

R.I.P. JOHN GRIMWADE

Former rector of Caversham and founder of this newspaper dies

Canon John Grimwade who was rector of St Peter's, Caversham, for 20 years, has died at the age of 92. During his time as rector, he was responsible for overseeing several other churches including St Andrew's and St Barnabas and set them up to become separate parishes.

He died on 30th July at the hospital in Cirencester where he lived for the last few years of his life. His wife, Anne, died in December, aged 91. They leave two children, David and Alice, and two grandchildren.

A service of thanksgiving for his life was held at the parish church of St John the Baptist, Cirencester on Friday 10th August. One of the clergy involved in the service was the Rev'd Derek Spears, vicar of St Peter's, Earley, who was a curate with Canon Grimwade back in the 1970s. There were no flowers and donations went to Christian Aid.

John Grimwade was born on 13th March, 1920, went to Oxford and was ordained in 1951. He and his wife came to Caversham in 1962 at times of great change in society and the church community. St Peter's was then almost Edwardian in character with a dark interior and the chancel separated from the congregation by a rood screen.

John soon set about making changes.

One of his early innovations was to set up the Caversham Bridge and it is a tribute to his inspiration that it is still thriving today, 48 years and 572 issues later.

He felt that the traditional parish magazine was no longer the way to reach out to people, particularly those outside the church, and was too narrow in its approach.

His idea was to produce a monthly newspaper which involved not just the Anglican church, but also other denominations in the area.

It needed to have high standards and a businesslike team to run it. The first meeting of Caversham Christian News was held at The Rectory on 14th July 1964 and a board was appointed with an advertising manager and a circulation manager. Canon Grimwade was the first editor.

The first edition appeared in September of that year and a local newspaper predicted it wouldn't last six months – a prediction that was out by quite a few decades.

One aspect of Canon Grimwade's ministry in Caversham was his ability to select excellent curates. One was Derek Spears,

already mentioned, and another was Alan Wilson who is now Bishop of Buckingham.

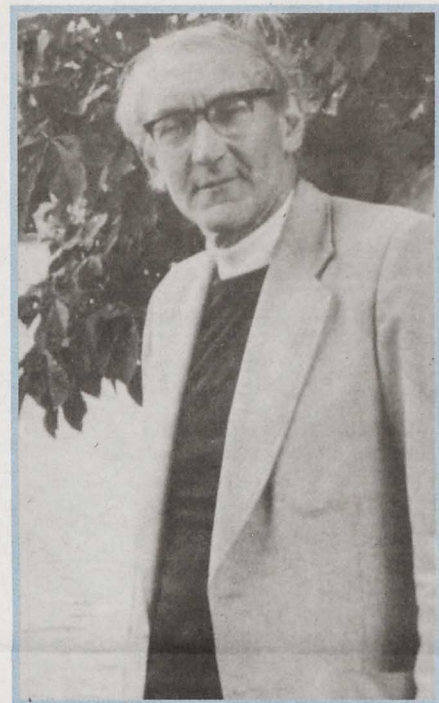
The parish holiday, another institution still going strong today, had already started when he arrived but he soon became involved and organised it for many years. At that time a large party of people from Caversham churches spent a week together every August at Embley Park, near Romsey. Among other things it was an opportunity for Canon Grimwade to demonstrate his skill and guile as a croquet player.

Among many community activities he was involved in were the Caversham festival and the Good Neighbours scheme. A parishioner described John as someone with a great attitude of get up and go plus the ability to stimulate other people into joining in.

John and Anne left St Peter's in 1984 and went to live at Stonesfield in Oxfordshire where he continued a part time ministry as a locum priest for local churches. He finally retired in 1989 and some time after that they went to live in Cirencester. They kept in touch with friends in Caversham over the years and he was a regular reader of Caversham Bridge, sometimes sending in letters of comment.

During his long career as a priest, John also had the distinction of being a Queen's Chaplain.

