

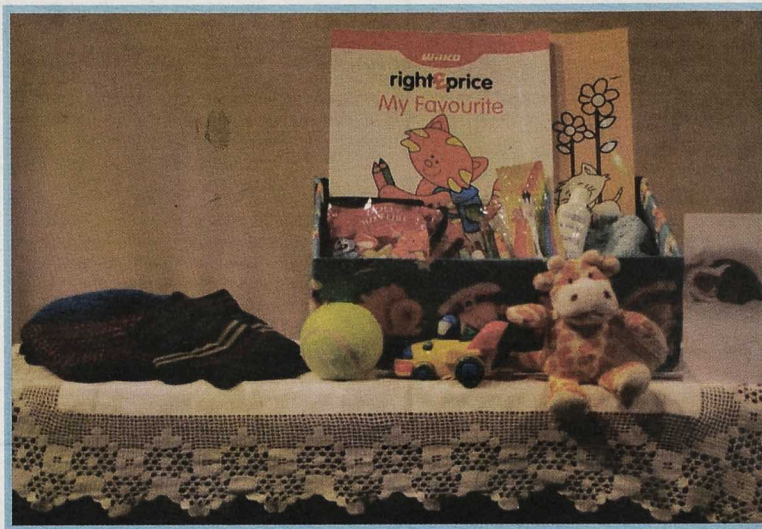


What's in the box?



That was the question asked at St John's church when the congregation arrived to find a mountain of brightly wrapped boxes in front of the altar, ready to be blessed by Revd Marion Pyke on the last Sunday in October.

St John's Mothers' Union have filled an amazing 102 shoeboxes with gifts for children who otherwise would have nothing for Christmas. The boxes will be distributed to children in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia



through the Samaritan's Purse charity and their Operation Christmas Child. Contributions towards the cost of sending each box have come from the MU and from members of the wider congregation at St John's.

What's in the box? Each box, which is labelled for a boy or girl and their approximate age, contains toiletries, sweets, a pencil case, exercise book, colouring book, toys, hat, scarf and gloves, with a Christmas card from the person who filled the box.

Choral Success at St Peter's Caversham

Five choristers from the choir of St Peter's Church have been successful in recent award examinations from the Royal School of Church Music.



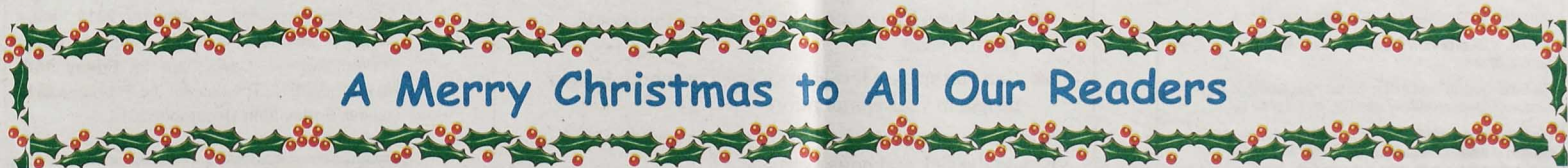
These rigorous examinations consist of liturgical knowledge as well as vocal and musical preparation.

Two choristers, Joy Blount and Isobel Hodgson, were awarded merit at the bronze level, while Gillian Cooke, Hannah Asbury and Edmund

Westley were awarded distinction at the silver level. The picture shows the choristers who were presented with their medals by rector Revd Dan Tyndall during a recent morning service, together with choir master Ian Westley.

The choir of St Peter's Church sings a varied repertoire ranging from worship songs to full Cathedral repertoire and the choristers receive a thoroughly professional musical training. The choir sings in the Sunday services at 9.45am and 6.30pm and also on Feast Days.

Rehearsals are held on Fridays from 6.30 to 7.30 (Juniors) and 7.30 to 9.15pm (adults). Children aged six upwards and adults with experience of singing are invited to contact the choir master, Ian Westley, via the Parish office (telephone no: 0118 996 8836 or by e-mail: office@ctmparish.org.uk). The choir has an active social life and usually visits a cathedral to sing at least once a year.



A Merry Christmas to All Our Readers

INSIDE

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|--------------------------|-----|
| Talking Point | p2 | Christmas Services | p7 |
| Caversham traders | p3 | Clubs | p8 |
| From The Lookout post | p4 | Miscellany | p9 |
| Churches | p5 | Happy Wanderer | p10 |
| Forthcoming Events | p6 | Crossword | p11 |

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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 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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Revd Margaret Dimmick, 12 Lowfield Road,
Caversham Park. Tel: 947 0258

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
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(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

John Dudley

Writing this in October, we have entered the commercial 'preparation for Christmas' season, with a vast array of Christmas goodies for sale. By the time Christmas does eventually arrive, we may be experiencing Christmas fatigue, with its attendant anxieties and stress, so that we're too exhausted to enjoy the meaning of the event.

When *Caversham Bridge* drops onto the doormat, we will have entered the season of Advent, which offers a very different time of preparation for Christmas. This is not the hustle and bustle of the market place but a time to reflect on the gift that has been prepared for the whole world.

The lectionary guides us to readings from the Old Testament, during this season of Advent. The first of these Sunday readings this year is from the book of the prophet Jeremiah. God speaks to him of a promise of restoration for a world in disarray. But before that restoration can take place, two readings for the following Sunday remind us of the need for reflection on the way we live, and to prepare ourselves to receive the promised gift of justice and righteousness, whenever that might occur.

By the time we get to week three, the mood has changed. A sense of anticipation builds. The words of the prophet Zephaniah speak of the process of restoration taking place. "The Lord your God, is in your midst" is the proclamation, but as yet, we are left searching for the truth. Finally, on the fourth Sunday of Advent our thoughts and reflections are directed towards Bethlehem, to await the momentous event that is to be unfolded.

