explored. The Local History page on the website [www.Caversham100YearsOn.org.uk](http://www.Caversham100YearsOn.org.uk) is building up more information. Can you add to it? Please email [info@Caversham100YearsOn.org.uk](mailto:info@Caversham100YearsOn.org.uk) or call 0330 100 2828.



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## The big Caversham clean up - RESCUE 2011



A big "thank you" is due to 21 Caversham GLOBE supporters who invested 64 hours over three days to clear litter and fly-tipping during the annual RESCUE week. Readers may have seen some of them in The Warren, Amersham Road playing field, Central Caversham, Hill's Meadow, View Island, Grove Hill, Surley Row or Elliot Close. Their collection included 80 sacks of litter, 34 car tyres, four car batteries, two settees, two rotary washing lines, two window blinds, a wash basin and toilet, a chain saw, two shopping trolleys, two wheelie bins (one burned out), a TV and various amounts of scrap metal and plastic. Sadly this demonstrates that some members of our community see nothing wrong with fly-tipping of hazardous or general waste or discarding drinks cans, bottles, snack and food wrappers in our green spaces.

## GIRL GUIDES

Caversham Guides recently hosted their division AGM at the Grace Church, where the newest Guide unit currently meets, and welcomed Guiders from across Reading, as well as the county commissioner and her two assistants. The meeting heard of all the activities that had taken place in Reading throughout the centenary year and were treated to a pictorial presentation by Caversham - featuring many of the events.

The meeting heard that last year was a rollercoaster and true to form, Caversham wholeheartedly embraced the centenary and were in evidence at many events across the district, division, county, region, nation and even internationally.

Caversham continues to grow as a district, with a further increase in unit numbers and since the last report has added another Guide unit at Emmer Green.

There are now 16 units in the district, with 320 girls being looked after by a total of 68 leaders, young leaders and helpers. Within the overall leadership team there are 16 leaders in training. One of our two Rainbow Units almost closed at Christmas, but, just in the nick of time, a mum, with no previous guiding experience, stepped forward.

Carly Barrow, who has joined the district, has gained her Queen's Guide award, although much of it was earned in her previous county of Somerset.

## Langtree Sinfonia Spring Concert 2011

The Spring concert of the Langtree Sinfonia will be held in Dorchester Abbey, Dorchester-on-Thames on Saturday May 14th at 7.00pm.

The evening starts with Brahms's 'Academic Festival' Overture followed by Beethoven's 'Choral Fantasia', Jeremy Boughton is piano soloist and the orchestra is joined by members of the Abbey Choir and Thames Consort.

The evening will end with Dvorak's colourful and exciting 6th Symphony. As usual, Paul Cox is conducting.

Tickets are available at the door or 0118 9415498

Also at 'Inspiration' The Arcade, Goring  
Adults - £9.50; Students - £5.00;  
Under 16s - free

## ERLEIGH CANTORS

The Erleigh Cantors Chamber Choir, directed by Ian Westley, will be giving a concert at St. Peter's Caversham on Saturday May 21st at 7.30pm. The music sung will be for double choir by Vaughan Williams, Holst, Pachelbel, Schutz, Swayne, Mendelssohn, Taverner and Stanford. There will be organ solos by Philip Aspden. The concert will be in aid of the Sebastian Gates Action Trust [www.sebastiansactiontrust.org](http://www.sebastiansactiontrust.org)

Tickets available from Ian Westley (9478382) or on the door £10 (£9 concessions).



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## CHURCHES

## Reading Street Pastors

During Lent a number of soup and roll lunches have been hosted by members of St Peter's church to raise money to support the Reading Street Pastors, who are part of a national network of street pastors. A street pastor is a church member with a concern for society, who is willing to engage and assist people where they are, in particular on the streets and in pubs and clubs.

At the first of these lunches, Sylvia Chumbley, a member of St Peter's church gave a talk on the work of the street pastors, including some of her experiences in this capacity, and her talk was replayed at later lunches. Street pastors wear a distinctive outfit, and carry a rucksack containing a variety of useful items.

The street pastors operate on Friday and Saturday nights, typically between 10pm and 3am, when groups of three or four go out from St Lawrence's church, in two different circuits, either to the station, Friar St and West St, or to the Oracle, River Kennet and St Mary's Butts, picking up the pieces of people who are inebriated.

There are 21 clubs in Reading, plus a large number of pubs, and there have been 25000 people at one time in the centre of Reading, though the normal number is about half that. The liveliest venues are around Friar St. There may be around 200 people in each venue, then they pour out onto the pavement, either for a cigarette break, or because they are thrown out for being objectionable.

