

ARCC goes Italian



Jason, the manager, explaining things.



Children handling the ingredients.



Making spaghetti.

Do you remember reading about the Amersham Road Cooking Club's grand finale in July, when the children cooked a three-course meal for invited guests? A chef from Jamie's Italian Restaurant in the Oracle came to this event, and following that, we were invited by the restaurant to take a group of children on Sunday 9th October to see how it all worked.

So eleven children and their parents, with three helpers from the Club turned up at 9.30 in the morning.

First we were given tea and coffee and then we gathered round a table to hear the manager, Jason, explaining how herbs, fresh vegetables, meat and shellfish are the ingredients of some of the dishes. He was excellent with the children, telling them how the restaurant is run, which chefs do what and how Jamie Oliver began his career and what his effect on school dinners has been.

Then he described how pasta is made, and the children all had a turn at working with the machine as it extruded spaghetti. They had to guide it as it came from the nozzles and curl it into nests. A young lady demonstrated how the bread is made, which we later sampled.

At about 10.30 we sat down to a meal of spaghetti pork bolognese, soft drinks and the aforementioned bread. Call it a late breakfast or an early lunch, we all ate with gusto! One of the helpers thanked the staff on everyone's behalf.

A new session of ARCC has just begun, with plans in place until Christmas.



The display of herbs and food.

Contributors to Caversham Bridge

If you send your contributions for the Bridge by email, can you please delete all email addresses that you have for the office and replace with secretary@ctmparish.org.uk. We are having both a reorganisation in the office and a reorganisation of our IT and we do not want your articles to get lost.

COMPANY SECRETARY

The current Company Secretary of Caversham Christian News Ltd (The Caversham Bridge) is moving away from Caversham and we need a replacement to take over from her as soon as possible.

The key duties of the role are:

1. To prepare and minute three or four board meetings per year.
2. As designated company secretary, to prepare and submit annual returns and any other statutory requirements to Companies House and the Charity Commission.

Total time commitment is in the region of 15-20 hours per year centred around each of the board meetings.

If you are interested and would like to talk about it, the present secretary would be happy to discuss the role in more detail. Apply to Marjorie Tillman c/o The Parish Office, Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX. Email: office@ctmparish.org.uk.

Photos courtesy of Sylvia Chumblers

WE WISH OUR READERS A HAPPY CHRISTMAS

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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

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

www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

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

www.standrewscaversham.org

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Revd Dan Tyndall

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Tel: 947 9505

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8 Hewett Close, Caversham RG4 7ER Tel: 947 7868

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Revd Margaret Dimmick, 12 Lowfield Road,

Caversham Park. Tel: 947 0258

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Park. Tel: 947 5152

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Tel: 947 2223

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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.

Fr Bob Devaney, Tel: 07786 836146

18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common

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Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the February 2012 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by Tuesday 3rd January. The date for the March 2012 issue is Tuesday 31st January 2012. Email address as above.

Advertising copy for the February 2012 issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, by **Friday 30th December 2011**. The date for the March 2012 issue is **Monday 30th January 2012**.

TALKING POINT

by

Father Giles

Does Christmas really begin in October?

The season of Advent is being totally eclipsed by the way we are now encouraged to celebrate the Christmas season. The tradition in the Church is that we have a defined time to prepare for a major feast and then we celebrate it both when it arrives and for a time afterwards. So we have the season of Advent, Christmas Day, and then Christmastide which, depending on your tradition, lasts until the Epiphany or Candlemass. Contrast that with the secular tradition which is to celebrate it before it happens, and then forget about it as quickly as possible and move on to the next thing. Shops start marketing Christmas in October (or August if you go to Harrods Christmas Shop). Radio Stations play Christmas carols throughout December, but I bet you don't hear one after Christmas Day. Restaurants and pubs do Christmas dinners, but only up to the beginning of Christmastide. As far as the marketing industry is concerned Christmas ends on the 25th of December, as far as the Church is concerned that is just when it begins. It is very hard to resist being caught up in this way of thinking, but we do need to be aware of it, otherwise we risk being bored with Christmas before it even arrives, which would be terribly sad.

The problem with adopting the secular model is that we are constantly in a state of anticipation, we never celebrate where we are at the present, what Jean Pierre Caussade calls the Sacrament of the Present Moment. This early-eighteenth century Jesuit tells us that, "in the moral and supernatural order the duties of each moment conceal, under the semblance of dark shadows, the truth of their divine character which alone should rivet the attention." It is no wonder we find it hard to rivet our attention on the present moment when we are constantly being encouraged to live in the future.

So how is the religious character of Advent, when Christians prepare for Christmas, different from the secular model of anticipating it? Well I think it lies simply in the fact that Advent does have its own distinctive character, we are not anxiously celebrating Christmas before its time. The distinctive character of Advent means it is not just borrowing from Christmas. Advent hymns are not Christmas carols; the readings the Church appoints for Sunday liturgies are not the Christmas story. It is important that we get the preparation right so that we can also get the celebrating right when Christmastide does eventually arrive.