This year, the fourth Sunday of Advent falls on the day before Christmas Eve, so we don't have long to wait for the revelation of God's gift for our salvation. It is imminent, but not yet. The surprise is not revealed. The hymns we sing reflect this sense of anticipation, as for example, in the hymn by Charles Wesley, "Come thou long expected Jesus".

As night falls on Christmas Eve, we truly enter into the sense of Holiness that is Christmas. Now the music of our hearts can tune into the essence of songs such as "O Holy night! The stars are brightly shining, it is the night of our dear Saviour's birth". We enter into the mystery of that event: God in the world, in human form.

Recently, having become grandparents, my wife and I were reminded of the joy of anticipation of the birth of a much wanted baby. Not knowing the gender of the child added to that sense of anticipation, and when, surprisingly, the baby arrived three weeks early the sense of wonder was overwhelming. The safe delivery of the babe leads to further anticipation and queries. What will be the colour of the eyes? Where will life lead?

For the prophets of the Old Testament there was no knowledge of the time of the Saviour's birth, nor was there any idea of the process of salvation. All that could be known was that it would be a time of rejoicing as the Lord came to be among his people. The glory of the gift we receive on Christmas Day is revealed in the light of the empty tomb on Easter morning.

May your Christmas be filled with the wonder, joy and peace that is God's gift.

Rev John Dudley is an associate priest at St John's 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
6.45 pm. Worship at South Street (1st & 3rd Sundays)
3.45 pm. Messy Church for the whole family at South Street (Last Sunday of the month)
11.00 am Sanctom Service (1st & 3rd Fridays)

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)

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 **January 2013** issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by **Monday 19th November**. The date for the **February 2013** issue is **Wednesday 2nd January 2013**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Advertising copy for the **January 2013** issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by **Friday 16th November 2012**. The date for the **February 2013** issue is **Friday 28th December 2013**.

PARISH OFFICES

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Caversham's Late Night Opening

Award winning shops, cafes and restaurants in Caversham are getting into the Christmas spirit by joining a special late night opening on 12 December.

A host of independently owned shops will stay open until 9pm, and many are offering special treats and promotions for visitors.

The event means shoppers can pick up festive gifts from shops stocking more unusual and special items. They will be able to browse and buy without the queues, crowds and cars which take the fun out of the festivities in bigger towns and cities.

Pupils from St Anne's RC Primary School will start the celebrations in style with special carols at 5pm. There will also be festive performances by Caversham Baptist Church choir.

Father Christmas will be paying a visit to the precinct - find him by the Christmas tree!

Chris Walton, Chairman of the Caversham Traders Association said: "This is our second late night opening - last year's event was great and we had really positive feedback from all the people who came along. This year, again, we've had a great response from the Caversham traders who have really entered into the spirit of things. Caversham boasts a large number of award winning, independent, specialist shops so anyone stuck for Christmas gift ideas is bound to find something special here.

"We're also very proud of the wide range of restaurants and cafes - again, some of them award winners, on our doorstep. Visitors are guaranteed a very warm welcome. Even better, there's plenty of free parking!" he added.

For full details, see www.choosecaversham.co.uk

Click Here !

Computer advice by Francis Brown

A confusion of e-mail options

Students and customers, new to e-mail, sometimes ask me to choose between the web e-mail services offered by Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail and so on. They all offer similar services. My choice would be Gmail, otherwise known as Google Mail because their security is better. On that point, be sure that your e-mail password is not used as a password anywhere else.

Web e-mail services are like web pages. If the Internet connection is not available then e-mails can't be read or composed. An alternative approach is to use an e-mail client such as Windows Live Mail (users of Outlook Express and Windows Live should upgrade to this). The commercial equivalent is Outlook. These products store the e-mail on your own PC. You can have the best of both worlds with, for example, Windows Live Mail set up with a behind the scenes link to pick up mail from say Gmail. This has the additional benefit that the advertising is removed.

Microsoft has issued a series of web e-mail products, some with unhelpful names. These include MSN, Hotmail, Windows Live Hotmail and most recently Outlook.com. The last one is not related to Outlook or Outlook Express.

Notes from the Editors

Charity begins... At home? At Caversham? At Christmas?

Do you know how many charity shops there are in the centre of Caversham? However many you think there are, many high streets around the country have more. Christmas is a time when many charities attempt to increase their income, often because their outgoings rise at this time. Many charities raise funds by selling Christmas cards, and these are on sale at most charity shops and also at the Minster church in Reading. You can also buy such cards at some chain stores: if you do, look to see how much of the purchase price is donated to the specified charities. You may be surprised. Many choirs and other musical groups arrange Christmas concerts to raise funds, either to finance their own activities, or to support a specified charity, and a number of these concerts are advertised in this newspaper.

But there must be other charities operating in Caversham or the surrounding area which do not get such support or publicity. If you work for one of these charities, Caversham Bridge would like to hear about it, so please send in some information about the charity and the work it does. Some information about two charities is included in this paper: Home Start on page 5 and Footsteps on page 9. The address is on page 2.

Owen Jewiss

There is a report on page 5 on the first Owen Jewiss memorial lecture. In addition to all the other work he did, Owen was a frequent columnist for the *Caversham Bridge*, often writing on ecumenical matters, and his contributions are sorely missed. We are interested in publishing any information about life in Caversham, so please send us information about your church, club or association.

Crossword

A new feature we have included this month is a crossword puzzle, constructed mainly around a Christmas theme. We hope you enjoy solving it. Solution next month. Compiling this crossword took more effort than I had expected, never having tried it before, despite many years of attempting to solve crosswords. If you think this is a feature we could run in future issues, we would love to have offers to contribute original puzzles.

We wish you all a very merry Christmas.

Message for Emmer Green surgery Patients

Please look at our website for our new quarterly Surgery Newsletter

on www.emmergreensurgery.co.uk

If you do not have internet access you can collect a copy from the surgery.