■ **The next issue of Caversham Bridge will carry tributes to Canon Grimwade. The deadline for material, which should be emailed to secretary@ctmparish.org.uk is Tuesday 4th September.**



John Grimwade – 20 years at St Peter's



John and Anne thank holidaymakers for a gift in appreciation of their contribution towards running the parish holiday

Picture: Andrew Hill

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Caversham Clergy

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St Andrews

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St Peter, St Margaret, St John

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7AD Tel: 947 9505

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

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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

Revd Rob Beardsley.
Tel: 07515 260019
email robg.beardsley@btinternet.com

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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

Becky Lovatt

Harvest festival

It is September again, the beginning of a new Methodist year, and the time when once again in our churches we celebrate harvest festival. This is traditionally a time when farmers and those that worked the land and sea, brought their produce into church to thank God for His bounty and for a safe gathering of a bumper crop.

As a child I grew up in Cornwall and my father's father was a farmer, so for him and his family the time of harvest played a significant part in their lives. I cannot say the same, or at least not in the same way. My first memories of a harvest festival service are like this: At about age of two or three my mother had made me a fruit basket that I was to "take up to the preacher". It was full of nothing but grapes. I liked grapes and so, as we waited our turn to take the produce up to the front during the first hymn, I started to eat them. By the time I got to the front of the church all the grapes had gone and only the stalk remained. However, my offering was received and God was praised for his bounty.

This harvest festival I come with joy in my heart to once again thank God for his bounty, not for the great harvest gathered in, although my prayer is, that those who wait for this will be rewarded. My thankful heart comes because of Theo. He is our nine-month-old son, who more than lives up to his name which means 'Divine Gift' in Greek. Every day he does something new and every day my husband and I find ourselves laughing out loud because of something he has done. We are so blessed to have him.

At Caversham Methodist Church off Gosbrook Road on the 30th September, we are having a harvest festival of wool, where people have been encouraged to knit or buy something woollen that will later be taken to Christian Community Action and the items, where possible, given to people in need. Each of us will remember and celebrate harvest this year in our own way, and with our own reasons. However, may it be a time where we can recall again God's bounty to us and praise Him for His everlasting love for each of us.

Becky Lovatt is a deacon with the Methodist churches in Caversham

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

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

10.30 am Worship at South Street
7.00 pm Worship at South Street (fortnightly)
3.45 pm Messy Church for the whole family at South Street (Last Sunday of the month)

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

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)

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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 **October 2012** issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by **Tuesday 4th September**. The date for the **November 2012** issue is **Tuesday 2nd October 2012**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk
Advertising copy for the **October 2012** issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by **Friday 31st August 2012**. The date for the **November 2012** issue is **Friday 28th September 2012**.

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Couples celebrate 70 years of marriage

Golden weddings are quite frequent these days with many people living longer and diamond weddings are not unheard of. But amazingly not one but two couples with links to Caversham churches have just celebrated their 70th wedding anniversaries.

Margaret and Leslie Woolford celebrated their platinum day on Sunday July 15th. The couple, who are both 92, were married at St John's church in 1942, and they have lived in Caversham or Emmer Green all their married life. In fact Leslie was born in Caversham, but Margaret moved here with her family when she was a teenager.

They had two children, but sadly their son died in his 40s, and have six grandchildren and three great grandchildren. All the family gathered in St Barnabas church hall for a celebration party on the day of their anniversary.

Leslie has been a regular worshipper at St Peter's church for the last 22 years, although Margaret is unable to get out

much now. They previously attended St Barnabas, when they lived in Emmer Green, and Leslie was for many years a sidesman.

Maurice and Edna Soffe, both in their nineties, had a wartime wedding on June 26th 1942 in Knebworth, Hertfordshire. She was one of eleven children and he one of three. When they met Edna was a Land Girl and Maurice was in the Army. He spent all his life apart from his Army days as a herdsman moving across the country from Sussex, Hertfordshire, Devon, Oxfordshire, and finally at the Mapledurham estate. He was in charge of milk production there for 13 years until his retirement in 1983 when they moved to Sonning Common.

Edna is a great cook and made scones for Mapledurham House even after they moved to Sonning Common.

They have been members of Caversham Heights Methodist church for more than 30 years and have been until recently active members of the congregation. Edna has always made cakes for church activities and her mini Christmas cakes were in great demand. They both used to help in transporting people from Borough Court to church.

They have three children, Angela, Brian and Christine, five grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

We wish both couples many more years together.