Father Giles Goward is parish priest at Our Lady and St Anne's church.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's, St Peter's Hill

8.00am Holy Communion
9.45am Parish Communion
6.30pm Evensong

St John's, Gosbrook Road

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

St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

8.00am The Eucharist
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)
First Sunday, Family Eucharist
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)

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

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

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

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"Industrial Caversham" - A Celebration and a Warning

Alarm bells for crafts and skills in peril were rung on 29 October, when Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group led an evening of memories of industries which once thrived in Caversham village and along the river. Peter Trout and Dennis Johnson of BIAG gave an overview of the industrial scene at the beginning of the 20th century: farming and the chalk and clay extraction industries still thrived, the river was an important goods artery as well as being the focus of fisheries and boat-building, and many more work and leisure pursuits were dependent upon both of these industries. Eel fishing, for example, was an occupation often combined with osier-growing and basket-making.

Industries developed which one might not expect to find in a village, such as coach-building and cycle manufacturing. These produced such icons of a bygone age as the Wall's ice-cream tricycle built by John Warrick & Sons at their Monarch Works on Caversham Road. Samuel Elliott & Sons in Gosbrook Road, Caversham, made everything from the revolving doors at the BBC's Bush House in Aldwych to fittings on the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth liners. During the Second World War the workforce at Elliott's soared to over 1,000 as the company put their skills to making wooden frames for aircraft and landing craft. After the war, Elliott Healey saloon cars boasted a revolutionary aluminium alloy panelled body, fitted over an ash wood frame built by Elliott's. The names of Thorneycroft Marine Engines, Herbert Engineering and H & E Cars in Wolsley Road stirred memories of craftsmanship to be proud of. And who would have guessed that Napisan and the Milton steriliser were invented by Gascoigne-Crowther in Caversham?

The well-known author of "Down by the River", Dr Gillian Clark, surveyed the impressive history of boat-building on the Caversham stretch of the Thames. As many as six firms were operating between the 1870s and 1950s, with names such as Cawston, Moss and Freebody building and maintaining every kind of craft from punts and skiffs to elegant launches and steamers. After a lean period, boat-building returned during the Second World War, when landing craft used for the Normandy landings were built by Elliotts at Caversham: photographs of these craft being speed-tested on the Thames, and being officially handed over to the Royal Navy, were an inspiring testament to the skill of local craftsmen. Gill added an encouraging coda to her presentation: at Hurley, the Freebody family is still boat-building and using traditional crafts to restore Thames boats.

Mildred Cookson of Mapledurham, the only female watermill in the UK, had a sadder tale of lost skills of milling, millstone dressing and blacksmithing, but

brought encouraging news of adaptation and new technologies. The role of the miller in the 21st century is very different from that in times gone by, when the miller controlled the flow of the river and the flashlocks, and thus all traffic along the waterways. Mapledurham, the only working mill on the Thames, was built as a grist mill for animal feed, and in its heyday in the 1800s employed five people. There were originally two other mills on the estate, one a fulling mill which was later converted into a wire-pulling mill. Today Mildred dresses her own mill stones, using modern tungsten-carbide tools which speed up the process, but her skills are irreplaceable.

Church House was filled to capacity for the BIAG evening, which ended with lively discussions and exchanges of reminiscences and expertise. Thanks to BIAG for arranging the event as part of the Caversham 100 Years On project, and to all the speakers and other contributors for such a fascinating evening.



Baroque Beauty at St Andrew's

The second season of Concerts in Caversham at St Andrew's started in style on October 15th, with a fascinating combination of flute, bassoon, harpsichord and piano. Among the pieces on offer was a beautiful performance of Il Carnevale di Venezia by Briccialdi, played by Emer McDonough who is principal flute of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. She told us she was inspired by hearing a performance of this piece by James Galway when she was a girl, and certainly she must have inspired any flautists in the audience.

The bassoon made a lovely counterpoint to the flute, and was played by Benjamin Hudson who first learnt with the Berkshire Young Musician's Trust and was woodwind winner of the BBC Young Musician's Competition in 1996. Benjamin gave a performance of Sonata sopra 'La Monica', bringing to life the argument between a girl and her father who is trying to send her to a convent.

Adrienne Black played both harpsichord and

piano with delightful virtuosity, and The Harmonious Blacksmith by Handel showed the full range of the harpsichord. Adrienne told us that a treatise on how to play the harpsichord included the instruction that the player should look as if he were not doing anything in particular. Rather difficult! The last piece in the concert was the slow movement from Sonata in B minor for flute and continuo by JS Bach, which gave a serene ending to a most enjoyable concert.

The next Concert in Caversham is on 3rd December, a 'Christmas Concerto by Candlelight' held in conjunction with the City of Oxford Orchestra. It will include seasonal favourites, Corelli's Christmas Concerto, Vivaldi's Winter, Pachelbel's Canon. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served in the interval. It will be a lovely way to begin the preparations for Christmas with your family and friends.

To be added to the emailing list for Concerts in Caversham please contact Jane Pares 0118 948 4112.

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From the Lookout Post

22 bus route

From Wednesday 9 November the 22 bus to Caversham Heights again turned left from Oakley Road into Kidmore Road and then right along to the Mount and on to Albert Road. These changes have been contentious in terms of the loss of service to Priest Hill and The Mount and of the concerns from people living in Kidmore Road about the suitability of the route for large vehicles.