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From the Lookout Post

Increasing pupil numbers in Caversham

The CADRA autumn meeting topic of 'Planning More School Places' proved to be the topic of the moment as almost 100 people packed Thameside School Hall in October to hear Kevin McDaniel and Myles Milner, from Reading Borough Council Educational Services, give a comprehensive presentation. The CADRA meeting slotted into the timetable for the road show entitled "Let's Talk Education". As part of this consultation RBC are seeking the views of local individuals and groups.

Mr McDaniel presented demographic information highlighting the 15% increase in the Reading population aged 30 to 34 in the decade ending in 2011. Unsurprisingly this increase, in a prime child-bearing group, has produced a 34% increase in the zero to four year age group. Mr McDaniel then focused in on the situation in the RBC area north of the river in terms of forecast of demand, existing school resources available to meet that demand and some possible ways to bridge the gap. He confirmed that, over the next few years, Caversham would need to increase its primary school intake by two forms, one permanent extra class, and another bulge class. Several possibilities for providing these places were discussed.

As well as expanding existing schools, a possible part of the solution is the potential for a community group to bid for a 'free school' from the Department for Education. A number of parents indicated their willingness to explore this possibility. Mr McDaniel gave some insight into the procedures, resources and timetables of such a possibility. He gave strong advice to parents applying for places for the coming year to think carefully and to visit schools before applying. They should use all four preferences wisely; this is recommended as fewer people will get their first choices in 2013. All applicants who have indicated their four preferences will be given consideration, in regard to their lower preferences, over those who did not indicate lower preferences.

The increase in numbers will also have an impact on the provision of secondary education. Discussions are taking place with the two main schools for Caversham pupils, Highdown and Chiltern Edge, about how these needs can be satisfied. Indeed there are preliminary discussions with educational authorities north of Caversham about co-operating with those authorities.

The CADRA meeting has kick-started various discussions among parent groups. We await with keen interest outcomes of the consultation and any initiatives for a continued high quality education in Caversham.

Caversham policing

In October the position of Caversham neighbourhood sergeant was assumed by Nigel Scarratt. Sgt Scarratt joined Thames Valley Police in 1993 and has been on several response and neighbourhood teams, including a short spell in Caversham in 2008. He was promoted to Sergeant in 2000 and served in that capacity in Whitley and Oxford Road, and as acting inspector in Wokingham.

Sgt Scarratt has expressed his pleasure in returning to the area where he has given most of his service and the challenges of a busy community. He also stated how impressed he was with the existing Caversham team, including confidence that they can make a difference in Caversham, together with policing partners and the community, in preventing crime, catching offenders and bringing them to justice. He is always keen to tackle issues that matter to the community and will ensure that he and his team are visible on a regular basis. Sgt Scarratt enjoys being out on patrol and looks forward to meeting Caversham residents and the business community. With the Caversham policing team now at full strength there is an updated photo gallery of them on the Thames Valley Police web site. Also on this web site is a Caversham policing team monthly update.

The Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGS), who meet bi-monthly, are some of the effective platforms for residents to make their views known on

priority policing issues and any other problems. There are two NAGS serving Caversham, and information on them, including meeting details can be found on <http://uknags.org.uk>

We welcome Sgt Scarratt's appointment to lead the Caversham policing team and wish him success in the post.

Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch Association

A while ago Thames Valley Police informed us that burglaries from sheds and outhouses have increased across the region, so to protect your garden tools etc you need to make sure they do not disappear!

We have a new padlock alarm with a 110-decibel siren. If tampered with it lets out short sharp beeps. If continually tampered with it will send out a very loud siren, which will frighten away any criminal. It is operated by a battery keypad, and is weather resistant, with zinc alloy hardened shackle and costs £14.00.

We also have in stock Smartwater, a liquid solution that can protect valuables within your home and in sheds or outhouses. It costs £24.00.

Advice from the police is that now that the dark nights are here, we need to try and prevent or reduce the traditional increase in house burglaries at this time of year. Winter holds its own challenges. It is night time at 4pm; if you don't get home from work until 6pm your house can be easily identified as unoccupied.

There are some easy and inexpensive actions you can take to protect your property. Consider how your house looks when you arrive home: if it looks cold and empty to you, that is what it looks like to a burglar.

Most burglaries are opportunistic: properties are not generally targeted, but if offenders see a chance they will take it. A cheap device for preventing this is a timer plug which you can set to switch a lamp on when it gets dark, or to plug in a radio: talk stations can give the impression of people being in. Devices such as dusk-till-dawn bulbs and lamps can make it look like somebody is home. Actions such as getting your bins in after they have been emptied and pushing mail through letter boxes can also help.

Don't be afraid to walk up somebody's drive and push junk mail through the letter box if it is sticking out. The police encourage good neighbour schemes and ask that you keep an eye on your neighbours' houses. You know when something is out of place or suspicious in your own street. If you see something you are not sure about call the police on the non-emergency 101 telephone number or 999 in an emergency and they will come and check it out.



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CHURCHES

Inaugural Owen Jewiss memorial lecture

Speaking at St Barnabas church, Emmer Green, on the first anniversary of the death of Owen Jewiss, Revd Rosemary Fletcher began by paying a moving tribute to Owen. She praised his commitment, his enthusiasm and his ability to keep going.

Taking the theme "Mission - Churches Together or Apart?", Rosemary, a Methodist minister at an Anglican-Methodist church in Lambeth and formerly active in Churches Together in Caversham, looked at the nature of mission. "We must never lose sight of the fact that the mission is not ours but God's," she said.

"Christian Mission always needs to be expressed within the wider world context and this includes a spirit of sharing and receiving", Rosemary went on "The starting point is to acknowledge the reign of God over all. The priority which follows this is to proclaim, promote and live by the 'Kingdom Values'. Such values include truth, love, justice, peace, righteousness and goodness, the fruits of the Holy Spirit, along with both recognising and valuing the worth, dignity and human rights of all people".

