

CAVERSHAM MAKES MUSIC

Jesus Christ Superstar staged in church



Oliver Dench as a brooding Jesus with plotting priests in the background.



Judas (Hannah Mullan) sings in anguish after betraying Jesus.



The Disciples gather around Jesus for the Last Supper.



Jesus is dragged to his crucifixion.

Photos: Zoe Midford

Carols in Caversham Court



– see page 3

John Robinson

Riverate and Alison Golby in Concert



– see page 5

Courtesy Ian Lowry

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DLEX 1758/5012

Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas

Revd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.

Tel: 947 8239.

www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrews

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.

Fr Bob Devaney, Tel: 07786 836146

18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Rev H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009 (contact)

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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TALKING POINT

by

Dan Tyndall

Always read to the end of the story!

There will be many people in Caversham who will miss it, who won't notice, who will let the day pass without a second glance. But there is a day which marks the end of Christmas and many people will let it pass without a thought.

On the High Street, Christmas starts with the first playing of 'Frosty the Snowman' and ends when the doors close on Christmas Eve. By the time we head for the January sales the carols have gone and we're being encouraged to think about our next holiday.

In our churches, on the other hand, Christmas starts with the first singing of 'Yea Lord we greet thee, born this happy morning'. Then we have, not just twelve days, but forty days of Christmas: forty days of "Merry Christmas" and "We three kings". It's not just Lent that has forty days, but Christmas as well.

And if you plot a graph forty days on from 25th December you get to 2nd February and the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, or Candlemas. It is this date that will pass many people by. And if the date is missed so will be the reason for this particular season.

Mary and Joseph took their son to the Temple to do what was customary according to their faith. There they met Simeon and Anna, wise old people who had been waiting for this moment all their lives; waiting to see this new thing that the Lord was doing that would bring healing and peace to the world.

We could leave the story there, with two older people billing and cooing over a baby whilst the doting parents look on. Or we could read the next few lines as well, where Simeon looks directly into the eyes of Mary and tells her in no uncertain terms: *this child is for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, a sign that will be opposed and will reveal the inner thoughts of many people; and a sword will pierce your own soul as well.*

Too often we stop reading before the end of the story. In our desire for a faith that is a comfort, we leave aside anything that is uncomfortable and so ignore those parts which call us back to the painful realities of what it is to be human.

Today, the day I am writing this 'Talking Point', is 28th December: Holy Innocents, the day we remember the slaughter that Herod wrought in Bethlehem following the visit of the Wise Men as they journeyed to Bethlehem:

Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

"A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation. Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

Dan Tyndall is Rector of Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham

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
11.30am	The Eucharist
6.30pm	Evening Prayer (as announced)

St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

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

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.00am	Parish Communion
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CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP Meeting at Caversham Park School

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

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

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

GRACE CHURCH Old Peppard Road

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

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

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

Gosbrook Road

10.30am and 6.30pm

Woodcote Parish Church

9.45am (second Sunday)

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne's, Southview Avenue

Saturday 5.30pm,

Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm

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

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)

Church Street, Reading

10.30am

(House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Church Street, Caversham

9.30am Sunday School

11.00am Divine Worship

6.00pm Evening Service

Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the March 2012 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by Tuesday 31st January. The date for the April 2012 issue is Tuesday 28th February 2012. Email address is below.

Advertising copy for the March 2012 issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, by Friday 24th January 2012. The date for the April 2012 issue is Friday 24th February 2012.

Please note: the dates for the April issue are earlier this year as Easter is early in April.

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MISCELLANY

Christmas carols in Caversham Court

No snow to make a winter wonderland, but a fairytale scene nonetheless, as well over 300 people gathered in Caversham Court to sing carols on 19th December. The weather could not have been more different from the previous year – fortunately the rain stopped just in time to allow the event to go ahead in the open air.

The bells of St Peter's rang out to draw visitors in to the gardens, which were floodlit and enlivened by dozens of twinkling candles. The choir of St Peter's church, under conductor Ian Westley, led the singing, with five members of the Salvation Army band accompanying familiar, much-loved carols.

The tea kiosk did a brisk trade in mulled wine, mince pies and hot chocolate, adding to the festive atmosphere and raising funds for local charities.

The Friends of Caversham Court Gardens would like to thank the Rev Dan Tyndall, the bell-ringers and choir of St Peter's church, the League of Friends and the Ways & Means charity, the Salvation Army band and the staff of RBC parks department for their contribution to a memorable evening.

It was only the second year that carols had been sung in Caversham Court, but a new Caversham tradition has been established. We look forward to welcoming the Christmas season with carols in the gardens in December 2012.