The temporary change from 8 October to 8 November was due to a refusal by the Traffic Commissioner to permit a change at short notice. We understand that the route via Kidmore Road is the planned permanent route but James Freeman, chief executive officer of Reading Transport, has pledged to keep this under review. CADRA would welcome any comments via info@cadra.org.uk.

The Community Link routes 28 and 18 are not affected by these changes and will continue to operate via The Mount and Priest Hill as they have been since 26 September.

Gravel extraction east of Henley Road

The closing date has now passed for comments on the Oxfordshire County Council draft planning strategies for minerals and waste development. This includes proposals to extend the area of extraction as far as Shiplake. Local people are very concerned about additional lorry traffic through Henley and Caversham and about the potential impact on flooding. Since gravel extraction started to the north of the B478 to Sonning, flooding of that road has been more frequent. For more information see <http://seag.blogspot.com/>

Reading RESCUE

On 15 and 16 October, 113 volunteers were out in the sun tidying up Reading's waterways and towpaths. A total of eight shopping trolleys were pulled from the river, a metal spring bedstead was found and countless discarded plastic bags.

For the past 22 years the RESCUE event has taken place in March. This year, Thames Water supported this additional autumn event. To register an interest in taking part in next year's RESCUE event (8th to 11th March 2012) call 0118 9372100, or go to www.readingrescue.org.uk.

Blue badge scheme from January 2012

Following growing concerns about the fraudulent abuse of blue passes, the Department for Transport (DfT) is introducing a new assessment process to ensure badges only go to those people who meet the disability criteria. A central nationwide database of all blue badges is being issued to help prevent fraud and abuse.

Northgate Public Services have been appointed to manage the new scheme, and local authorities will have to pay them £5.52 for each badge. Councils are permitted to charge up to £10 for each badge. Reading Borough Council's cabinet on 31 October was recommended only to pass on the £5.52 cost of the badge itself (this lasts for three years) and to cover other costs internally. The council is also considering ways to step up enforcement to prevent fraudulent use of blue badges in the town.

Under the new scheme, blue badges should be almost impossible to reproduce or alter.

Policing matters

The roll out of a new non-emergency phone number for the police has extended across the Thames Valley police area. 101, the new national single non-emergency number will replace the 0845 8505 505 number. Both will run concurrently until March 2012. When you call 101, the system will determine your location and connect you to the police force covering that area. A recorded message will announce which police force you are being connected to. There is a charge of 15p for these 101 calls regardless of time of call or duration.

The Caversham neighbourhood police team can also be e-mailed on: CavershamNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

The clock's going back usually corresponds with an increase in domestic burglaries. To reduce the chance of your home becoming the next target, you can use a 24 hour timer to turn on a light, radio or TV

and you can register your valuables on www.immobilise.com. This is a free service and takes only a few minutes. If your valuables are stolen it will allow you to give details of your property to the police and your insurer which can make the difference in recovering your property and catching the thief.

Green garden waste collection

The council should be congratulated for reversing the policy to charge for green garden waste and for a more flexible approach by the curb-side collectors. When collection of green garden waste was implemented the proportion it formed of waste jumped from 3% to 9%. Some 6,000 tonnes of Reading's green waste is composted annually to form a soil additive and mulching material. The green material is not going into land fill and having a negative environmental impact. It is a win-win outcome to encourage Reading residents to participate in a composting scheme.

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THAMESIDE CHILDREN GO TO THE POLLS

On Thursday 20th October, children at Thameside Primary School went to the polls to elect their School Council.

Children from Year 2 upwards wrote manifestos and took part in hustings to persuade their peers to vote them into office. All the candidates promised to help make the school even better. Popular policies included expanding the adventure playground, buying more outdoor play equipment and raising money for charity.

On election day a classroom was turned into a polling station with ballot boxes and booths borrowed from Reading Borough Council. The polls were open during break and lunchtime for Years 3-6, with the Infants visiting during morning lessons to learn about elections and voting. Year 6 children volunteered to work as election officers and helped to count the



votes. The results were announced the following day during assembly.

Mrs Wallace, the headteacher, told the children that their job as voters wasn't over and they should make sure the children they had elected kept their promises and did a good job as their representatives. She reminded the newly elected councillors that they should keep their constituents informed and ask for their ideas and opinions regularly.

Miss Long, the teacher responsible for the School Council, said, "We not only want the children to know that their ideas and opinions are valued, but to get them into the habit of voting from an early age."

Aimee Lamb, who was elected as a new councillor for Year 5, said, "I will listen to what my classmates have to say and support and bring their ideas to school council meetings."

Rainbows looking for a Pot of Gold

Girlguiding UK is well represented in Caversham/Emmer Green and Caversham Park with eight Brownie units (7-10 year olds), five Guide units (10-14 year olds) and one Senior Section unit (14-25 year olds) but we only have two Rainbow units (5-7 year olds).

The Rainbow units are both held at the same venue in Caversham Heights and have 27 places available between them. We currently have a waiting list of over 80 girls and desperately need a new Rainbows unit to meet this demand. Would you be prepared to set up a Rainbows unit? Do you have two or three hours of free time each week (the sessions only run for an hour once a week)? A well-structured training/mentor programme exists which ensures that this task would not be overwhelming and other members of the team may be willing to prepare accounts and share with planning etc.