In the first part of the evening, people are mostly sober, so the pastors try to get friendly with the doormen, to build up a good relationship, and to learn the "in" language. Later on people, particularly the women, may get separated from their friends and then they get upset. Young men get sick, and may crouch down in doorways nearly unconcious. In snowy weather they can get really cold.

Street pastors give out lollipops to raise the sugar level and to counteract the effects of alcohol. They may give out "spikeys", to fit in the top of bottles to stop the drinks being spiked, and water, because it dilutes the alcohol and brings people round more quickly.

Sylvia depicted three events, typical of those with which pastors become involved

A. The police called to say that a young man had collapsed in a shop doorway. The police had called the parents, but did not want to stay around while the man sobered up. The street pastors took charge of his wallet and keys, and waited about half an hour until his parents arrived to collect him. Very respectable parents turned up to take him home, so street pastors were able to relieve the police of this responsibility. The parents and son were very grateful.

B. Just talk. A young man started talking; he was just visiting Reading for his nan's funeral, and he was then going back to Yorkshire where his girlfriend was expecting twins! He said how he was going to get a job and agreed he would have to work hard to look after the babies when they came. He was just glad of the chance to talk.

C. Mid evening, the phone rang to say that a woman had hurt her ankle in Chain St. Four street pastors found a woman of about 45, whom they recognised from the month before. She was upset because someone had tried to molest her in a club, and now she had hurt her ankle. They stayed with her to give her time to recover. She was very appreciative, saying "You people are marvellous".

Money is needed to cover:

- Mobile phones, used to communicate with St Lawrence's church.
- Co-ordinator, who works 3 days a week.
- Outfits – coats, hats, rucksacks.
- Lollipops
- Headquarters – legal cover, insurance as part of a national organisation
- Dustpan and brush – to sweep up broken glass so that girls don't cut their feet
- Flip-flops – to protect girls' feet, when they can no longer wear high heeled shoes
- Backpack

Donations may be sent to RCN, c/o Greyfriars Church, Friar St, Reading RG1 1EH.



photo by Mary Tucker

Sylvia Chumbley in her street pastor's outfit.

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## CHURCHES

## ST BARNABAS FAREWELLS

## WALTER WILLIAMS

For the past 37 years Walter Williams, and until her death 10 years ago with his wife Rosalyn, has been a staunch member of the St Barnabas congregation. For 19 of those years until 2010 Walter served as Churchwarden. These were formative years not long after St Barnabas became a separate parish within the Caversham Group of Anglican Churches. Walter brought great wisdom to this role, always seeking to bring consensus to decisions but with a determination to ensure that these were of benefit to the church, the community it serves and to the glory of God. Looking back over the period it has been a time when the church has been reordered: dark Victorian pews being replaced by beech-wood chairs and latterly the addition of the Parish Centre.

During his time he was foremost in the ministry of welcome, knowing the names of all the congregation. He did much to encourage the work among the children and young people, being sure to know their names as well. After retirement he also turned his attention to the older generation, serving in the town as Chairman of Reading Age Concern.

He was brought up in Anglesey and never lost his Welsh accent or his fluency in the Welsh language. It was no surprise then that his involvement with the Reading and District Welsh Society resulted in St Barnabas Church being the venue of the annual bilingual St David's Day Service.

Indeed such is Walter's love for Wales that he is returning to his roots in Anglesey where he has a warm relationship with Gwenda, a childhood friend now widowed. On 20th March the congregation bade Walter and Gwenda a fond farewell, presenting him with a book containing a photographic record of nearly four decades at St Barnabas and messages from practically all the congregation. Walter will be greatly missed, not least for his knowledgeable comments after international rugby matches and even that quintessential English game of cricket. He leaves with the thanks and affectionate good wishes of the congregation for many happy years of retirement in the "Land of his Fathers".

## THE CARROLLS

March also saw the departure of Jean and Brian Carroll, two other stalwarts of the St Barnabas congregation. For many years Jean has played a prominent role in the Youth Fellowship and before that with the Junior Church. She also took a lead in the dramatic productions at the Church, notably the Nativity Play at the Crib Service and the Pantomime at the Fish and Chip Supper. Outside the parish she helped, among other things, at the Churches in Reading Drop in Centre, and was active with Amnesty International and with Asylum Seekers. Brian is a Church Commissioner. Both were warmly thanked on their last Sunday and were presented with a framed photograph of the Church as a memento to take with them with the affectionate good wishes of the congregation as they move to East Sussex. They also will be greatly missed.