Concerts in Caversham City of Oxford Orchestra

On 3rd December we were treated to a feast of wonderful Baroque music played by members of the City of Oxford Orchestra at St Andrew's Church to welcome in the season of Advent. The church felt wonderfully atmospheric lit only by candles, and the almost capacity audience were treated to Bach's double concerto for oboe and violin, played by oboist Timothy Watts and Julian Leper, who also directed the orchestra. The joyful interplay between the two instruments in the outer movements was contrasted with the serene and poignant slow movement in which the beautiful tone of Timothy Watts oboe playing was on full display. Julian Leper gave a spirited performance of Winter from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* – a performance enhanced by the reading of poems which inspired the work, beautifully read by Lindsay Sanderson who runs the City of Oxford Orchestra. Other favourites enjoyed were Pachelbel's *Canon*, Bach's *Air on a G string*, and an unexpected and moving performance of *Gabriel's Oboe* in which the oboe melody soared through St Andrew's sending everyone home feeling joyful.

The next Concerts in Caversham concert is 24th March and will be given by trumpet/cornet virtuoso Robert Vanryne with Sue Addison on trombone, playing instruments owned by both Elgar and Holst, with Adrienne Black on piano. The programme will have a flavour of Last Night of the Proms.

Out of date software is risky

A recent survey of 7000 computers, infected with malicious software, found a common factor: 99% of the malware was associated with out of date software. The problems could have been avoided by using the free updates for Oracle's product Java, Adobe's products Reader, Flash and Acrobat and to a lesser extent Microsoft's browser Internet Explorer.

Fortunately, using the free services on www.filehippo.com/updatechecker there is an easy way to check whether your Oracle and Adobe products are up to date. The checker reports on a great many products but there is one big exception: it does not check any of the Microsoft products. Use the free services on www.update.microsoft.com/microsoftupdate to confirm that the essential updates are in place. XP users should use the "Custom" rather than the "Express" update button.

If you are using Adobe Reader 9 or earlier, delete it and install version X. Unless you use Adobe Acrobat, it is best to delete it. If you are an XP user, check that Internet Explorer 8 is installed. Users of Vista or Windows 7 should check that Internet Explorer 9 is installed. See www.fbrown.org for more information.

Spring Concert

In their 60th Anniversary year the South Chiltern Choral Society will be performing requiems by the French composers, Fauré and Duruflé, at a concert to be held at Douai Abbey, Woolhampton on Saturday 24th March.

The South Chiltern Chamber Orchestra and organist Robert Harre-Jones will be accompanying the choir. The conductor will be Gwyn Arch.

The concert begins at 7.45pm and tickets costing £14 (£7 for under 18s) are available from Mary Eslemont (0118 987 4346) or Newbury Corn Exchange (01635 522 733).

Anne Grimwade

Many of our older readers will be saddened to hear of the death, after a long illness, of Anne Grimwade. She was the wife of Canon John Grimwade, a former rector of St Peter's, Caversham, and the founder of this paper. The funeral took place at Cirencester Parish Church on 9th January. We send our sympathy to Canon John Grimwade on this sad occasion.

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From the Lookout Post

Station Hill

You may already know that Station Hill closed to all vehicles in January. This is due to last for 18 months as part of the redevelopment of the station. A new major retaining wall is being built between the railway and the new transport interchange in Station Hill. Once the retaining wall is completed, the council will start works to demolish the existing road structure and construct the new lowered transport interchange. Pedestrian and cycle access is due to remain throughout the works. The remaining bus services from Station Hill will run from the refurbished former bus station, off Station Hill.

The underground drop-off car park, located off Blgrave Street, near the Apex Plaza now closes at 11pm (previously 9.30pm), seven days a week.

Bid for green transport fund

Reading Borough Council submitted a bid in December for £24.2 million of Government funding for green transport initiatives. Funding from the local sustainable transport fund would allow schemes including a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Thames, expanded park and ride facilities in neighbouring boroughs and a bike hire scheme for Reading. The aim is to reduce carbon emissions, cut congestion and increase alternatives to travel by car.

The package includes five key areas:

- Personalised travel
- Fares, ticketing and information services, including a range of reduced bus fare offers for local trips and payment by a single card or mobile phone, similar to London's oyster card.
- Cycle hire/pool bike scheme at local centres, employment hubs and transport interchanges, including folding bikes at stations.
- New and improved pedestrian and cycle routes, including the proposed new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Thames, plus better surfacing, signage, lighting, widths and information/maps.
- Park and ride/park and rail facilities and services including sites at Thames Valley Park, Mere oak and Theale railway station.

The total cost of these investments is £31.8m, of which £7.6m is made up from local contributions. The £24.2m LSTF bid, if successful, would then make up the full package. The council expects to hear the result of its bid by June 2012.