Rainbows are the youngest members of Girlguiding UK and will be celebrating 25 years in 2012. They follow a structured programme covering four areas: look, learn, laugh and love. The girls make decisions on what they do, experience new things, learn to work in small groups, build their confidence and independence as well as meeting other girls from different schools in the area.

Festival Chorus Christmas Concert

On Friday 9th December Reading Festival Chorus will present a Christmas Concert, under the baton of new musical director, Edward-Rhys Harry. The programme includes Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols* and Bullard's *A Feast for Christmas*. They will be joined by the Crosfields Chamber Choir under the directorship of Richard Adams, and accompanied by Jane Seymour (piano) and Julia Hammersley (harp). The programme also includes music for harp and children's choir. Tickets are available from Alison Mackay (tel 0118 983 4523), from chorus members, at the door or via the website www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk, £12 adults, £10 concessions (senior citizens, students with NUS cards, or Reading Passport holders) and £2 for children. The concert is being held at Wesley Methodist Church, Queens Road, Reading.

On Monday 12th December, also at Wesley Methodist Church the Festival Chorus will be holding an open rehearsal, singing Christmas carols. All are welcome!

I took over one of the Rainbow units in January 2011 as it was about to close. I had no Girlguiding experience, except for being a parent of two daughters who were Rainbows in the unit. I wanted girls to have the same fun experience as my daughters and this is my way of saying "thank you" to all of the volunteers who run the units. If you would like to enjoy this experience, then email cavershamguides@hotmail.co.uk

Kathleen Moore

Caversham Artists' Christmas Show

Caversham Artists, in association with Reveal Showcase, announce their Christmas show 2011 at The Old Fire Station, Henley. Visitors can come and view many beautiful items produced by local artists and craftsmen, meet the makers and find gifts for Christmas. There is a wide range of work on display.

Caversham Artists regularly exhibit work by 23 local artists and craftsmen covering a wide range of styles and prices. Why not come to the Private View and enjoy a glass of wine with the artists from 6 - 8pm on Thursday 1st December? The show runs from Thursday 1st to Tuesday 6th December 2011, and is open from 10am - 5pm daily including Sunday.

See www.CavershamArtists.co.uk for further updates and examples of work available.

Scouts Christmas Post

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY AND SAVE MONEY AT CHRISTMAS!

The 89th Reading Scouts are once again providing a Christmas Post service for Caversham, Emmer Green and Caversham Park Village. This is a great opportunity to save money (postage is just 25p per card!) and at the same time support the local beavers, cubs and scouts who are currently raising funds to develop their headquarters in Emmer Green. Post boxes will be situated at a number of locations in the area including: Caversham Library, Martins Newsagents, Word Play, Balmore Park and Emmer Green Surgeries, Woodcote Way News, Suprema Dry Cleaners, St Barnabas Church and local primary schools. You can post your cards in these locations from Monday 28th November and the last collection will be on Friday 16th December.

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Christmas in Caversham

St Andrew Caversham

18 December 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight, followed by mince pies and mulled wine
24 December 3.00pm The Nativity Service
8.00pm Christmas Eve Service (no Midnight Mass)
25 December 10.00am All-Age Eucharistic Service

St. Barnabas, Emmer Green

4 December 9.30am Toy Service
14 December 7.00pm Christingle Service
18 December 4.30pm Carols and Lessons
24 December 4.30pm Nativity Play
11.30pm Midnight Mass
25 December 8.00am Said Communion
9.30am Family Communion

St John the Baptist Caversham

11 December 10.00am Christingle
21 December 7.30pm Carol Service
24 December 4.00pm Crib Service
11.30pm Midnight Mass
25 December 10.00am All Age Communion

St Margaret Mapledurham

18 December 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight
24 December 3.30pm Christingle Service
11.30pm Midnight Mass
25 December 11.00am Christmas Day Holy Communion

St Peter Caversham

23 December 8.00pm Nine Lessons and Carols
24 December 3.00pm Christingle (doors open at 2.30pm)
4.30pm Christingle (doors open at 4.00pm)
11.30pm Midnight Mass
25 December 8.00am Communion
9.45am Festival Communion

Caversham Park LEP

Caversham Park Primary School
18 December 11.00am Nine lessons and carols
3.30- 4.30pm Carols and cakes at the Milestone Centre.
24 December 11.30pm Midnight Communion led by Heather Wilson
25 December 11.00am Christmas Day service.

Caversham Baptist Church

at South Street
4 December 10.30am Toy Service
11 December 10.30am Morning worship
6.30pm Christmas meditations, (191 Kidmore Road)
7.00pm Christmas prayer

18 December 10.30am Nativity service
3.45pm Christmas Carol Cafe
24 December 5.30pm Carols by Candlelight
25 December 10.30am Christmas Morning worship

Grace Church

18 December 4.30- 5.15pm Carol service for those with young families
6.30- 7.45pm Carols by candlelight
Both services will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies
25 December 10.30- 11.30am Family service

Caversham Heights Methodist Church

18 December 6.30pm Carols by Candlelight
24 December 11.15pm Midnight Communion
25 December 11.00am Family worship

Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

18 December 10.30am All-age Carol service
24 December 4.00pm Crib service
25 December 10.00am Family worship

Our Lady & St Anne's

Thurs 15 Dec 7.30pm Penitential Service
18 December 10.00am Mass
6.30pm Mass
7.30pm Carols & Benediction
24 December 6.30pm Family Mass with procession to the crib
10.00pm Solemn Mass of Christmas Night
25 December 9.00am Mass
10.30am Mass
6.30pm Mass
26 December 10.00am St Stephen's Mass