Maurice and Edna



Margaret and Leslie

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SERVICE OF THANKS FOR KEITH AND ANN

St Margaret's Church at Mapledurham was packed to overflowing on Friday 20th July to say thank you to the Revd Keith Knee-Robinson. Keith, a non-stipendiary minister and a member of the Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham clergy team, has retired after looking after St Margaret's and conducting services there since 2002.

He and his wife Ann have been associated with the church for much longer than that. They came to this area in 1978 and joined St Margaret's soon after. Keith, a civil engineer, served on the church council and was church warden for 10 years. He worked in Jordan for four years before returning to this area and becoming ordained.

The service in July was extra special because it was also the church's patronal festival. Regular members of the congregation mingled with people from St John's and St Peter's as well as former members of the church.

When Keith trained for ordained ministry he was supported by a local group which was overseen by Lee Rayfield, then vicar of a church in Maidenhead. Keith was keen to invite him to preach at this special service. Back in 2005 Lee moved onto a new role within the Church of England, so it was as Bishop of Swindon that he returned to St Margaret's for the first time since the church's patronal festival in 2001.

The service, designed by Keith, was (as many people said afterwards) "just right". It had an appropriate air for such an important occasion, without being overdone. Much of the credit for this should go to Bishop Lee whose manner and style fitted superbly with the feel of the service.

In his sermon Bishop Lee encouraged us to reflect on the seasons: not the seasons of the year, but the seasons of our life. He wondered whether Keith was feeling 'wintery' as he came to lay down this part of his Christian discipleship; but went on to suggest that perhaps this is a 'spring' moment. Rather than seeing this as an ending for Keith and Ann, the bishop spoke of it as the beginnings of a new chapter.

Keith led the rest of the service and presided at the Eucharist. For the first time in many years, silverware, on loan from St Margaret's to the Victoria and Albert museum, was used for the service.

Proceedings were interrupted just before the final dismissal when a couple of short speeches and a presentation were made before refreshments were served outside. The rector, the Revd Dan Tyndall, spoke of the

equal value of each of the three churches in the parish and said he was delighted and proud to have served alongside Keith whom he described as loyal, capable and dependable.

Dan also read a message from James Cook, for many years the representative of Eton College, patrons of the ancient parish of Mapledurham, who was unable to be present due to ill health. James wrote: "I would so much like to have been with you. Keith has been a rock on which St Margaret's has, for so many years, relied."

Peter Stratton then spoke on behalf of all members of the church, past and present, picking up on that theme of the church relying not just on Keith but also on Ann. Having thanked them both for their dedication, commitment and hard work over the last twenty (and more) years, Peter presented them with two pictures, one of the church and one of the watermill, a vase with flowers and a John Lewis voucher for a not insignificant amount. Thank you to everyone who made a contribution to this fund.

After thanks from Keith and Ann, Keith dismissed the congregation with the usual words: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In reality we only got as far as the churchyard where we were greeted with wine and food. Once everyone had a drink, we toasted Keith and Ann and gave them three cheers. It is a testimony to their leadership and ministry at St Margaret's that Jack and Lady Anne Eyston from Mapledurham House were among the congregation.

Dan Tyndall

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CHURCHES



Seen here standing (from left) are Shirley and Margaret Knott, Noreen and Kathleen Hancock, Mary and Agnes McDonagh. Sitting are Una and Imelda Whitbread.

Picture: Mary Van Den Berghe

Afternoon teas at Our Lady and St Anne's

Every other Tuesday, an informal afternoon tea party is held in the Cenacle meeting room at the back of the church of Our Lady and St Anne, Caversham

The idea for the teas came after a Lenten House Mass at the home of Mary Van Den Berghe. After the Mass, people stayed for refreshment and chatter and it was lovely to see the happiness created, particularly for those who had not seen each other for some time. Mary asked Father Giles for his blessing to start offering afternoon teas in the Cenacle. The teas are now run by Mary Van Den Berghe, Agnes McDonagh, Veronica Rogers and Bridie Kerr.

No fixed charge is made, but voluntary donations are asked for. There is also a raffle with prizes donated by people as they come in for tea.

Over the nine months to April, an astonishing amount of almost £2,500 was raised and this was given to the Sue Ryder Home at Nettlebed which was the parish-designated charity at the time. Currently, money raised will be given to the Church Building Fund.