## "What - no building?"

What do you think a church is? Is it a building, or is it a gathered community of Christians seeking to journey with God together?

When the church started, people met together in each other's homes and shared their time and food together, so a church is not always defined as a physical building, made of stone or wood or bricks. I think there is a difference between a CHURCH BUILDING and a CHURCH. The building is a place where the church meets, the church is the people.

At Caversham Park Church we don't have a building. We meet on Sunday mornings in Caversham Park Primary School at 11am. We are an LEP. Sounds like some weird disease doesn't it? What those letters stand for is Local Ecumenical Partnership. This means that we are one group of people who meet on a Sunday but who represent different flavours of church. So we are Anglicans, Methodists, Baptist and United Reformed in our church backgrounds. This can seem confusing at times, (even for me and I'm the minister!).

We are a very welcoming church, and we have recent-

ly begun two projects which we warmly invite you to. Firstly the Friday Tea Break. We meet in the Function Room in the Milestone Centre from 2.30 until 4.30pm most Fridays in term time. We serve coffee, tea, and biscuits. We welcome you to join us to have a chat; we'd love to meet you.

We are aiming to have a Hymn Cafe on Sunday afternoon every other month on the 1st or 2nd Sunday in the Milestone Centre between 3.30 and 4.30pm. Do join us to choose and sing a hymn that you like. We break half way through for a cup of tea and cake.

We now have a website (very much a work in progress), our website address is [cpvc.org.uk](http://cpvc.org.uk)

If you would like any information about us or how to get to us, please visit the website, or phone me on 0118 947 5152.

We look forward to meeting you soon.

Heather.

Heather Wilson

Baptist minister in training Caversham Park LEP

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**Peal of bells to celebrate Diamond Wedding**

Caversham residents Ted and Christine Carter celebrated their diamond wedding on 24th March.

They began their married life in Reading in 1951, and ten years ago their golden wedding anniversary was marked by the St Peter's bellringers with a quarter peal of Plain Bob Major at Aldermaston where their middle daughter Jenny was one of the ringers.

This year, in celebration now of sixty years of married life, a quarter peal of Cambridge Surprise Major was rung on 20th March, this time at St Peter's Caversham, by a local band, with Jenny and her son Jack, now 13, both ringing. The team are pictured below.

Ted and Christine, who are parishioners at St Peter's church, and are also Caversham Bridge distributors, wish to thank the St Peter's bellringers for helping to celebrate their diamond wedding anniversary.

**St Andrew's Concert Series - 5th March**

It was in some ways the height of luxury, and a perfect evening. The luxury was taking a short walk to a quiet neighbourhood church, to listen to beautiful, world-class chamber music performed by three talented young musicians.

Naomi Watts (cello), Ilya Mochvan (violin) and Christopher Guild (piano) played an hour-long programme which opened with Schubert's sad, lyrical trio in B-flat Major D-898, and continued with virtuoso solos from each of the performers of pieces by Paganini, Rachmaninov and Bach, as well as music by Elgar, Saint-Saens and Piazzolla.

For some of us, the only piece which was truly familiar was The Swan, from Saint-Saens' Carnival of the Animals. But the selection, played in such an intimate setting by award-winning musicians just starting out on their careers, held everyone's attention.

Each piece was chosen to contrast with the next, and the three performers took it in turns to relate short anecdotes about the music and composers between each piece.

Naomi comes from a family of professional musicians, and it was with her mum, Adrienne and dad, Tim (piano and oboe) that she played at the inaugural concert in the St Andrews series a few months ago.

The next concert is scheduled for the 25th June - soprano, clarinet/saxophone and piano.

Stephen Herrmann

**How many loaves have you?**

A report from the Women's World Day of Prayer on 4 March 2011

The service ended, but many folk headed not for the exit but to the front of the church to view the wonderful collection of items from Chile, and the display of pictures showing the different types of dress worn in each of the four geographical regions of that country. We were fortunate indeed to have our own 'woman of Chile' to lead the service and to provide our displays.

The musicians of our host church, St Anne's, led our singing, with the organ being used for some hymns, whilst a guitarist and vocalist led us in others and taught us the song from Chile, 'Five barley loaves and two fish'.

Our speaker, Heather Wilson from Caversham Park church drew on her own mission experience of a woman in Moldova wanting to share all she had which in her case was apples. Heather also gave us some startling facts about the enormous amount of bread we waste each year. Her message to us as Christians was that we who have plenty have responsibility to share both physical and spiritual bread.