St Michael's, Sonning Common

24 December 6.00pm Mass for families with children
11.30pm Christmas carols readings and music followed by Midnight Mass
25 December 10.30am Morning Mass
26 December 10.00am Morning Mass (feast of St Stephen)

New Testament Church of God

18 December 6.00pm Carol service
25 December 10.00am Christmas morning service
31 December 10.00pm Thanksgiving service

Caversham Court Gardens
Christmas Carol Evening
Monday 19 December
7.30pm
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25p per card
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Post boxes in: Caversham Library, Suprema Dry Cleaners, Word Play, Woodcote Way News, Martins Newsagents, Balmore Park and Emmer Green Surgeries, St Barnabas Church and local primary schools
Merry Christmas from 89th Reading Scouts

St Barnabas Christmas Fair
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Saturday 3 December
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The Fisherman is a cosy continental style café in St Andrew's Church Hall open from 3 to 10 pm every Thursday. It has been running since March 2011, and after the success of its six month trial period, it will continue. Our aim is to be a meeting place for the local community. The staff, most of whom are volunteers, are friendly; families and young children are welcome, and there are games and a range of newspapers available.

St Andrew's has invested in a professional coffee machine, so we can now make excellent coffee (cappuccino, latte, espresso and hot chocolate) up to the standard of the well known coffee chains, and you can now take it away if you want to. Many products are fair trade, and you'll find different sorts of teas and a wide range of high quality soft drinks.

We offer homebaked cakes and scones every week and if you fancy something savoury, we have two sorts of hot mini pizzas, and in the evening you can bring a bottle of wine to share with your friends for a modest corkage.

If you haven't tried it before, come and visit the Fisherman – you are assured of a warm welcome!



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"Ubi Caritas" medals awarded

At the end of October, Bishop William Kenney visited the church of Our Lady and St Anne to present Diocesan "Ubi Caritas" medals to three parishioners. These medals are awarded for outstanding service to the church over a long period and on this occasion were awarded to Sophie Swallow and to Anne and Colin Clarke.

Sophie Swallow has for many years headed the small group of people who regularly keep the church and altar linens clean and has spent many hours regularly carrying out that cleaning. She modestly said that the award was actually due to all those who help with the cleaning in any way and she merely

represented them in receiving the medal from the Bishop.

Anne and Colin Clarke have kept the books for the parish finances for many years as well as spending most Monday mornings counting, recording and banking the Sunday collections. It was when the bookkeeping was transferred to a computer system recently that it became obvious just how much work had been involved for so many years.

Bishop Kenney used their service to illustrate the theme of the Mass reading – love for God and love of our neighbour – and said that such devotion, quietly going on behind the scenes, helped life run along smoothly, not only in our parish,

Christian Aid

The 2011 Christian Aid street collection in Caversham, Emmer Green and Mapledurham raised £7407. A sum of £2862 was declared for Gift Aid (39%) adding £715 to the total. The Christian Aid service at St Barnabas raised £88.

This year only four walkers from the Caversham area took part in the Bix Walk raising £214. The total raised was £8237 with additional unknown amounts sent directly to Christian Aid HQ. Some 124 walkers took part.

The street collection was about 15% lower than the 2010 figure, almost entirely due to lack of collectors. The difficult financial climate also played a part. All those who took part in the street collection produced a very good result and once again a big 'thank you' to all involved.



Sophie, Anne and Colin with their certificates.

ALPHA IS COMING TO ST BARNABAS

It happens on Thursday mornings (10am to 11.30am) from 5th January to 29th March 2012.

Alpha is a practical introduction to the Christian faith designed for people who are neither church goers nor committed Christians. It is very appropriate for anyone wanting to learn more of the Christian faith.

The course consists of 10 weekly sessions and an away day. It provides a relaxed and non-threatening environment in which people can explore the faith of Jesus, ask questions and make friends. The talks are on topics such as "Who is Jesus?" and "Why

Did Jesus Die?". Each session starts with refreshments followed by a DVD on a specific topic and then a time of discussion.

All sessions including the away day will be held at St Barnabas Church Parish Centre, Emmer Green. A crêche will be available if required.

For further information contact 0118 947 5744, 0118 947 9708 or alpha@saintbarnabas.org.uk

We would also be pleased to hear from anyone who is interested in attending an Alpha course but cannot make a daytime session as we are planning to hold an evening course.

Concerts at St Barnabas

St Barnabas will host three concerts in the near future. On Saturday 10 December at 7.00 pm, the South Berks Concert Band will pay a return visit, and the following Wednesday, December 14 at 2.00 pm, there is an

opportunity to enjoy Vivace Voices in concert. Looking further ahead, the Reading Phoenix Choir will perform on Saturday 28 April at 7.30 pm. Further details and tickets from Richard Gash 0118 9475744.

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TRIBUTE**Owen Robert Jewiss**
1933 to 2011

Caversham Bridge is saddened to report the loss of a prominent Caversham churchman, and one of its most regular contributors of articles and pictures, Dr Owen Jewiss who died on 24th October after a battle with cancer.