It is remarkable that, among those who enjoy the teas, there are four pairs of sisters who all went to St Anne's school in their younger days.

SECOND ECO CONGREGATION AWARD FOR METHODIST CHURCH

At the morning service on Sunday 29th July Caversham Heights Methodist Church was presented with a second Eco Congregation award by Dr Joanna Laynesmith from the church of St John and St Stephen in Newtown. Joanna has played a leading role in the Reading Christian Ecology Link, which exists to help Christians in Reading relate their faith to their relationship with Creation as a whole.

The Link is inspired by Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, who wrote "For the Church of the 21st century, good ecology is not an optional extra but a matter of justice. It is therefore central to what it means to be a Christian".

Joanna has been an active champion of the Fair Trade and Eco-Congregation movements and was an assessor for Caversham Heights' first award in 2008. The award is made for a period of three years and this church's award was the first in the Reading area. A further application has now been successful for a second three-year period which takes us to 2014.

Joanna presented the award to Deacon Becky Lovatt and Phil Chatfield, who is the church's volunteer Traidcraft representative and is himself an Eco-Congregations assessor. Phil with his wife Pam run a monthly stall after a morning service to sell Traidcraft foods and crafts. Philip and Pam have been doing this for more than 20 years and support Traidcraft sales at a number of other churches. We thank them for their continuing devotion.

A sad farewell to Heather

Caversham Park Church was sad to see the departure of Heather Wilson, who has been minister in training at the church for the last three years.

A special farewell service for her was held in July. There were a number of friends there, who in addition to the church members, had supported Heather with friendship and advice on her studies. The service contained a special prayer for people moving on and afterwards Heather was presented with a new suitcase, gift vouchers and book tokens.

Following this, all who could stay continued in friendly conversation over lunch.

Heather will return to Cirencester for the time being to work there until she is placed in a church of her own. Messages of appreciation from anyone she has met and helped can be passed on to her.

The church is now working towards a fresh start. It is open for worship on Sundays at Caversham Park School at 11 a.m. Look out for information on the village noticeboards, and in the Milestone Centre for our other activities, or look on the website: www.cpv.org.uk

All are welcome to come to a coffee morning from 10.30am-12 in the Milestone Centre on Tuesday 4th September. Also to Hymns and Cakes, a café style service with cakes and tea in the interval. A speaker from Homestart will tell us about their work. Services run from 3.30 to 4.30.

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Joanne presents the award to Becky watched by Phil Chatfield

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What a great

The weather was very varied, and sometimes absolutely dreadful, but it was still a wonderful summer in 2012. Caversham was buzzing with one event after another – everything from a Spitfire flypast to the arrival of the Olympic torch.

True to the British spirit of making the most of things even when it's pouring down, we carried on regardless. On this page and the next we celebrate some of those events.

The biggest moment came when huge crowds turned out to greet the Olympic torch when it came to Caversham on 11th July to start day 54 of its 8000-mile relay round Britain.

Following its arrival in Reading the previous day, culminating in a huge celebration at the Madejski Stadium, its departure from Reading was organised for early on Wednesday morning. The event was witnessed by probably the largest crowd ever to be gathered in one place in Caversham, swollen by many schoolchildren who were permitted to start school late

that day so that they could see the torch.

The departure was scheduled for 8.04am from the gazebo in Caversham Court Gardens, and crowds began to assemble well before 7.0am. They were entertained by the Reading Pipe Band, who were due to perform later at the Olympics closing ceremony, and by a group from the Progress Theatre. The kiosk was open to serve hot drinks and bacon butties, and they did a roaring trade. The bells of St Peter's church were due to chime out at 8.00am to herald the start of the day's relay.

Promptly at 7.57, the torch, borne aloft by PC Lee Umpleby, was seen progressing through Caversham Court towards Church Road, which at that time had not yet been closed. People were still streaming through St Peter's churchyard towards Caversham Court, and many were disappointed that starting the day's event several minutes ahead of schedule meant they missed seeing the torch. Too late the bells pealed, promptly at 8.00, but by then the torch had gone.

The torch then progressed through Church Road, Bridge Street,

Church fete raises

The annual Caversham Church Fete, organised by St Peter's and St Margaret's churches to raise funds to support the churches' charitable giving, took place at Caversham Court on 14th July.