Reflecting on the phrase "Together or Apart", Rosemary pointed to tensions in the church since the beginning - "any ideas of a perfect united church are confounded when we read the New Testament. The disciples had to learn how to live with difference and compromise.

"We all live out this tension within our own denominations. Most people see us just as Christians. You try explaining to a neighbour with a young child who has not been to church but wants her child baptised what are the differences between you and the Anglican female vicar down the same street. There is far more which unites than divides.

"What do we need to do together? One of the wonderful things about the Jubilee 2000 debt campaign was that on the coach we took to Cologne (for the G8 summit) we had people who were RCs, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, URC, and from various Free Churches. If we had discussed the theology of baptism or the Eucharist we would not have agreed, but we were all agreed that world poverty was wrong and contrary to the Gospel and we were united in our desire to challenge the world powers to address the issues of injustice. We could unite in a mission imperative to challenge the world order and the injustice of awful inequality in our world, and what's more we saw some positive results.

"Now we have the Christian Aid campaign for tax justice, campaigns on global warming, food prices, critique of capitalism. How do we work for these things with those of other faith groups or no faiths? These issues cannot be left in any one denomination - they are bigger than us all.

"These are difficult days for the churches and we need each other's support now more than ever. It seems to be a sad fact of life that we retreat into denominationalism and our own corners when we have never needed to be so united. Sometimes schemes fail because there is not enough lay empowerment. One way to get to know one another is to meet together regularly - for prayers and fellowship and sharing. We cannot work together unless we meet together.

AUTUMN FAIR AT CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH IN AID OF HOME START

I am impressed by Home Start's aims and objectives.

For the average parent the thought of constant care of babies and little people can be daunting, especially if the parent is the sole carer, perhaps without family or friends to support, and with often scant resources on which to call.

Home Start Reading is a branch of a national charity which provides weekly help to suit each family. This help is given by a trained volunteer who calls and helps out in any form that is required. With all the social problems that may be experienced, such a friend is a real life-line and the charity is one that our Church is delighted to support.

As for the Fair - it may appear to be on automatic pilot but this is certainly not the case. I'm terrified to mention names as I'm sure that I'll miss out some very prominent people. But enter Richard Ellison (the organiser) who has worked so hard for many months. The stalls were imaginative, whether it was Christmas decorations and gifts, books, toys, craftwork, our organist Peter Bernard's CD, or the raffle - a strip for £1.

The produce stall sold decorated pots of jam made by the male stallholder.

The Traidcraft stall offered Christmas cards, jewellery, chocolates, grocery items etc. Cakes and teas plus fresh home-made bread were all pretty tempting.

Fun and games were provided for children.

This all made for an excellent social occasion, as well as supporting a worthy cause.

The final amount raised was in excess of £1850.

Jo Nicholls



Pictured here are (left to right): Rosemary Fletcher, Daphne Jewiss (Owen's widow) and John Madeley (the meeting's organiser)

"There is now very little enthusiasm for structural union but what other sort of union is there? My experience has been that when Christians of various denominations go out into the world to do mission together, whether it be visiting workplaces or campaigning on issues of world justice, or anything else, there are rarely any problems.

"We can choose what we do together and we can choose whether we are a part of something bigger than each one of us, namely God and the Kingdom of God, or we can choose to stand alone. I believe that Christians acting together not only achieve more but show the world an example of unity. We do not need to agree on everything but we can celebrate our unity in the God who is God of all".

For the full text of the lecture, e-mail john.madeley@gmail.com

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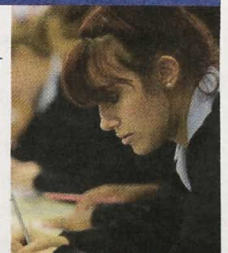
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St Michael's Catholic Church, Sonning Common

Our parish priest Father Bob Devaney left the parish on 8 November to take up a chaplaincy visiting hospitals in the Warwick area. We have been very privileged to have had his services over the past few years and wish him all the best for the future. On 17 November we welcomed Father Paul Rowan, who is also a lecturer at St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill.



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Christmas carols in Caversham Court

The choir of St Peter's church will be leading the singing for an evening of traditional Christmas carols in Caversham Court on Monday 17 December at 7.30pm. Members of the Salvation Army Band will add to the festive music.

The floodlit gardens will be open from 6.15 pm and mulled wine and mince pies will be on sale in the Tea Kiosk in aid of local charities. The church bells will ring out from 7.15pm.

Members of the Friends of Caversham Court Gardens will be lighting your way in the magical floodlit gardens. Wrap up warm, bring a torch (to read the carol sheets!) and come along to sing in the festive season.

Concerts in Caversham

'Concerts in Caversham' will host a Concert by Candlelight given by the superb strings and soloists of The Caversham Ensemble - professional musicians from the country's finest orchestras and ensembles - in a delightful programme of seasonal Baroque music, which includes such well-loved classics as Vivaldi's Winter from *The Four Seasons*, Handel's *Messiah*, Pachelbel's *Canon*, Bach's *Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring*, Haydn's *Cello Concerto in C*, Corelli's *Christmas Concerto* and much more.

The soloists will be Naomi Watts (cello), Xuan Du (violin) and Timothy Watts (oboe d'amore).

The concert will begin at 7.30pm on 8th December at St Andrew's Church, Albert Road, Caversham RG4 7PL

Tickets, to include seasonal refreshments during the interval (except mulled wine at £1 per glass), cost £15, £13 concessions if bought in advance, under 16s free, or £17, £15 on the door, under 16s free, and can be obtained from Wordplay, Prospect Street, Caversham tel 0118 9482800 or from 0118 9484112 or 0118 9463202.