Owen was born in Gravesend in 1933, the son of a merchant seaman. He started his schooling there and went to Gravesend Grammar, but this was interrupted during the war when the family relocated to Liverpool. When they came back to Kent, Owen went on to study botany at Imperial College, London, graduating in 1955. This was clearly a subject in which he excelled, for he went on to complete a doctorate in 1958. During this period of study he met another botanist, Daphne, who was to become his wife, also in 1958.

They set up home in Maidenhead when Owen was employed at the Grassland Research Institute in Hurley, and the family grew with the arrival of their daughters Philippa and Hilary. They became members of their local churches, St Peters and St Marks, where Owen was active as a Sunday School organiser and in the Church of England Men's Society. The family have fond memories of a year in Australia in 1969/70, when Owen was engaged on a research project there. He retired when the Institute closed, but remained active on professional and scientific matters in many roles including editing the journal of the British Grassland Society. In these later years Owen and Daphne welcomed and enjoyed time with their five grandchildren.

Owen was a devoted family man and a distinguished professional, but for the Church community he will be remembered as exceptional in his commitment and someone whose faith and witness were an inspiration to many.

The family moved to The Ridings in Emmer Green in 1971, and were welcomed at St Barnabas Church. Owen's energy and experience were quickly recognised and within a couple of years he had become a PCC member and been appointed Churchwarden. He remained a PCC member until the time of his death, and held the office of Warden on more than one occasion over a period of some twenty years. He has been at the centre of the life of St Barnabas ever since he arrived, and at some time or another he has undertaken many tasks, great and small – the full list would be endless. In the management roles the Church benefitted greatly from his breadth of knowledge and experience, but he also worked quietly behind the scenes on many less glamorous, but equally important, tasks. But he was much more than an administrator – he could relate to people with warmth and empathy. His leadership of a house group was greatly valued, and he could be relied upon to be there at social gatherings, greeting friends and sharing a joke. This same sensitivity, coupled with his career interest, showed itself in a keen and practical concern for environmental issues. People who might not have recognised much of what he did will remember him as the man with the camera. He was always on hand to take pictures, and had amassed a tremendous photographic record of local church and community events.

Whilst his contribution to his local church alone would have stretched most people, he also devoted a great deal of time and energy to the wider church. In Reading he served on the Deanery Synod (and was Lay Chairman in the 1980's), the Churches Together groups and was connected to the University Chaplaincy. He was respected and held in affection by a wide circle of friends and colleagues from many church backgrounds in the town. More widely, he was involved with Churches Together in Berkshire and the Diocesan Synod, he chaired the Diocesan Board of Trustees and was a member of the Diocesan Glebe Committee. In recognition of his significant service to the Diocese the Bishop of Oxford bestowed upon him the rare award of the Order of St Frideswide. There was a short ceremony at Owen's home on 22nd October with family and friends present – a proud and emotional moment after such an outstanding Christian life.

Owen characteristically kept as many of his activities going for as long as he could, and his loss will be keenly and immediately felt. It is probably fair to say that for the many organisations he was involved with he will be irreplaceable. For many more individuals the loss will be of a conscientious and engaging friend or colleague. Owen could move in exalted and humble circles with equal ease. He could be as solemn and academic as he needed to be, but a dry sense of humour was never far beneath the surface, and he enjoyed making a point with a twinkle in his eye.

He will be greatly missed, and our thoughts and prayers are with Daphne and his family, who have the greatest loss but the best of memories.

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ENVIRONMENT

CAFOD speaker in Caversham

Dr Sarah Wykes, the lead analyst on environment and climate change for the aid agency CAFOD, came to the church of Our Lady and St Anne in October to speak about the agency's initiative "Don't Drop the Ball on Climate Change".

"Man-made climate change results in two million premature deaths worldwide every year and threatens water and food security – especially among the poorest three billion" said Dr Wykes. "Failure to mitigate climate change will violate our environment".

We need to recognise the serious and potentially irreversible impacts of global warming caused by the emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants, Dr Wykes went on. "We need, without delay, effective and fair policies to reduce the causes and impacts of climate change on communities and ecosystems. By acting now,

in the spirit of common responsibility, we accept our duty to one another and to the stewardship of a planet blessed with the gift of life".

Developed countries have already recognised the need to reduce greenhouse emissions by 25-30%, she said, adding that Britain has committed to at least 34% by 2020. But funds are needed to help countries mitigate the effects of the changes.

Dr Wykes urged the government to push for progress in the United Nations climate change talks in Durban this December. "They must not drop the ball on climate change", she urged.

CAFOD is active in over 40 countries. It works to reduce poverty with people of all faiths and none. (CAFOD, Romero House, 55 Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7JB, www.cafod.org.uk)

Allotment treasures at Caversham Court

The common medlar, *mespilus germanica*, is anything but common nowadays, though gardeners unjustly ignore it. In our climate it forms a handsome, compact tree perfect for the smaller garden, putting out long dark green leaves which take on a good red autumn colour before falling. Large white flowers appear in spring.