For the second year running the event was enlivened by a flypast of a Spitfire from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. Once more it was Squadron Leader Dunc Mason at the controls, this time flying an aircraft which saw action

during the D-Day invasion. The St Peter's bells rang out from 1.45 to 2pm then, at 2.05pm precisely, silver Spitfire MK356 (a Mk LFIXe) flew twice along the Thames, providing a stunning start to the afternoon's activities.

Thankfully it stayed dry for most of the afternoon and as usual a large crowd of Caversham people came through the gates. They were treated to a splendid array of entertainment, stalls, sideshows and information stands

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Inside and out for the fair

The annual summer fair of the Church of Our Lady and St Anne took place in the Cenacle and Narthax on one of the few Saturdays that it didn't rain all day. Consequently, the barbecue, the strawberries and Pimms stall and the skittle alley were able to be located outside. Inside, the volunteers manned their stalls and all the usual favourites were there. The cake stall, plant stall, and bottle tombola amongst others were well stocked. The ladies providing refreshments were busy all afternoon.

Father Giles was attending an ordination service and was not able to perform the opening ceremony but Paul Freeman said a prayer and declared the event open. Fr. Giles arrived in time to supervise the draw for the raffle.

A substantial amount was raised for the church building fund.



Is that the Queen on the strawberries stall?

Photo Jane Shaw



Boys from ARO Fitness demonstrate kick boxing



Street dancing display by girls from the Wright School



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summer it was!

Promenade Road and along the Thames path through Christchurch Meadows, where more crowds were assembled, to Reading Bridge, from where it continued its journey through Reading and on to Newbury, Basingstoke, and eventually to Salisbury.

In addition to the kiosk being open, and selling out of bacon rolls, giving a much needed boost to the charities involved, tea, coffee and biscuits were available at St Peter's church, and many people took advantage of the hospitality, including members of the pipe band, whose uniforms and

instruments drew many admiring glances.

On July 10th, the prayer baton, which was travelling around Britain on a route which closely followed the torch, arrived in Caversham from Oxford, and a service was held in St Peter's church to commemorate the event, and to pray for the church's mission to and during the games. On July 11th the baton travelled on to Salisbury.

The bells were rung again at 8.12am on Friday 27th July to mark the official start of the Olympic Games.



PC Umpleby carries the torch in Caversham Court
Photo: Rob Dowling

£7000

for various local groups. Of particular note were the first appearances by the Wright School of Dance with a display of street dancing by groups of girls from five to 15, and ARO Fitness with a display of kick boxing. The Berkshire Youth Orchestra Swing Band was also welcomed back to provide musical entertainment during the afternoon.

The organisers were grateful for the help of the Rotary Club and the Round Table, who have been staunch supporters for many years. They were also pleased to welcome the Caversham and District Residents Association, the Friends of Caversham Court Gardens, the Caversham Good Neighbours, the Caversham Bridge and, the special guests for this year, the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association. SSAFA were represented by a number of Gurkha ex-servicemen. This group have strong links with members of our churches and have previously featured in these pages.

The total raised by the event was approximately £7,000, which is somewhat down on last year, but was very creditable considering the unseasonable weather, the uncertain state of the economy and the number of other attractions taking place.

The BBMF provide flypasts free of charge, but accept donations to support charitable causes. This year Dunc Mason has cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats to raise funds for the Jon Egging Trust, in memory of the Red Arrows pilot who died last year. The Trust was set up by Jon's widow and friends to inspire young people to have a love of flying and generate enthusiasm for teamwork. You can read more on: <http://www.joneggingtrust.com>

Vickie Abel, chairperson of FCCG, commented: "The Friends of Caversham Court Gardens would like to thank Nigel and his team for organizing what is always a highlight of the summer season and for bringing us all together for a genuine community event."

"Special thanks, also, to our gardener, Graham Spiller, for his enthusiastic help on the day and for keeping the gardens looking so beautiful for the fete."

Open-air players

Despite the wind and rain in July, members of Progress Theatre carried on bravely with their open air production of Henry IV Part One by William Shakespeare in Caversham Court Gardens. It ran for more than a week. Here some of the actors get in the mood for the first act.