Caversham 100 Years On

The year 2011 is well and truly over but the project is by no means finished. The website, www.Caversham100yearson.org.uk is still active. Any other contributions for the local history page or picture gallery are still welcome. Please use the contact form on the website or email info@cadra.org.uk.

The exhibitions in Reading Museum finished before the end of January. They showed a fascinating glimpse of life in Caversham in the late 19th and early 20th century. Many thanks to the museum staff for putting this together with the able assistance of Martin Andrews, who with other local people and businesses, loaned many of the items on display. This was just one example of the wonderful response from so many people in helping to

bring together so many different parts of the programme in 2011.

The heritage exhibition booklet has been selling well at WordPlay. Stock levels are always limited so you may like to reserve a copy by calling 948 2800 or email info@wordplay.co.uk. A big thank you Deirdre and her team at WordPlay for getting these on sale in time for Christmas. Copies are also available in Reading Library, Caversham Library and all the local schools.

Work is progressing to prepare a heritage map of central Caversham. Subject to the necessary formal permissions, this will be printed on an enamelled board and attached to the railings of Caversham Library on Hemdean Road, near to the site of the ancient Scholar Tree and before this the village whipping post! The map will include drawings of a dozen or so areas of historical or architectural interest. These will be shown on a hand drawn map with background information. The work is funded as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant to the Caversham 100 Years On project.

Also funded by the grant will be a Caversham Court booklet. Both the map and the booklet should be complete by the end of 2012.

Caversham traders

The work of the Caversham Traders' Association has gone from strength to strength in the last year. A considerable amount of work goes on behind the scenes to help Caversham centre to flourish. A new initiative was the very successful late-night shopping evening in December. Do take another look at www.choosecaversham.co.uk. As well as giving details of the many businesses in Caversham, there are details of events, schools, artists, local clubs and much more. It also allows an easy and cost effective way of providing a simple website for Caversham organisations.

Keeping the roof over your head

These are two starkly contrasting reports of the challenge of keeping the physical roof on your home.

The first is that, this autumn, several Caversham residents were targeted by rogue contractors offering to undertake roofing maintenance and repairs. These individuals have a convincing patter, often offering to undertake work cheaply as a ruse for starting an operation that will require further more major and hence more expensive work. Tribute should be paid to the Reading council consumer protection section and Thames Valley Police for their speedy and professional response in dealing with a number of these incidents. Do contact these authorities if you or a neighbour or relative is approached by trades people who have not been requested by the householder. The recommendation is never to agree for works to be undertaken by door step traders and the old adage still rings true, "If it sounds too cheap to be true, it probably is"

The second incident of a Caversham resident is that a lady home owner undertook a roofing contract with a well-known local firm, to replace her leaking roof with like-for-like materials. However, she was subsequently notified by RBC that she was in contravention of building regulations, which she had not applied for. A considerable financial penalty was imposed.

A visit to the RBC help desk could only establish that the range of building works encompassed by building regulations is available at the web site www.planningportal.gov.uk. This site is complicated to interpret. The definition of what works might be included is very encompassing, including all washing and sanitary facilities, foul and rain water drainage, replacement windows and fuel burning appliances of any type. Indeed, if roof replacement of more than 25% of the area is proposed, building regulations apply, notably in relation to upgrading of thermal insulation. Many of the works, such as boiler or double glazing installation appear to be building regulations compliant where they are undertaken by contractors who belong to recognised trade associations or quality marks. The lesson is to check with RBC building regulations section to ascertain if your proposed project requires building regulation approval.

Caversham
100 Years On

Local Heritage Exhibitions

A series of exhibitions produced in 2011, to mark 100 years and many more of Caversham's rich local heritage.



The Heritage Booklet.

Ex Libris

Early in the last century, a range of beautifully designed book plates were developed to fit into a personal book collection denoting, Ex Libris – this book belongs to The Ex Libris column in this paper which ran for six years on alternate months had a rather different connotation.

Before the opening of the excellent toy and bookshop, WordPlay on Prospect Street, Caversham was served for many years by the Caversham Book Shop. Here you could find friendly and expert help on books of every kind from a specialist publication to a new idea for a holiday read. Both John and Lindsay Mullaney brought their experience as teachers to provide a local community service and their work on different community projects extended well beyond the work of the book shop.

When John and Lindsay retired and handed on the business, John joined the committee of the Caversham and District Residents' Association. Individuals from CADRA have long contributed to columns in this paper including *Watchdog*, *Nomad* and more recently, *From the Lookout Post*. John agreed to take up his pen again and set about looking for a nom de plume. For six years he brought a range of community news and personal thoughts to this column. He has finally decided to lay down his pen and so we send our warmest thanks for the many musings of Ex Libris.

Rivarate Prepares for the Coming Season

Rivarate, the Caversham based choir for mixed voices, has recovered from a busy pre-Christmas period and is now feverishly preparing for the Woodley Festival of Music and the Arts next month and for its Spring Concert at the Methodist Church, Caversham Heights, on Saturday 26th May.