A beautiful start to your Christmas season!

Henley Choral Society get their 40th Anniversary Season off to a cracking start when they invite you to their much-loved traditional Carol Concert at 8.00pm on Tuesday December 11th at St Mary's, Henley. This will feature audience participation; the children of St Mary's School; readings from 'A Christmas Carol' to celebrate the 200th birthday of Charles Dickens; a retiring collection in aid of the Footsteps Foundation which helps children with disabilities to take their first steps; plus wine and mince pies. A great way for the whole family to start the Christmas season! Tickets £12.00 (under 18s £8.00) from ticket secretary 01491 572795 or Gorvett & Stone, Duke Street, Henley-on-Thames

For more information see www.henleychoralsociety.org.uk

Concert in aid of RNLI

The RNLI is probably our oldest and most highly esteemed national emergency service. It has no public funding and relies on its charitable status to meet the cost of rescue vessels and equipment for the volunteer crews, who put their own lives at risk in the service of others. Operating costs amount to nearly £400,000 per day. Following its recent successful ventures in supporting other humanitarian causes (SABRE, the Air Ambulance and RBL), the Henley chamber choir *Aliquando* will be giving a concert in aid of RNLI at St Mary's Church, Henley on 24th November.

The centre piece of the concert will be 'Song of Songs' by the contemporary composer, Patrick Hawes. Patrick draws his musical inspiration from mediaeval plainsong and early composers, such as Palestrina; he transforms these into a modern, classical idiom. He composed the *Highgrove Suite* for Prince Charles; he has also been Classic FM Composer in Residence. Patrick will conduct the concert himself. The soloist will be the Welsh soprano Elin Manahan Thomas, accompanied by the one-time royal harpist Claire Jones and the Akina String Ensemble. The seasonal dimension will be provided by the Christmas Oratorio by Camille Saint-Saëns, a fresh and tuneful work by a young man of 25. The final movement *Tollite Hostias* had an outing by the choir at a previous concert. The concert will include two movements from the cantata *Lux Aeterna* by the Danish American composer, Morten Lauridsen.

Further information and tickets at £15 are available from Ian Heriot, 01491 629254, ian@heriot.eu, or in Henley from Boatique in Hart Street or Hobbs in Station Road.

Reading Festival Chorus

Reading Festival Chorus presents a concert of Christmas carols for choir and audience, including a selection from the newly-published Cohen's Carols, conducted by Edward-Rhys Harry; the organist is Simon Dinsdale. The concert will be held at Wesley Methodist Church, Queen's Road, Reading RG1 4BW on Saturday 15th December at 6.30 pm.

Tickets at £10, £8 concessions, £2 children are available from Alison Mackay tel. 0118 983 4523, chorus members or at the door.



South Chiltern Choral Society

Hallelujah! It's Christmas!

This year the centre-piece of the South Chiltern Choral Society's Christmas concerts will be the music of the most famous oratorio of all, Handel's *Messiah* (Part I). The choir, conducted by Gwyn Arch and accompanied by Ian Westley (organ), will be joined by three young professional soloists, Lisa Wilson (soprano), Lindsay Bramley (mezzo-soprano), Adam Kowalczyk (tenor) plus the slightly older Stephen Holloway (bass).

In the second half of the concert the quartet will each contribute popular Christmas songs of their own choosing, interspersed with recently-composed carols by John Rutter, Alan Bullard and Will Todd sung by the 120-strong choir. There will also be traditional carols for the audience.

The dates are Saturday 15th December at 7.30pm and Sunday 16th December at 2.00pm at Chiltern Edge School, Reades Lane, Sonning Common

Tickets are priced at £12 for adults including refreshments, £6 for under 18s (children under five free) from Mary Esslemont tel 0118 9874346

For further information visit the choir website: www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk

St Barnabas Christmas Fair

A Christmas Fair will be held at St Barnabas Church, Grove Rd, Emmer Green on Saturday 1st December from 2pm to 4pm. Father Christmas, quality goods, jewellery, toys, raffle, cakes, handicrafts, refreshments and more!

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Christmas in Caversham

St Barnabas Emmer Green

| | | |
|---------------|---------|---------------------------------|
| Sun 2 Dec | 9.30am | Toy Service |
| Wed 12 Dec | 7.00pm | Christingle Service |
| Sun 16 Dec | 4.30pm | Lessons and Carols |
| Christmas Eve | 4.30pm | Crib Service with Nativity Play |
| Christmas Eve | 11.30pm | Midnight Mass |
| Christmas Day | 8.00am | Said Communion Service |
| Christmas Day | 9.30am | Family Communion Service |

St John the Baptist Caversham

| | | |
|---------------|---------|-------------------|
| Sun 16 Dec | 10.00am | Christingle |
| Wed 19 Dec | 7.30pm | Carol Service |
| Christmas Eve | 4.00pm | Crib Service |
| Christmas Eve | 11.30pm | Midnight Mass |
| Christmas Day | 10.00am | All Age Communion |

St Peter's Caversham

| | | |
|---------------|---------|---------------------------------|
| Sun 2 Dec | 9.45am | Toy Sunday Parade Service |
| Sun 9 Dec | 6.30pm | Advent Carols |
| Mon 17 Dec | 7.30pm | Carols in Caversham Court |
| Tues 18 Dec | 6.30pm | Carol Service for Families |
| Sun 23 Dec | 8.00am | Holy Communion BCP Advent 4 |
| Sun 23 Dec | 9.45am | Parish Communion Advent 4 |
| Sun 23 Dec | 6.30pm | Nine Lessons & Carols |
| Christmas Eve | 3.00pm | Christingle (doors open 2.30pm) |
| Christmas Eve | 4.30pm | Christingle (doors open 4.00pm) |
| Christmas Eve | 11.30pm | Midnight Mass |
| Christmas Day | 8.00am | Holy Communion BCP |
| Christmas Day | 9.45am | Festival Communion |