Next year's production will be Macbeth with dates to be confirmed later. See <http://www.progresstheatre.co.uk/> for further details.



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GLOBE carries on planting

Caversham GLOBE (Go Local On a Better Environment) continues with its aims to improve our area for the benefit of wildlife and local residents. Recent activities included planting trees in Lower Caversham, planting geraniums and lavender on the frontage of the BT Exchange on Church Street, litter picking various hotspots and clearing shopping trolleys from the Thames.

As a non-political group, GLOBE is grateful to all councillors for supporting its aims, through practical activities and discussions about problems. GLOBE supporters have also been in consultation meetings and had correspondence with Reading Borough Council Officers about landscaping changes being planned for Hill's Meadow and refurbishment of paths across Balmore Walk. Disappointingly, GLOBE's opinions on stone chippings or gravel for path surfaces are not always agreed by the council; an example being that unsympathetic tarmac across the semi-rural back field of Balmore Walk.

GLOBE wishes to thank those local shoppers who gave their green discs, resulting in a donation of almost £300 under the Waitrose Community Matters good causes scheme. This money will be used wisely for the benefit of the community.

On 12th and 13th October a programme of litter clearance across all areas in the borough will be taking place. Look out for publicity locally as help is essential to the success of this task. All residents are welcome at GLOBE's monthly meetings which, from August 2012 have changed to the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7.15pm in Church House, Caversham. No formal membership or subscriptions required, just turn up you will be made welcome. GLOBE may be contacted via info@cavershamglobe.org.uk or Richard Denney on 07768958407, see also: www.cavershamglobe.org.uk

Click Here !

Computer advice by Francis Brown

Comparing CPUs

The component that has the most influence on the speed of your PC is the Central Processing Unit or CPU. Intel CPUs have dominated the market for the last two or three years. The type of CPU is important when buying a PC. Ignore Celeron, Dual and Pentium chips and instead focus on the first, second and third generation series. They have numbers like i3-2xxx, i3-2xxx and i3-3xxx. The 2000 indicates second generation and the 3000 third generation.

The word chip is carried over from the days of transistors. Hundreds were built up on a wafer of silicon and later cut up into chips. Nowadays CPUs have the power of millions of transistor equivalents. The internal copper connections are being made thinner and thinner. The newest CPUs consume less power, batteries last longer and so laptops can be made lighter and thinner. Right now, I think the second generation offers the best value for money and the third generation has the best in style. The three generations also come in three grades: i3, i5 and i7. The i3 is good, the i5 is more expensive but there are bargains, the i7 is for specialist use and is costly.

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ENVIRONMENT

EXPLOSIVE CONKERS



Last month, I wrote about a children's game which was often called soldiers, involving plantain stems. This month's article concerns the weapon in another kind of duel, which is threaded onto string.

One theory is that it was called a horse chestnut because it wasn't pleasant to eat, like a sweet chestnut, and fit only for horses, but there is another theory, as we shall see.

The tree is now frequently seen. There are several in St. Martin's Precinct in Caversham, and over in Reading, under the wall of the old prison, on the riverside Chestnut Walk. We sometimes forget that these trees were not seen in England until about 1600. There are records of them being planted in Windsor Great Park in 1699. This helps to explain why the game of conkers isn't recorded much before the twentieth century. Most children wouldn't have seen horse chestnuts until the establishment of public parks in towns, from the 1850s onwards.

The horse chestnut came from the Balkans and Asia Minor, and it was in the Pindhos Mountains of northern Greece that I came upon it, a few years ago, looking surprisingly at home.

Eventually, of course, all conkers must fall to the ground, but somehow it was thought by small boys that the best conkers were those that stayed on the tree, near the top. So in the 1950s we took delight in throwing sticks at the trees, to knock down the best conkers – to the annoyance of park-keepers.

Botanically speaking, conkers are very large seeds. They have long been thought to have curative properties. Just carrying one round in your pocket would prevent or cure rheumatism or piles. Hung in your wardrobe, they would deter clothes moths.

Some of these properties are not entirely imaginary. Whilst merely carrying a conker in your pocket may not cure you, there is an active ingredient called aescin in a conker, which is an anti-inflammatory, and promotes the circulation of the blood. Products derived from it help cure sprains, bruises, varicose veins, and piles.