The choir's mid winter concert took place in the spacious St. Peter's Church in Earley where members performed on behalf of the Rotary Club of Caversham, in aid of *Polio Plus* and *Sue Ryder Care*. It was a most enjoyable evening and the audience were as generous with their donations to the two charities as they were with their appreciation of the programme chosen by Alison Golby, the choir's musical director, who was ably supported by the choir's regular accompanist, Pam Asbury.

The choir sang a wide selection which ranged from Faure's *Agnus Dei* through *Sleepytime Bach* and *Don't Cry for Me, Argentina* to the familiar *Let It Be*, *Dream a Little Dream* and *You Raise Me Up*. Soloists performed the music of Britten, Chopin and their own composition. The Rotarians were very pleased to have raised a sum just short of fourteen hundred pounds to share between their two nominated charities.

On the Saturday afternoon before Christmas Day, members of *Rivarate* grouped in the Precinct in Caversham to sing a selection of familiar carols to the passing shoppers. On this occasion members of Caversham Good Neighbours took the opportunity to collect for their good cause.

Rivarate is now in its fourth season in Caversham and has more than quadrupled in numbers in that time. There are 85 committed members at present – 25 of whom are tenors and basses - and Alison, who lectures in music at Henley College, is always keen to hear from anyone who would like to join the waiting list. She is particularly keen to hear from young people who would like to join. We rehearse every Tuesday evening. If you think you would like to sing with *Rivarate* in the future, visit our new website in the first instance or contact the Chairman, Libby Lowry, on libby_lowry@hotmail.co.uk who will send you details.

Choir contact: Ian Lowry Tel. 0118 9481321.

Alpha is coming to St Barnabas

5th January to 29th March 2012, each Thursday morning from 10am to 11.30am.

Alpha is a practical introduction to the Christian faith designed for people who are neither churchgoers nor committed Christians but 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 by a time of discussion.

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

For further information contact 9475744, 9479708, 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.

Golden Wedding



Albert and Carol Shields cut the cake to celebrate their Golden Wedding after the morning service at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church on New Year's day.

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CHURCHES

Christmas at St Peter's

The Christmas services at St Peter's church are always popular and drew large congregations again in 2011. The choir led carol singing in Caversham Court on the Monday before Christmas, then on the Tuesday evening the church was packed for a service arranged for the pupils of Caversham Primary school, and also for the St Peter's cubs, scouts and brownies. The service of nine lessons and carols on Friday evening was again well attended, and featured many carols for the congregation to sing.

On Christmas Eve, two identical Christingle services were held, as the church is unable to accommodate in a single service all who wish to attend. A combined total of nearly 700 were present to celebrate the birth of Jesus in the distribution of Christingles and the church roof was raised by joyful carols lustily sung.

The rector, Rev Dan Tyndall, introduced the service with a reading from Luke's account of Jesus' birth in the stable in a back street of Bethlehem, when God appeared in a baby, a vulnerable, human baby.

Then Rev Graeme Fancourt, one of the curates,

explained the meaning of the Christingle (Christ's light) with Rev Marion Pyke, the other curate, as a visual aid!

She entered and was dressed as an orange, which, Graeme told us, represented the world. Dan then wrapped a red ribbon round it to show God's love for all of us, and pushed into the orange four giant cocktail sticks with sweets on them, representing the four corners of the world with God's gifts to us. The walking Christingle was crowned by a model candle and flame: Jesus the Light of the world.

The big moment arrived as everyone queued to receive their own Christingle. Then all their candles were lit, the lights turned off and our centuries old building was bathed in soft, warm candlelight.

Collections at the two Christingle services raised £1100 for the Children's Society.

Later on Christmas Eve, the church was again full for the traditional Midnight Mass, celebrated in a service led by Rev Dan Tyndall, and the Christmas Morning Eucharist was also well attended.

The picture shows Rev Marion Pyke being dressed as a giant Christingle by Rev Dan Tyndall.



M Carpenter

News from Our Lady and St Anne's

At the end of November, the annual Christmas Fair was held in the Narthax and the Cenacle at the back of the church. All the usual stalls were there. The plant stall with plants and Christmas candle arrangements was a picture and quickly sold out. The white elephant stall had many interesting bargains and the toy stall was heavily laden at the beginning of the event. The cake stall quickly sold out of mostly home made cakes. Four gorgeous cakes were raffled and tickets for the draw were in great demand. The Christmassy smell of mulled wine and mince pies filled the air at one end of the stalls and refreshments were available at the other end while burgers and hot dogs were being cooked outside. As well as the bottle tombola, which was busy all afternoon, there was a soft toy tombola to delight the children. Father Christmas came along to occupy his grotto. The event was a great success both socially and financially.