The medlar tree is in general short-lived, having a life-span of 30 to 50 years, so the specimen in the allotments at Caversham Court is unlikely to date back to the heyday of the estate's kitchen garden. There would almost certainly have been one there in earlier times, along with quinces and other fruits we rarely use in England today.

The medlar was brought to Britain by the Romans, and was an important fruit plant in medieval times, providing precious vitamins through the winter. It had fallen out of favour even before the 19th century, however. Mrs Beeton did not think the medlar worth eating, though Theodore Garrett's 19th century Encyclopaedia of Practical Cookery gives some recipes.

The medlar was well known in Shakespeare's time, as the many mentions in his plays show, but you have to know something about the fruit to understand the references.

The wood of the medlar is very hard and has been used for spears and fighting sticks, and most famously for the Basque walking stick and defensive weapon, the Makhila. In general the medlar is not used for its timber because of its small size.

The medlar in the allotments yielded a fine crop this year. If you are lucky enough to have a medlar in the garden, what should you do with the fruit? Jane Grigson's Fruit Book quotes French sources praising the medlar for its medicinal qualities in regulating the stomach. Grigson goes on to wax lyrical about the flavour of the ripe fruit, recommending eating them just as they are, or turning them into a tart jelly to eat with meats.

In her 1954 classic Food in England, Dorothy Hartley recommended scraping out the flesh of soft medlars and eating it with cream and brown sugar, or cooking the fruit for a few minutes in a hot oven with butter and cloves. An interesting idea for Christmas fare might be Theodore Garrett's medlar cheese, a spiced fruit paste which can be poured into fancy moulds; turned out, they make pretty sweetmeats rather like membrillo, the quince paste often served with cheese in Spain.

The medlar only becomes edible after it has been softened, or "bletted", by frost, or after long storage. It also has an odd formation: the long sepals of the flower remain on the fruit, hence the English common name for the fruit, open-arse, which led to many ribald and often indecent puns in Elizabethan and Jacobean plays. More recently, D.H. Lawrence wrote of "delicious rottenness" in his poem Medlars and Sorb-Apples.



Medlar in flower – Courtesy Friends of Caversham Court.



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Caversham WI

Derek Ritchings was the welcome speaker at October's meeting. It was his 2nd visit and this time he demonstrated his art with water colours and pastels and made 2 lovely pictures. He then introduced a new game when someone did a quick doodle and he transformed it into a picture! After business was conducted, with reminders of future events, Derek judged the competition for a water colour picture. The winner from about 10 entries was Sylvia Myzsor. The raffle finished a fascinating and creative evening.

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St Peter's Wives Group

Gordon Crutchfield was the speaker at our October meeting and his subject was fungi.

We were probably expecting to see photographs of the many colourful toadstools to be found in our woods at this time of year, but his talk was far more wide-ranging than that.

He explained the differences between fungi and bacteria and described how he first became interested in fungi some 25 years ago and is still fascinated by them. Foraging for field mushrooms has largely died out now, not least because they are not easy to identify. Accidentally eating a poisonous mushroom can cause death, or serious kidney and liver damage, resulting in either an organ transplant or lifelong kidney dialysis. Although not as tasty as wild mushrooms, supermarket mushrooms are safe and eight million tonnes of them are grown commercially worldwide each year.

There are long Latin names for different groups of fungi and Gordon explained the differences and the uses to which many of them are put. Quorn is a tasteless fungus, with no cholesterol and very little fat, and has to be flavoured to make it palatable. Yeast is used in bread-making and brewing and yeast extract is used to make savoury spreads, using the waste from the brewing industry.

Penicillin is derived from fungi and was discovered in 1928, although it was not until 1953 that it was first prescribed. When organ transplants became possible in the 1970s, it was often found that the new organ was rejected. However, it was found that a fungus called cytosporum, when given to the patient after surgery, stopped this rejection. Statins also are derived from fungi.

The Irish potato famine in 1845, in which two million people died, was caused by a fungal disease which persisted for 15 years. Dutch elm disease in the 1970s was a fungal infection carried by a beetle, which bored into the tree. Up to three inches of leaves can accumulate in woodland during the autumn and fungi carry out the initial breaking down of this material. This is followed by the action of bacteria, eventually producing leaf mould.

We all thoroughly enjoyed this interesting talk

Our next meeting at Church House will be on Tuesday, 20 December at 8.00pm, when we will be holding our Christmas Party.

Caversham Heights Society

In October Pat Baxter presented to a full house the plans for the multi-million pound upgrade of Reading Station. Pat, who is Head of Transport for Reading Borough Council, works closely with central and regional government on policy, funding, bids and franchising, among other issues. Her department is closely involved with the design and construction of the Reading Station upgrade, as well as other major road schemes.

Pat stressed that the scheme was the best possible one to benefit Reading people. A spacious, well-lit subway will provide a level route for pedestrians from one side of the station to the other. There will be a main entrance to the station on the Caversham side as well as redeveloped entrance on the town side. Building should start in January 2013, finishing 15 months later. Five new platforms will reduce delays to both stopping trains and through trains. The existing over-bridge will be replaced by a more central, wider one accessible to all platforms by escalators. The Cow Lane bridges will be completely rebuilt to allow two-way traffic and buses. The entire project will be finished by 2016 taking four years to complete.