In its native Turkey, it was apparently used to treat sprains and bruising in horses, and the Turks called it a "horse chestnut" in their language, hence the English name. At least, that is the other theory.

As for the word conkers, I had always assumed that it had something to do with conquest. The *Oxford English Dictionary* has another, rather unpleasant explanation. Before little boys played conkers with horse chestnuts, they played it with live snails, which they called conches, or conkers.

There are two seasons of the year when it is particularly worth having a look at horse chestnut trees. One is in spring, when the tree bears its great candles of flowers. The other is in autumn, when the leaves turn a radiant orange-brown.

Today, all too often, the autumn display is spoiled by the horse chestnut leaf-miner – the caterpillar of a moth which disfigures the leaves and causes them to shrivel in late summer. This isn't thought to cause much lasting hurt to the trees, but makes them look a bit sad.

Incidentally, in both world wars, children were encouraged to collect horse chestnuts, not for fun, but to help make explosives in the Royal Ordnance Factories. Apparently they could be used to make cordite, and in 1942 the government was paying 7s. 6d. (37?p) for each hundredweight (around 51kg) collected.

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President Margaret Pyle welcomed members and visitors to the July meeting and Margaret Seal conducted the business part of the meeting. She also announced that £34 had been collected at the June meeting in memory of Irene Howlett and that emergency toiletries bags had been made up with this money and sent to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Margaret Pyle then introduced the speaker, PCSO Chaston, who first explained the duties of Police Community Support officers and introduced his assistant Rebecca who was also a PCSO. They both went on to outline precautions that should be taken by householders, such as checking the identity cards of callers before letting them in the house; if unsure phone the office where they are supposed be from and make sure all windows and doors are locked before going out.

There were a lot of questions from members and some very useful leaflets were given out.

After the talk a cup of tea was enjoyed by members and the raffle was held.

Visitors to meetings are very welcome which are held the 1st Wednesday of the month at St Barnabas Church Hall Emmer Green

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

Several members braved our uncertain summer weather for a short sponsored walk in aid of The Princess Royal's Trust for Carers, finishing for lunch at the Toby Carvery.

We are looking forward to a boat trip and lunch on the Thames in London at the end of September. Other Guild members from all over Britain will also be there for a great get together.

Our next meeting, after the summer break, will be a talk by Simon Williams about The Great Train Robbery. This will take place at 7.30pm on Thursday 20th September at St Andrew's Church Hall, Albert Road, Caversham. New members and visitors will be very welcome.

Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club

On Wednesday 12th September, 'Four do Flowers' is the title of a demonstration by Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club at Caversham Heights Methodist Church starting at 7.30pm. Irene, Jane, Sara and Shirley, all medal winners at Chelsea or Marlborough flower shows, and members of the club, will entertain with fabulous designs. Entrance £4.50 for visitors who are always very welcome. Books, plants, floral accessories and refreshments will be available. For further details contact Berna Macdonald on 9477400

Rotary Club of Caversham

All the committees of the Rotary Club of Caversham are now into their stride and actively pursuing various projects for the year 2012/2013. The community

service committee helped at the St Peter's and St Margaret's fete; the young generations committee judged the entries for the Stan West Trophy at the technology department of Prospect School; and the membership services committee has been investigating whether there is a more suitable venue for the club's weekly meeting. It has decided that, meantime, the club should continue meeting at Caversham Heath Golf Club on Wednesdays at 5.45 for 6.15pm. Anyone interested in visiting to see what goes on would be made very welcome and should contact the secretary, Frances Hill, at frances.hill@cavershamrotary.org.uk

In July the visiting speakers were Liz Siggery (one of our new members), and Matthew Jackson talking about the philosophy of working for the common good as practised in South Korea, while in August members heard from Judith Diment, the district governor of District 1090, which is the district Caversham club is in, and John Manners who talked about growing poppies for the production of morphine for medicinal uses.

Future speakers will include Malcolm Wells talking about the charity Canine.Parters, and Helen Rice from the Caversham business Its Gone Funny.

Reading Gardeners

The winter programme of talks to be held in Caversham Primary School hall at 7.30 begins in October. On 3rd October Edwin Rye, recommended by David Austen, will give a talk on 'Roses'.