A couple of weeks later, the parish children's Christmas party took place in the school hall. Forty-four exuberant children attended and each received a present from Father Christmas. Before sitting down to tea, they played games to work up their appetites. It was especially pleasing to find the number of young parishioners who came along to help with the entertaining and to clear up afterwards.



Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

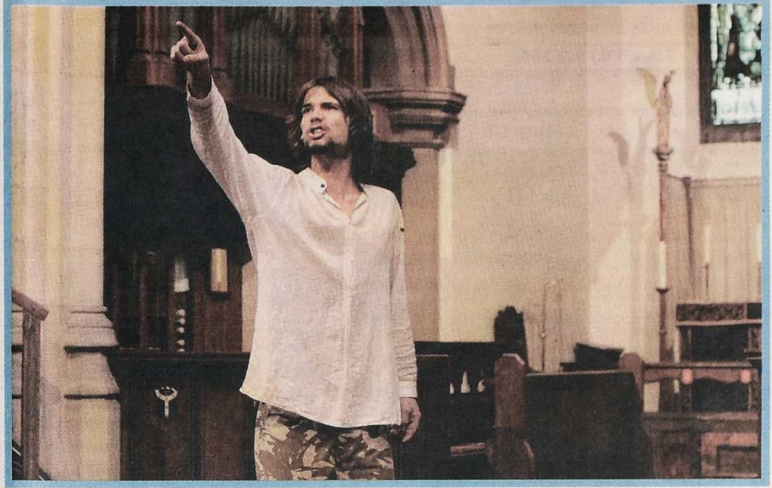
We are in need of musicians to play at our Sunday morning services. Are there any budding or established musicians who would like to play for a growing congregation? We sing well and would appreciate whatever musical accompaniment that could be offered.

This could be the first time you have played in front of a congregation and may be able only to offer an occasional visit.

If you can help please contact David Herbert on 9478209 or by email david.herbert@mypostoffice.co.uk

CHURCHES

Super show at St Andrew's



The 100-year-old stones of St Andrew's, Caversham, shook to the sound of rock music in December when Henley College's theatre group staged Jesus Christ Superstar in the church.

It was probably the first time a full-scale musical has been performed there and was a further step in the church's development as a cultural and community centre. Its series of classical concerts is already well established.

The students took over St Andrew's for almost a week, built a temporary stage and put on four performances. Their lively and dramatic production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical made full use of all the building with dancing girls in the aisles, Mary Magdalene in a mini-skirt and the 30-plus cast moving freely among and behind the audience.

They also found room for an eight-strong band. Fittingly the show was one of the final events of the church's centenary year.

The show's director, Nic Saunders, said: "St Andrews was chosen as the venue in order to allow the production to draw on the atmosphere of the church and hopefully lend the proceedings greater resonance than a conventional stage would allow. It was also our intention to take the production out of Henley and to the wider community.

"It was a joy to work at St Andrew's and although it posed a few logistical problems, I think it was worth it. Staging the crucifixion and scourging in the church created, hopefully, some powerful theatrical moments."

The show's controversial depiction of the relationship between Jesus and Judas was made even more so by the fact that Judas and all the disciples were played by girls.

The vicar, the Revd Nigel Jones, commented: "We were very pleased that Henley College chose St Andrew's as their preferred venue for this show. Jesus Christ Superstar was something a bit different! We don't often have scantily clad teenagers doing somersaults down the aisles: perhaps we should introduce it into our Sunday worship!

"Although it is about Jesus' last days, this is not a Christian show. But in depicting such a human Jesus it is certainly very thought-provoking. Some Christians are offended by it, and I do not agree with it all either. I do not agree with Tim Rice's lyrics which claim that Jesus' and Judas' roles were inevitable and that they had no real choice. But like any work of art, it's one interpretation.

"We didn't host the show because we agreed with its theology, but because the church is a great venue for concerts, which we want to make use of and because the music is dead groovy!"

Alison Golby, joint musical director with her husband, David, said: "It was an incredible privilege and pleasure for us and the young performers and musicians, many of whom live in Caversham, to stage the show in such a beautiful setting. We were overwhelmed by the support and warmth of the local community and their appreciation of the dramatic impact of the performance as a whole and of the individual talents on display.

"As local residents and on behalf of the Henley College we are grateful to Nigel for being so welcoming and accommodating, and we very much hope to return to Caversham with another production in the future."