On leaving the church we were all given a small piece of the bread which had been placed on the table during the service and which, we were reminded, is the main food in many Chilean homes. We then continued our fellowship as we enjoyed a cup of tea together.

Next year the Women's World Day of Prayer service will be prepared by the women of Malaysia on the theme 'Let justice prevail'. Book the date of 2 March 2012 in your diary now!

**Gold medal for young Caversham bell ringer**

Jack Page is the youngest ringer in the St Peter's band, and was selected to represent the Oxford Diocese Guild to take part in the first ever National Striking competition in Pimlico on Saturday 26th March. All ringers must be under 19 on the day of the competition.

The team won the gold medal for being the highest placed band which rang a 'method', which is technically more complicated than 'call changes'. The team were placed third overall in the competition, which was won by a team from Hereford which rang call changes. The competition was about good striking regardless of complication. The judge felt that all the bands competing would have passed the 'wedding test' - would the bride and groom who had paid to have the bells rung be pleased?

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**ENVIRONMENT****Caversham Court update**

Come to Caversham Court in May and look for the wisteria flowering behind the east and west border. During the 2008 - 2009 restoration it survived the rebuilding of the wall behind. The lavender blue flowers of the nepeta Walkers Low will be in bloom along the base of the yew hedge. Keep an eye open for the chocolate brown irises (Kent Pride) and the purple alium in the east herbaceous border. Down by the causeway wall the 'White Ness' geranium will be in flower. This plant thrives even although it is growing in shallow soil above the foundations of the causeway only a foot or so below.

The tea kiosk will be well into its new season with charities selling tea, coffee and cakes in aid of their funds, so enjoy the refreshments and support a good cause from Wednesdays to Sundays.

On Sunday May 1 (and the first Sundays from June to October) FCCG volunteer guides will have an information stand in Caversham Court from 2.30 to 5.00. They will be delighted to answer questions about the history of the gardens and give informal tours. There is no need to book just bring your friends and families to see Reading's special public gardens.



Photo Alison Hewitt Freeze Frame Photography

**Friends of Caversham Court Gardens**

FCCG were delighted to welcome the Mayor of Reading, Councillor Gul Khan, to their AGM at Reading Canoe Club at the end of March.

More than 100 members and friends heard the news from Vickie Abel, the FCCG Chairman, that Caversham Court had won its fourth award - the British Association of Landscape Industries national award for restoration 2010. She thanked everyone for their help in winning these awards - judges noted community input, and not just the outstanding work of the head gardener, Emily Waters and her team. The chairman went on to outline the FCCG's activities planned for 2011, including the work of volunteer guides and events such as the Easter egg trail, the Progress Theatre's production of The Tempest in July as well as the use of Caversham Court for events in the Caversham 100 years on festivities.

After the formal part of the evening, Ben Viljoen, vice chairman of Berkshire Gardens Trust, spoke about early 18th century landscape gardeners in the Thames Valley - the work of Charles Bridgeman at Purley Hall and Blenheim and how this related to the original design at Caversham Park.

Moving on to Caversham Court, Ben said he was puzzled by the date of the gazebo (or summerhouse) - he felt it was odd that it was always known as a gazebo even though the word first came into use about 50 years after the date on the weather vane - 1663. At that time the usual 17th century word for such a summerhouse was a belvedere - a word almost unknown now. He also explained that Caversham Court's crinkle-crinkle wall was not a true crinkle-crinkle wall in the traditional Norfolk sense. There the word is used for a single brick free-standing wall given extra strength from its snake-like shape. The Caversham Court wall between St Peter's and the gardens is more accurately a bay and buttress wall, built that way to give it the extra strength it needs as a retaining wall.

**Join Friends of Caversham Court Gardens**

The FCCG are always delighted to welcome new members who wish to support them in their work of protecting, developing and publicising Caversham Court. Look out for membership forms at events, in libraries, at <http://home.fccg.org.uk/join-us> or contact Alison Hewitt, FCCG Membership Secretary, 31 All Hallows Road, Caversham, RG4 5LP Tel: 0118 947 6968. E-mail: [friends@fccg.org.uk](mailto:friends@fccg.org.uk). Membership cost £2.00 per person to December 2011 or £5 for a three year membership until December 2013.