Another well attended meeting on 19 October was enthralled by Beryl Maile who gave a demonstration of her high speed painting skills, interspersed with amusing, sometimes saucy, repartee with the audience. She said that whenever she saw an unusual shape she could immediately visualise the makings of a picture in it so she asked two members of the audience to draw doodles that she then quickly turned into drawings. On a more serious note, she demonstrated to the budding artists among us the uses of a broad brush and a sponge.

The month ended with an outing to Gloucester to see the source of the River Thames and visit Gloucester historical docks. At Kemble the actual spring was to be found over a muddy field so wisely we decided not to cross it! At the docks members were able to choose among many attractions including the National Waterways Museum, Soldiers of Gloucester Museum, the Antique Centre and Mariners Chapel. Some took a boat trip to Sharpness Canal while others went to the new outlet centre.

On the return journey we saw the spot for many years regarded as the source of the Thames. This is now recognised as the source of the River Churn which runs into the Thames some 14 miles away.

Rosehill WI

A well-attended Harvest Lunch was held at the October meeting. The committee had worked hard and provided an appetising and enjoyable lunch.

President Brenda Caborn then held the business part of the meeting. Secretary Margaret Seal announced that £50 had been raised at Brenda's coffee morning half of which had been sent to Berkshire Federation to help their funds. £12 raised at the Sept meeting had been sent to Denman College following their appeal.

The committee has also arranged Christmas lunch at Goring Heath Golf club for members on December 15th.

Following an appeal from the Royal Berkshire Hospital Brenda announced that a working party would be set up to arrange the purchase and packing of emergency packs of toiletries for emergency patients.

The walkers had enjoyed their walks and lunches during September. The Scrabble group had met in September and had enjoyable afternoons.

The rest of the afternoon was spent as social time with a quiz.

The meeting closed with the raffle.

Meetings are held at St Barnabas Church Hall on the 1st Wednesday of the Month and visitors are very welcome

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

The Guild is getting into the Christmas mood this month with a trio of events. On the 5th of December a group will attend the annual Carol Service to be held in St Albans Cathedral. The Social Studies group have a Christmas lunch at Mapledurham Golf club, and our Christmas party takes place on the 22nd December.

2012 starts with a social evening on 19th of January.

New members and visitors are always welcome. We meet every third Thursday in the month at St Andrews church hall, Albert road, Caversham

Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club

On Wednesday 14th December, Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club is holding a Christmas Party at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Rd., Caversham. A fun-filled festive "hands-on" evening with an American Supper will start at 7.30pm, doors opening 6.45p.m. Bring scissors! A small charge for materials will be made. An evening of seasonal inspiration, great food, and a chance to chat with friends will ensure a very enjoyable time for all. Entrance £4.50. For further details contact Berna Macdonald on 0118 9477400.

Reading Gardeners

Members are reminded that subscriptions are due on January 1st. Due to increased costs they are now £12 for a single membership and £20 for two people at the same address.

Two meetings in January will include a talk by John Grimshaw on January 11th entitled *New trees. Recent introductions to cultivation*. Val Bourne's subject on January 25th will be *Plant Lore and Legend*.

New members will be most welcome or it is also possible to attend any meeting as a visitor for a fee of £2.

Website address is www.readinggardenersclub.org.uk

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The Turkeytail

Will you be having a turkey this Christmas? Here is one of the most distinctive of the bracket fungi, which bears more than a passing resemblance to the tail of a turkey-cock.



It grows on dead wood, often in great numbers and in tiers, with one layer of brackets under another. It's very common, and can be found at any time of year – but for obvious reasons, I thought it would be appropriate to write about it for the December edition.

The edge of the bracket is wavy, and the surface is velvety when it's young. The concentric bands of different colours are usually some shade of brown, black or grey, but may occasionally be green or even blue. The underside is whitish, and the spores are produced in tubes, to emerge through tiny pores on the underside. It gives me great pleasure to look at fungi in general, and to think of their usefulness to humanity, and of what would happen if they were not around.

But this particular fungus also made me wonder why a turkey is called a turkey, when it comes from North America. The story turns out to be rather involved, because the first fowl to be called a turkey in this country is what we now call a guinea fowl – which comes from Guinea in West Africa! According to the Oxford English Dictionary, it was imported to Europe “through the Turkish dominions” in the 16th century. When the North American bird arrived, it was thought to be another variety of guinea fowl, and both were called turkeys. Then when the two species came to be differentiated, the name “turkey” was given to the wrong bird – not the one which had come in through those Turkish dominions at all!

It was found difficult to acclimatise the North American bird to this country, and rearing them became an East Anglian speciality. Mrs. Beeton, in her Book of Household Management, published in monthly parts between 1859 and 1861, tells how turkeys had to be walked along the roads to the London markets, by a driver using a piece of red rag tied to a stick. Things became easier once the railways arrived.

I seem to remember that in the 1950s, chicken was a luxury reserved for Christmas, and to eat turkey was almost unheard of – though I can remember that a farmer near us used to rear a few in his field. They would come up to you and make their gobbling sound, and try to peck the bits of bread you had brought out of your hand.

I also remember in more recent years seeing inside a modern turkey shed. It was very disappointing – the birds were all whitish, with no great strutting turkey-cocks with bright red heads, blue round the eyes, pendulous wattles, and a great tail like a fan with bands of grey and black.

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