Photos: Zoe Midford

Jesus with Mary Magdalene played by Josie White (left)

Jesus makes a dramatic point in one of his solos (above)

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'Twas seven o'clock that December morning,
Plus 6 said the weatherman as a warning.
It was quiet as a mouse and all that was heard
Was the song of the earliest of earliest birds.
The sky was dark and shining stars bright,
The table with hot coffee needed a light.
Members of St Barnabas were braving the cold,
Sharing the spirit of Christmas of old.
Coffee, tea, hot chocolate to share
With those at the bus stop who were waiting there.
A gift of this magnitude was out of the norm
For those tired, sleepy faces this cold December morn.
Sceptical faces turned to faces of delight
As steaming cups on trays came into their sight.
Students and parents and commuters by bus,
Neighbouring businesses were treated by us.
As the hour turned to eight on the hands of the clock
The sky began to lighten and we refreshed our stock.
While a brilliant blue sky erupted above
We happily served cups of warm Christmas love.

On the 9th December St Barnabas Church Emmer Green offered a Christmas gift of free hot drinks to our Emmer Green neighbours. We served drinks to those at the St Barnabas Church bus stop, to parents walking back from the Emmer Green Primary school, to local businesses, and to passersby. The recipients were delighted with the



Courtesy: J Gay

neighbourly gesture. Some expressed hope that we would repeat the offer sometime in the future. We served about forty hot drinks between 7 and 9 am and provided our neighbours with information about December concerts and services at the church.

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CHURCHES

A signed reply to an anonymous note

We tried something new for Christmas this year at St Peter's – we gave out leaflets offering some information on church life and asking for any reflections and comments that people would like to make. We got a few responses, one of which wasn't signed and hoping that its author may also be a reader of Caversham Bridge, I would like to respond:

Dear "Visitor (with email)"

Thank you for taking the trouble to write your thoughts and comments on the leaflet, and I am delighted that you feel we had "admirable aims" in it. I was saddened by your accusation of "cybersnobbery" and agree wholeheartedly that our faith is inclusive and so anything that excludes another person has "no place in the Gospel message".

I admire you taking a stand for those without email and would like to let you know of a couple of other things we did this Christmas to open (or keep open) lines of communication with people across Caversham. We were part of the Churches Together in Caversham Christmas card; we printed and distributed 1000 leaflets of our own; we had a poster specially made for our new noticeboard; and the clergy sent about 100 personalised Christmas cards to people who have come to us for baptisms weddings and funerals.

I fully accept that our leaflet had a bias towards electronic media, but I can assure that our approach was broader than that.

With my very best wishes
Dan Tyndall
Rector

Women's World Day of Prayer

On Friday 2 March over three million people world wide will be praying and worshipping together during an annual day of prayer, using a form of service prepared by Christian Women in Malaysia.

Jean Hackett, president of the national Committee of the Women's World Day of Prayer movement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland said,

"This is always an exciting day as a great wave of prayer sweeps the world, beginning when the first service is held in the Queen Salote Girls School in Tonga and continuing around the world until the final service takes place, some 35 hours later, in neighbouring Western Samoa. By then the day will have been celebrated in over 170 countries and more than 6000 services will have been held in the British Isles alone"

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. Throughout its history it has attracted migrants from other parts of Asia and beyond and it is one of the wealthiest and most developed countries in South East Asia. Women have made important contributions to its social and economic development but, nevertheless, they still face discrimination and violence at all levels of society. Even today a girl child is seen as less valuable than a boy. Malaysia is now the most popular destination country in Asia for migrant workers and human trafficking has become a sophisticated and organised operation.

Although Malaysia's multi-ethnicity has added to the rich heritage of its land and people, it has also given rise to many problems. In the service those issues of concern are named and the women voice their hope for the future. Justice for all is their hope and their prayer is 'Let Justice Prevail'.

Although organised and led by women, this is essentially a day of prayer for everybody, demonstrating our solidarity with our sisters and brothers in other countries and all are welcome to attend. Further information and resources, together with details of services in your areas can be found on the WWDP website at www.wwdp-natcomm.org

The service in Caversham on 2 March 2012 is being held at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church, Caversham at 8pm when the speaker will be Rev Jenny Dowding, minister of Caversham Heights and Gosbrook Road Methodist Churches.



St. Peter's Church

Twelve year old chorister, Edmund Westley, a member of the choir of St. Peter's Caversham, has recently been awarded the prestigious Bronze Award from the Royal School of Church Music. Preparation for the national Award included the singing of psalms, hymns and anthems. Although officially awarded the medal in Christchurch Cathedral Oxford, the photograph shows Edmund receiving the award in his home church from the Rector of St. Peter's, Rev. Dan Tyndall.

Anyone interested in the choir of St. Peter's should contact the Choirmaster on 9478382 or via the Parish Office in Church House on 947 1703 or office@ctmparish.org.uk.

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ENVIRONMENT

HAZEL NUTS

2011 was a very good year for hazel nuts. As I sit here on the afternoon of New Year's Day, I'm chewing a few as I write. Gathered in September, they are now just about perfect. Eaten in September, they're a bit tasteless, but if you keep them a few months, the flavour develops. Leave it too late to gather them, and the squirrels and jays will have got there before you!