**Mapledurham  
playing fields**

All the trees in the orchard are looking well, with a good mixture of wild flowers and grass beneath them. Of course the dandelions will dominate for a while. Friends of the playing fields will be around in the summer to check the trees, weeding and watering as well as doing general housekeeping in the woodland and wild flower areas. If you would like to join the group to help keep the site looking good, contact Steve on 9473294.

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## CLUBS

## Caversham WI

Members met for the annual meeting which we try to make interesting. Visitors were welcomed and normal business was conducted followed by the president's report. She highlighted various events from the past year and thanked everyone for their support. The committee was willing to continue in office and the president, Miss M Cameron, was re-elected. After refreshments the president conducted an auction of donated items which proved entertaining and lucrative. Members were reminded about the 50th anniversary and asked to look for any mementoes to go in our anniversary book. The raffle ended the evening.

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## Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

On Tuesday March 8th, the ladies of Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild met for the last time. Due to a number of circumstances, the guild was unable to form a committee and took the sad decision to close after 58 years. Adding to the sadness were the recent deaths of two members, Audrey Saunders, a founder member and Doris Prentice, a very active member for over 30 years. It was decided to celebrate 58 years of friendship, learning and service to the community with a champagne party, with guests from Caversham Heights and Caversham Afternoon Guilds and the Berkshire Federation president, Jean Broughton. The annual and financial reports and the chairman's remarks made up the formal part of the meeting.

Emmer Green Guild has played a large part in the life of the local community over the years, helping with the baby clinic, luncheon club, serving at the scout shop and local charity shops. We have planted a tree and crocuses on the green by the pond which are featured on the village sign. We have raised money towards a new ward at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, a mother and baby clinic in Dhaka, helped fund the building of two blocks of flats in Austria for refugees from World War 2 and the planting of nine woodlands in the British Isles. We have contributed to a mammography machine and premature baby unit for the Royal Berkshire Hospital and have supported many more worthy causes, having great fun in the process. We have enjoyed speakers on a wide variety of subjects including flower arranging and cookery demonstrations, travel far and wide, archaeology, linguistics, and have learnt a huge amount about the work of many charities, large and small and enjoyed friendship, support in difficult times and many happy social occasions.

It has been especially satisfying being members of the Townswomen's Guild movement, formed from the peaceful suffragists working for votes for women and afterwards to give women an education and a voice outside of the home, very important in the 1930s.

Some of our members will be joining one or other of the Caversham guilds or becoming associate members, thus keeping their TG membership and hopefully meeting at federation events. Many thanks were given to all those who have worked so hard over the years to make our guild so successful and there is a determination to support the four subsidiary groups which are continuing to meet.

## Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

On 17th March Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild held their 49th AGM, with cheese and wine and a look back over the year.

A variety of entertaining and informative speakers attended both Guild and social studies meetings.

We had two coffee mornings, a barbecue, two lovely parties, a theatre trip, and afternoon tea at the Great House, Sonning.

In June eight members attended the General Council meeting in Birmingham and enjoyed a concert the night before. Five members went to the national Carol Service at St Martin in the Fields at Christmas and eight of us went to the Victoria and Albert art exhibition at the Queens Gallery.

The Lunch club has proved most popular with eighteen to twenty members visiting a different restaurant every two months.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday May 18th at 7.30 in St Andrews Church Hall, when we will be taken on "Trips to the seaside" by Nicky Bevan.

On Thursday June 16th we celebrate 50 years of Caversham Heights TG with a party and entertainment by Tanya Pratt.

We are a very sociable group and new members are always welcome.

## Rosehill WI

Mrs Brenda Caborn welcomed members to a well attended March AGM meeting.

Mrs Margaret Pyle started proceedings with news of forthcoming events of interest to members.

She then gave her report for the year reminding members of

the interesting talks that had been given. The Scrabble group had some pleasant social afternoons and the knitters had made numerous blankets, jackets and bonnets for Buscot ward for the premature babies at The Royal Berkshire Hospital.

Mrs Margaret Pyle then took members through the financial report, which had been circulated to members, showing a very healthy bank balance and 40 members.

Brenda Caborn thanked the committee and all members for supporting and coming to meetings.

President, secretary, treasurer and all the committee were re-elected.

After business was finished members spent time looking at the beautiful craft work on display.

Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 2 pm at St Barnabas Church Hall Emmer Green

Visitors are very welcome.

## St Peter's Wives Group

Unfortunately, the speaker for the March meeting was unable to attend, due to illness.

However, the chairman arranged a Beetle Drive, which members enjoyed tremendously.

The next meeting will be at Church House on Tuesday, 17 May at 7.30 pm, when the speaker will be Rev Alveen Thoresen.