St Margaret's Mapledurham

| | | |
|---------------|---------|------------------------------|
| Sun 9 Dec | 11.00am | Toy Service & Holy Communion |
| Sun 16 Dec | 11.00am | Holy Communion |
| Sun 16 Dec | 6.30pm | Carols by Candlelight |
| Sun 23 Dec | 11.00am | Holy Communion |
| Christmas Eve | 4.00pm | Christingle Service |
| Christmas Eve | 11.30pm | Midnight Mass |
| Christmas Day | 11.00am | Festival Communion |

St Andrew's Caversham

| | | |
|----------------|---------|--|
| Sun 16 Dec | 3.30pm | Christingle Service – followed by refreshments |
| Sun 23 Dec | 6.30pm | Carols by Candlelight - followed by mulled wine & mince pies |
| Christmas Eve | 3.00pm | The Legendary Nativity Service |
| Christmas Eve | 8.00pm | Christmas Night Service (Eucharist) |
| Christmas Day | 10.00am | All-Age Eucharist |
| New Year's Day | 12 noon | Said Eucharist and Renewal of the Covenant |

Our Lady & St Anne's

| | | |
|---------------|---------|-------------------------|
| Friday | | |
| 21 December | 7.30pm | Penitential Service |
| Christmas Eve | 9.15am | Mass |
| | 6.30pm | Vigil Mass |
| | 10.00pm | Mass of Christmas Night |

Christ and the Persian Magi

This is paraphrased from Marco Polo's version of this story.

You may have heard it before but it is worth repeating.

The three magi, having followed the star and bearing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, came to the place where Jesus was born. The youngest went in first to see the child and found him to be like himself in age and appearance. He came out full of wonder.

The second magi, who was of middle age, did likewise and again found the child to be of the same age and appearance as himself. The third magi, who was much older, found a similar situation. They all emerged from the stable very thoughtful, full of wonder and utterly amazed. They decided to all go in together as they did not believe what they had seen. They saw the child in his real likeness and age, for he was about 13 days old. They worshipped him and gave him their gifts. In return the child gave them a closed casket.

The three magi then set off back home.

After they had ridden for a few days their curiosity became so great that they decided to see what was in the casket. All they found was a stone which the child had intended to signify that they remain firm in their faith. The magi, not realising this, threw the stone into a well. Immediately a huge fire descended from heaven into the well. When they saw this they repented of their act and each took some of the fire and carried it back to their own countries and put it in their respective churches. They keep it perpetually burning and worship it as a god. If ever it goes out it is replenished from the other fires from the same source.

This may be the origin of the peace flame that many churches bring to their church at Christmas. This is brought from the Holy Land and is kept burning throughout the entire season of Christmas. (Source – 'The Travels; the description of the world' by Marco Polo, written in 1298).

| | | |
|---------------|---------|--|
| Christmas Day | 9.00am | Mass of Christmas Dawn |
| | 10.30am | Mass of Christmas Day |
| Wed 26 Dec | 10.00am | Mass of St Stephen Patron of our Altar servers |

New Testament Church of God

| | | |
|---------------|---------|---------------------------|
| Sun 23 Dec | 11.30am | Christmas Sunday Service |
| | 6.00pm | Carol Service |
| Christmas Day | 10.00am | Christmas Morning Service |
| Mon 31 Dec | 10.00pm | Thanksgiving Service |

Caversham Park LEP, at Caversham Park School, Queensway

| | | |
|---------------|---------|--|
| Sun 2 Dec | 4.30pm | Hymnz'n'cakes with Nativity Story from Caversham Park Playgroup, activities for young children & Christmas Carols cafe style. Held in the Coffee Lounge, Milestone Centre, CPV |
| Sun 23 Dec | 11.00am | Nine lessons and carols |
| Christmas Eve | 11.30pm | Midnight Communion by candle light |
| Christmas Day | 11.00am | All Age Christmas morning worship |

Caversham Baptist Church

| | | |
|---------------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Sun 16 Dec | 10.30am | Nativity Service |
| | 7.00pm | Sunday Night Lounge Christmas Special |
| Fri 21 Dec | 10.30am | Sanctum Christmas Service (Trad) |
| Sun 23 Dec | 10.30am | Family Carol Service |
| Christmas Eve | 5.30pm | Carols By Candlelight |
| Christmas Day | 10.30am | Christmas Day Service |

Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road

| | | |
|---------------|---------|---|
| Sun 9 Dec | 10.30am | Toy Service (toys for Christian Community Action) |
| Sun 23 Dec | 6.30pm | Carols by Candlelight |
| Christmas Eve | 11.15pm | Midnight Communion |
| Christmas Day | 10.00am | Family Worship |

Caversham Methodist Church, Gosbrook Road

| | | |
|---------------|---------|-------------------------|
| Sun 23 Dec | 10.30am | Carol Service |
| Christmas Eve | 4.00pm | Children's Crib Service |
| Christmas Day | 10.00am | Family Worship |

Grace Church

| | | |
|---------------|---------|--|
| Sun 16 Dec | 4.30pm | Family Carol Service followed by mince pies & mulled wine |
| Sun 16 Dec | 6.30pm | Carols by candlelight followed by mince pies & mulled wine |
| Christmas Day | 10.30am | Christmas day family service |

St Michael's, Sonning Common

| | | |
|---------------|---------|--|
| Mon 17 Dec | 7.00pm | Special service of reconciliation, including a general blessing, exposition and time for individual reconciliations. |
| Christmas Eve | 6.00pm | Mass for families with children |
| Christmas Eve | 8.30pm | Christmas Carols, reading and music followed by "Midnight Mass" at 9 pm |
| Christmas Day | 10.30am | Morning Mass |

Christmas facts

Did you know?