When I was a boy, the only hazel nuts we ever saw at home appeared at Christmas, along with the dried figs and dates. They were round, and called "barcelonuts," or so I thought, until I connected them with a comic song I must have heard on the radio, "I'm one of the nuts from Barcelona." A glance through the *Oxford English Dictionary* shows that the nuts imported from Spain were known in London as "barcelonas" in 1851, when Henry Mayhew wrote his *London Labour and the London Poor*.

In greengrocers' shops I saw similar nuts, but more elongated, called filberts. There was a comic song associated with them as well - "I'm Gilbert, the filbert, the knut with a K." The OED says that these were imported from France, where they were known as the nuts of St. Philibert, because they were ready to eat on his feast day. Philibert was a seventh-century saint who founded the Abbey of Jumièges.

When I came to Reading in the 1960s, similar nuts were being sold as Kentish cobs. The dictionary says that a cob was something rounded and lumpy - which put me in mind of the little loaves called cobs I would be sent out to buy at the baker's, costing tenpence-halfpenny.

Interestingly, there was a time when Reading played an important



part in the cultivation of hazel nuts in this country: a few years back I came across an article about Richard Webb of Calcot Gardens entitled *Champion of the Cobnut*. They have a copy in the Central Library.

All of this seems a long way removed from the picture of a fat bud with some bright red threads sticking out of the end. In fact this is the female flower of the hazel tree, which with luck will grow into a hazel nut. The male flower is of course the better-known catkin or lamb's-tail. (And yes, "catkin" did originally mean a kitten - catkins are fluffy in appearance, like kittens.) By the time this article appears, the hazel catkins may well have expanded and begun to shed their pollen. It all depends on the mildness of the winter, but you can always cheat and bring a few closed catkins into the house, and put them in a vase, where they should quickly open to give the impression that spring has come early! It's interesting, too, to look at them through a magnifying-glass and see the arrangement of the scales and stamens.

It would be easy to go on and on about the hazel tree - there are many superstitions connected with it, and the leaves and branches have had many practical uses. It's very common around Caversham, and there are many bits of woodland where hazel has been coppiced, to make lots of rods grow up. While the leaves were good food for cattle, the rods were split and woven to make the wattle for wattle-and-daub walls. They also made hurdles, pegs for holding down thatch, and rods for divining.

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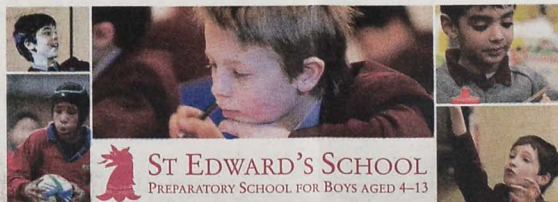


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CLUBS

St Peter's Wives Group

We held our Christmas party in December at Church House and a most enjoyable evening it was. All members contribute a plate of food and the colourful display of tasty offerings is always amazing.

We were entertained by Terry Eford who, after being invited to sample some of the food, sang a variety of songs dating from the 1920s through to the 50s. Terry has a mellow voice and accompanied himself on his guitar. We thoroughly enjoyed hearing Tommy Steele's *Singin' the Blues*, Bing Crosby's *Let It Snow, White Christmas* and many others, some of which we sang along to. It was a very pleasant evening altogether.

Our next meeting will be at Church House on Tuesday, 14 February at 8.00pm, when Mrs Jean Dyer will be giving a talk on The History of Knitting. New members are always welcome

Chazey WI

Party hats, crackers and mulled wine gave Chazey WI the perfect opportunity to meet old friends and enjoy a spread of tasty nibbles at their Christmas Party in December. Laden with plates of food to share, we soon filled a buffet table for everyone to help themselves. A feast of vol-au-vents, quiches, sausages, chicken wings, mince pies and other treats were devoured with relish. There was friendly rivalry and festive spirit once games and quizzes were underway and gentle ribbing as prizes were awarded to winning teams.

The evening concluded with a Christmas Cracker competition, bumper raffle and a lucky dip for all.

Chazey WI meet on the first Tuesday of every month (7.45pm) at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road, Caversham. We always extend a warm welcome to visitors and new members so please come along if you would like to make new friends.

Caversham WI

Christmas was well and truly celebrated when members met for a festive evening. Entertainment was provided by Hambleton Harmony – a talented group of WI ladies from Buckinghamshire. They presented the story of *The Fair Maid of Caversham* and her search for a husband, with musical numbers from the choir. In her vote of thanks the president said there are still 'fair maids' in Caversham looking for a husband.