New members are always welcome.

## Caversham Bowling Club

Looking for some gentle exercise? Or perhaps the opportunity to play a sport enjoyed by both men and women of all ages and make new friends?

Throughout the summer, starting on 20th May, each Friday evening from 6.00pm, Caversham Bowling Club will be open to anyone who would like to come along and try their hand. The only requirements are flat-soled shoes and enthusiasm. Our members look forward to welcoming you and will be on hand to offer advice and instruction.

The club has a friendly atmosphere with a licensed bar and organises social events throughout the year. Why not come along and try your hand - you may be pleasantly surprised!

Ample free parking is available next to the green in the Recreation Ground in Albert Park, and for a nominal sum light refreshments will be available.

## Shiplake Bowling Club

Shiplake Village bowling club is a mixed club founded in 1920.

You may be an existing bowler or a complete beginner trying the game for the first time. We do hope that you will come along and give us a try.

Where is Shiplake Village Bowls Club?

Many people do not know of its existence. It is tucked away behind Shiplake Memorial Hall and the Tennis Club, on Memorial Avenue at Shiplake Cross, RG9 4DN (Car Park at the Memorial Hall). We have superb facilities including a spacious club house with a bar, garden patio, a fine green and surrounds.

Bowling is for all ages and can be family fun, a social activity and a competitive sport; it's what you make it. We have members of all ages (10-80) and playing ability (beginner to county players). New members are especially welcome, free instruction is available from qualified coaches. The rudiments of bowling can be grasped in just a few sessions.

The majority of our club fixtures, including friendlies and in all the local League and Cup Competitions are mixed. The club also has annual in-house competitions with cups and trophies and an honours board for the results.

There is a full summer programme of matches from April to September. In winter there is a programme of social events.

There are various types of membership, Full, Junior, Disabled and Associate (Social).

We hope to see you at the Open Day, 14th May and only ask that you wear flat shoes. Bowls and other equipment will be provided. If you miss the Open Day, please drop in any Friday evening after 6:30/7pm and talk to any members.

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David Lloyd's job as a blood biologist was humanised by telling of his enthusiasm for MG cars, especially his own Midget MG; following on from his talk 'Tuberculosis – a new threat from an old disease'. Treatment and new drugs are in stark contrast to the sanatoria prevailing up to the 1960s with their open air balconies and patients on day beds getting 'fresh air' (The Royal Berks Hospital was to have balconies on the south side). New drugs are tested in 90 laboratories worldwide, some in jungles and others in India, Pakistan, Moscow, China and Nigeria.

Asked 'What is TB?' he explained that it is a very old disease and has been discovered in mummified bodies in ancient Egypt. It causes curvature of the spine in (varying degrees). Many well known and famous people suffered from it (as well as royalty). In 1950 there were 50,000 cases worldwide, increasing yearly, affecting many children in Africa and Eastern countries. 30% of the world population now has TB.

Prevention is difficult without education. Spitting prevails in many countries, as it did in England up to the 1940s when every pub and male bar had a spittoon and school boys challenged 'who could spit the furthest'! The development of new drugs, testing patients and teaching them that continuing to take their medicine daily over a period of 4 months followed by another 2 months is the only way to get better.

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**Caversham & Chiltern  
Flower Club**

On Wednesday 11th May, Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club is holding a demonstration by National Demonstrator Linda Shackleton entitled Floral Fancies, starting at 7.30pm, doors opening 6.45pm.

The evening promises to be a wonderful event, however a £2 supplement for members, and an entrance fee of £6.50 will be necessary to cover the extra cost. The venue as always is Caversham Heights Methodist Church, and a plant and book stall, sales table and refreshments will be available. For further details contact Berna Macdonald on 0118 9477400

**Caversham Horticultural Society**

Caversham Horticultural Society is holding two events this month to which all are invited.

Do you have gaps in your borders due to plants failing to survive this last winter, or do you just need some more plants in the garden? Why not come to the Spring Plant Sale on Saturday 7th May between 10.00 – 11.30am and purchase plants at ridiculously cheap prices. The sale will be held at the Oakley Road allotments near the society's trading shed which will also be open for members to purchase composts and other gardening sundries. Non-members who wish to join the society will be able to do so at the plant sale and to make use of the trading shed.

Jeanne Bliss will give an illustrated talk, based on her gardening experience entitled "Colourful Courtyards & Roof Gardens in Oxford & California", at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road on Wednesday 25th May at 7.45pm.

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