On 17th October, a talk on Late Summer Flowers will be given by Marina Christopher the owner of Phoenix Perennial Plants at Alton, Hants. Frost permitting there will be plants for sale on 31st October when Dr Simon Charlesworth, who runs Downderry Nursery in Kent, will explore 'A World of Lavender'.

For more information, consult the website readinggardenersclub.org.uk

Caversham Allotment Association

The association will be holding its next meeting at Church House, (next to Waitrose), on Tuesday 9th October at 7.30pm. The speaker will be Richard Thornton who will be telling of his experiences of plant hunting in China. Everyone is welcome to the meeting. Admission is free and there will be refreshments and a raffle.

For more details, contact Carol Wheeler on 9475802

Caversham WI

"Flowers to celebrate the president's birthday" was the theme of the July meeting. The speaker, Irene Manson, spoke about the history of flower arranging, starting with the ancient Egyptians and through the ages to the present day. She also gave some tips to help with flower arranging. The Tudor posy, used as an illustration, was presented to the 'birthday girl'. The speaker also had to judge the competition – a single rose and the winners were Terri Weaver, Sylvia Myzors and Jill Wright.

After tea, reminders of future events were given and the raffle ended the evening.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS**Open day at Cross Lanes**

The annual open day at Cross Lanes Fruit Farm, Mapledurham, will be held on Sunday 14th October from 10.00am to 5.00pm. Entrance to the fruit farm and car parking is free.

It has been a difficult year and a challenge with the unusual weather, but luckily some varieties of apples have produced a splendid crop. You will be able to enjoy the experience of seeing, tasting and learning about a wide variety of locally grown apples.

You can also help preserve the great British tradition and fun pastime of playing conkers by taking part in the annual conker challenge organised by the Goring, Woodcote and District Lions Club. Instruction and safety equipment will be available on loan free of charge to anyone who needs it. The Lions will provide a fresh conker complete with string in return for a donation of £1 to Lions charity funds.

For directions to and details about Cross Lanes Fruit Farm see the website www.crosslanesfruitfarm.co.uk

Dance band returns

The Mills Tones Dance Band is making a welcome return on Saturday 22nd September at 7.30 p.m. to St John's Church, Gosbrook Road, Caversham. You are invited to dance or just listen to the music of the Glen Miller, Count Basie and Duke Ellington big band era. Tickets are £10 from 9475120 or at the door. You are invited to bring your own drinks.

**Patronal feast at Our Lady and St Anne**

The feast day of Sts Joachim and Anne is celebrated as the patronal feast at the church of Our Lady and St Anne. As well as being the parents of Our Lady, they were grandparents of Jesus and so grandparents are always specially remembered and prayed for on this day.

This year, Father Giles invited Mgr John Nelson, Vicar General of the Portsmouth Diocese and parish priest of English Martyrs church, as the special guest. The two priests concelebrated the sung Mass with Deacons Mike Walker and Hugh Anscombe assisting, and Mgr Nelson preached an interesting and thought-provoking sermon. He described what a priest does as building bridges to help people to find their way to God and for God to reach out to his people.

After Mass, refreshments were provided in the Cenacle and Fr. Giles presented Fr. John with a small present. Many of the congregation remained to chat to Fr. John and with each other.

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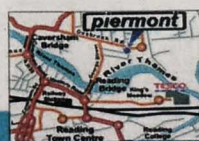
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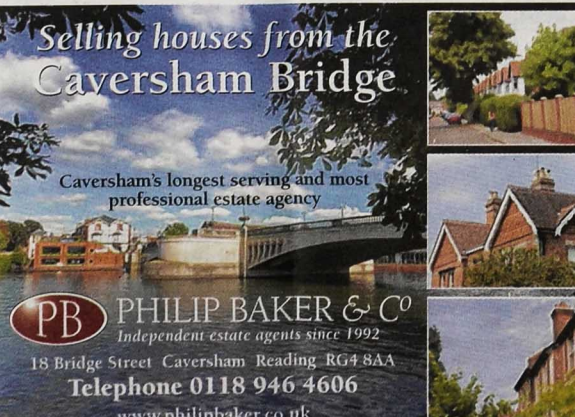


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