A carol sing-a-long was enjoyed followed by mince pies and cups of tea! The enjoyable evening finished with a bumper raffle and some of the visitors carried off prizes before returning to Buckinghamshire after being convinced that Caversham was in Berkshire not Oxfordshire.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

The New Year began with a social evening, which was much enjoyed by members. A scrabble club has been re-introduced after a break of a few years, with much friendly discussion about the rules. The lunch club and social studies continue to be popular, and we are sending a team to the first round of the National Quiz Contest. Our next meeting is on February 16th when Malcolm Nelson will tell us about his "Forty years of catching smugglers". We meet at St Andrew's Hall, Caversham at 7.30pm on the 3rd Thursday of the month, new members and visitors are always welcome.

Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club

The first meeting of the year for Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club will be its AGM on Wednesday 8th February starting at 7.30pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Rd, followed by a talk on Chinese Flower Painting by Jean Turton. For further details contact Berna Macdonald on 0118 947 7400.

Reading Gardeners

We have two meetings this month in Caversham Primary School Hall at 7.30pm.

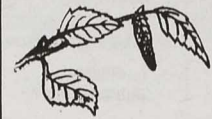
Wednesday February 8th is members evening. There will be short contributions, on a range of topics, from members of the organisation.

Wednesday February 22 Bob Brown returns to give a talk on *Plants Grow in Dirt*. We always enjoy his informative and entertaining talks.

Our website is www.readinggardenersclub.org.uk
Visitors and new members are always welcome.

Caversham Solicitors

After undergoing rigorous assessment by the Law Society Caversham Solicitors have secured membership of the Society's Conveyancing Quality Scheme, which was introduced to promote high standards in the home buying process. The scheme requires practices to undergo a strict assessment, compulsory training, self reporting, random audits and annual reviews to maintain CQS status. It is open only to members of the Law Society and has the support of the Council of Mortgage Lenders, the Building Societies Association, the Legal Ombudsman and the Association of British Insurers.



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Caversham Heights Society

The first celebration of the festive season took place when the Society was entertained with an organ recital by Christopher Cipkin. Christopher who works as library manager at Reading University, is a former president of the Berkshire Organists' Association and sings with the Reading Bach Choir. Recent organ recitals have included performances at Reading Town Hall and the Wycombe and Frome festivals. The programme included carol singing and five pieces of seasonal organ music.

This feast of music was followed by a feast prepared by the committee, with members bringing items of food.

A week later the society enjoyed a light-hearted and vibrant musical at the Playhouse Theatre in London. *Dreamboats and Petticoats*, starring Des O'Connor, was set in the 1960s and provided joy and nostalgia encouraging the audience to give a standing ovation. It was a happy outing on a fine day, and the coach was full. The evening ended with a meal at a restaurant near the theatre and the tour of the London lights.

The final meeting of December was when our chairman and local historian, Bernard Tripp, in recognition of Caversham's celebration of 100 years association with Reading, gave a PowerPoint presentation of Caversham's recent history, through the medium of his collection of picture postcards. The audience was intrigued to see the evolution of Caversham Bridge, complete with tramcar on one card, and the bunting celebrating Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887 and the coronation of King George V in 1911. It was interesting to see on other cards how the village centre and neighbouring streets and roads have changed over the years, not always for the better. The evening developed into a discussion as the audience contributed its recollections.

The evening concluded with the short comedy film, *Dinner for One*, seldom seen in the UK though a firm favourite at New Year in Germany and many other western European countries.

Reading and District Probus Club

History is not about Kings and Queens; it is right here under our feet.

Angela Spencer-Harper illustrated her talk about the local Chiltern Villages and particularly life in Stoke Row and Highmoor: what better than her own house originally built in 1604, burnt down and rebuilt using the salvaged materials in 1982 (what might be referred to as 'Modern History').

The term 'Hidden Villages' of old was the title given to encampments that wouldn't be seen or even known about as no tracks or roads ran to them or through them. Even today people don't know where they are. The 'Indian Temple' in the middle of an Oxfordshire village, refers, of course, to the Maharajah's Well, a gift by an 'Indian Prince' to acknowledge the work by British Engineers in building bore wells in drought areas in India. At that time water in the village of Stoke Row was intermittent and had to be carried. Today a car ride in the country will get the full history from the chap in the adjoining cottage. Interestingly, the metalwork of the well was fabricated, erected and latterly refurbished by Wilder Agricultural Engineers of Wallingford, who are now part of local history.

The 'Ponds' are man-made, being the pits for the clay used in brick and tile making (hence Tilehurst). Again local history came to life with family photographs of the 1920s showing water being brought up from the Thames for 'Tea and Taters' (both needing boiled water).

Probus History is now on the website www.probusclub-reading.org.uk or for an update ring the secretary Raymond Head on 0118 941 1445



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