The tradition of hanging stockings up by the fireside on Christmas Eve comes from a folk tale of Santa once dropping some gold coins while climbing down the chimney. These landed in socks hanging up to dry by the fire.

The alternative version is that St Nicholas heard about a man who was so far in debt that his creditors were threatening to sell him and his family into slavery. He felt so sorry for them that he threw a bag of gold through the window of their house. This landed in the children's socks which were hanging up to dry by the fire.

In France children don't leave a snack for Pere Noel. Instead they fill their shoes with carrots and treats for his donkey.

In Germany it is not treats children leave out for Santa but beautifully decorated letters to attract his attention

45% of the world's population celebrate Christmas

In 1647 the British parliament passed a law making Christmas illegal!

The Romans celebrated December 25th as the birth of the Uncomparable Sun in honour of Mithras the sun god. When the followers of this became too numerous Pope Julius declared that Christians should celebrate the birth of Christ to counterbalance this The first official Christmas day was December 25th 349AD

CLUBS

Rosehill WI

In October President Margaret Pyle welcomed members and visitors. Members had a harvest lunch which was enjoyed by all. This was followed by the meeting, and a quiz put together by Pat Denney and her husband. Finally a cup of tea was provided by Sue and her helper, and the raffle was held.

In November the speaker was Bob Odell, whose talk was entitled 'No Wine For The Major'. In December we will welcome the Serenade Choir, who will get us all 'In Tune For Christmas'. This will be followed by a festive tea.

Sadly, we announce that Myrtle Bowles passed away peacefully in October at her home in Highdown Avenue. We will all miss her smile, sharp wit and sense of humour.

Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.00 pm in St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green. Visitors are welcome.

Caversham Heights Society

On 3 October Sally Botwright, a London Blue Badge guide, described the history of the Olympic Games and told the story behind the Olympics and Paralympics 2012. Initially the ancient games consisted of athletics and wrestling and lasted for a day only, but expanded to 5 days later. The ancient games were stopped by Emperor Theodosius in 393 AD.

The modern games began after the International Olympics Committee was established in 1894 to organise a championship every four years, the first one taking place in Athens in 1896, when 12 nations took part.

After discussing the history of the modern games Sally turned her attention to the 2012 games.

The 2012 bid was won for London, not only because of a promised legacy but because it also promised to be staged on a reasonably cheap budget at many different venues. It cost £9.3 billion but most of this was for infrastructure and buildings which will eventually be used for housing and also for different sporting events. By almost every reckoning London 2012 was the most successful and friendly games.

Another enthralling talk was given by Professor Chris Rhodes entitled "What Happens When the Oil Runs Out". The problem is serious, as, at the present rate of consumption, supplies will run out in 40 years time. In 1980 we began to use oil faster than we found it, with four barrels now used for every new barrel discovered. World oil discovery peaked in 1965. Oil provides 38% of world energy, with gas at 23% and coal 26%.

30 billion barrels of oil are produced each year. Major producers are Saudi Arabia and Russia. Oil fuels transportation and is the raw chemical base for many modern materials. Without oil and natural gas we could grow much less food, being unable to power tractors and combine harvesters, and transport it around the world. The UK imports 40% of its food and whether imported or home-grown, it is transported around the country. UK farms alone use 800,000 tonnes of oil for tractors, with 7 million tonnes a year needed to feed Britain.

Alternative fuels will be needed as we run out of oil. We will emit less carbon but civilization will collapse without fuel! We will be unable to use energy at the present rate so we must reduce demand. Transportation must be cut by 70% by 20 years time. We would need to work closer to home and produce food locally to avoid the worst effects, with local initiatives, community actions, sustainable jobs and practical skills coming to the fore.

St Peter's Wives

Pat Williams spoke about the history of wedding gowns at the September meeting. Pat brought a collection of photos and fabric samples, and other items including books on various royal weddings. Some wedding dresses were also brought in by members, with veils and a crystal tiara worn by our chairman at her own wedding.

Pat's descriptions of wedding dresses through the centuries was fascinating, with silks and velvets being used in the 13th and 14th centuries by the rich, and other fabrics by the poor. Styles changed during the 20th century. In the 1920s the fashion was for flapper-style dresses, the '30s favoured bias-cut styles and in the '40s brides were often married in uniform or wore a costume with a corsage. The '60s saw very short crochet dresses worn with a floppy hat, or a more traditional white dress, either ballerina or floor-length, worn with a bouffant veil held in place by a crystal tiara.

At our October meeting we were entertained by Bernard Tripp and Beldon Bensley who had put together a collection of postcards showing Caversham through the last century and earlier, part of the 100 Year Centenary Book.

Images shown included eel traps at Buckside behind The Griffin, an island that no longer exists, and the old Caversham bridge prior to 1869. This bridge was superseded by an iron bridge which lasted from 1870-1880. This in turn was replaced by the current bridge. We enjoyed reminiscing about the changes which have taken place in Caversham, many of them in our lifetimes.

At our next meeting we will be holding our annual Christmas Party.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild start Christmas celebrations early with a coffee and mince pie morning at the home of our chairman on November 29th, and continue with a carol service and afternoon tea at Abbey Baptist Church on December 3rd.

Ambling, scrabbling, lunching and social studies continue to be enjoyed.

Later in December some of us will travel to St Martin in the Fields in London for the national Carol Service. Our Christmas party is on 20th December at St Andrew's Church Hall at 7.30 pm.

Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club

The last meeting of the year for Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club will be a Festive Social with a hands-on session. The fun starts at 7.30pm on Wednesday 12th December, at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Rd, followed by an American Supper. Don't forget to bring a pair of scissors! A small charge for materials will be made. The Christmas Party is always an enjoyable evening of seasonal inspiration, great food and a chance to chat with friends. Entrance £4.50 for visitors. For further details contact Berna Macdonald on 0118 9477400

Reading and District Probus Club

It is not very often you meet, or see, a magistrate in strict sleeves. However it was a warm, sunny afternoon when Peter Chapman, a magistrate, and Louise Melish, a probation officer, imposed a 'hands on' talk 'Local Crime and the Community Service' directly on the members. Having delivered a 'job description', the 'assembled jury' (club members) were given a copy of a 'Daily News' report of an assault case and on first reading asked to give and record their verdict. This was when the fun started. One magistrate was 'in the dock!' Questions, answers and additional evidence (contradictory to the news report) gave way to a revised verdict to the repeated question 'should this person go to prison?' Has the first verdict been repeated?

Altogether a stimulating afternoon – The Public Gallery stayed awake! The answers are not recorded here, not to prejudice a retrial in another court. It is said 'The Law's an Ass'. It is up to the magistrates and judge to interpret and assess according to circumstances and get 'the Ass' in the right stall.

If any man has retired, then by getting evidence from the website, or by phoning the 'clerk of the court' (Raymond Head), he can arrive at his own verdict – Probus: For or Against. Telephone 941 1445 or visit probusclub-reading.org.uk

Caversham Horticultural Society

Wednesday 5th December is the date of the society's last talk in 2012 and the Christmas social get together, when Mr Tim Walker, director of the Oxford Botanical Garden, will talk about his other responsibility, the University's Harcourt Arboretum at Nuneham Courtenay. The talk will be held at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road, starting at 7.45pm. All are welcome to attend. There is a charge of £3.00 for non members.

Caversham WI

Members were inspired to get their knitting needles out after hearing Mrs Jean Dyer talk about the history of the craft. It is a tradition that goes back to pre-history with samples being found

in tombs. Jean spoke about her early life as a knitting pattern designer at age 14 and showed many samples of work using different stitches. The competition – a knitted baby item – found Brenda Steptoe judged the winner, with Margaret Cameron and Sylvia Myszor runners-up. In the business section, thanks were expressed to Romayne Flight for collating the information on the 'Big Walk, Little Splash' event where members exceeded the target by over 400 miles. At the meeting on 15 November, there was a talk on Christmas.

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Caversham Library helps local woman into permanent employment

Julie Terney had spent a number of years working on fixed term contracts. In the spring she was facing the prospect of another contract ending and her search for permanent employment brought her into contact with the National Careers Service.

On the suggestion of Reading Job Centre Julie met National Careers Service adviser Lindsey Tighe at Caversham library. The first thing Lindsey did was to look over Julie's CV and to make some suggestions about the presentation of information on it. Julie says "Lindsey had some really good suggestions on how I could make the most of what I had done in my career to date. She also had tips on changing the order of things to tailor the CV for each position I applied for, highlighting the most relevant experience first."

Julie goes on to say "Armed with different versions of my new CV I managed to secure six job interviews between May and August, and these were interviews for decent and interesting positions at a time when it is difficult to find work."

Lindsey met Julie for two more advice sessions at the library when they went over interview techniques and practised questions. "The more I went over answers to questions such as 'What are your

strengths and weaknesses?' the more my confidence grew" says Julie. For Lindsey building up confidence is a key element of her role and the support she gives people. "Many people find being out of work and the process of looking for a new job knocks their confidence. Our service is here to support them, empathise with their situation and give them practical help and advice that really makes a difference".

As a result of her interviews Julie secured permanent employment. She started in September and she says "I'm just so pleased to be in a full time role that is local to where I live".

The National Careers Service is a free careers service for adults. It has a strong team of 20 professionally qualified careers advisers working across Berkshire and sees people in many different locations, including local libraries and job centres.

Julie added, "What made the difference was that Lindsey really understood my situation. I'd highly recommend the service to anyone looking for work. The advisers are warm, friendly and approachable, normal people really who can help you see things in a different way"

For more information on the services on offer, call 0800 1954 700 or visit www.direct.gov.uk/nationalcareersservice.

CLUBS

Rotary Club of Caversham

The Caversham Rotary Club helped the Rotary Club of Henley Bridge with their Fireworks Evening at the Sue Ryder Hospice at Nettlebed on 27th October, and sold 800 hot dogs and several gallons of soup.

In November the first round of the Rotary Young Chef competition was held at Little Heath School, Tilehurst, the judges being Maria Watsham and Xavier Le-Bellago of Forbury's restaurant in Reading. The competition attracts a lot of interest in schools as cooking is a popular subject which is part of the national curriculum.

The Club's fourth networking event for Caversham business people was held on 6th November. Many people connected to business spent two hours in the Waitrose staff canteen exchanging news of each others' business activities.

In December several members will be participating in a day of mock interviews with pupils at Chiltern Edge School. This will give them a taste of what it is like to be faced by a potential employer and, hopefully, will give them confidence to perform well when the real-life situation occurs.

Goring, Woodcote & District Lions

Footsteps

In October, president Chris Stevens presented a £1,500 cheque to Clare Morley, Footsteps fundraising executive. Clare told Lions members and guests about the unique life-enhancing work being carried out with children between 10 months and 18 years at the Footsteps centre in Dorchester-on-Thames.

The centre has a team of experienced physiotherapists, and equipment for children suffering from varying conditions such as cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and epilepsy. The equipment includes "The Spider" which enables therapists to carry out a range of exercises on different parts of the body whilst the child is supported by adjustable elastic ropes. More traditional therapeutic aids and equipment such as balls, rolls, trampolines, treadmills and ladders are also used. This combination of therapy is not currently available elsewhere in the UK.

£1,500 will finance a 3-week session for one child, typically comprising two hours of physiotherapy a day for five days a week. It is highly successful at enhancing and improving physical development, and builds confidence, which often also positively affects speech and cognitive capabilities.

There are nine physiotherapists who work with approximately 15 youngsters from all over the country during a three-week session; they treat as many as 150 different cases annually.

Footsteps needs to raise £150,000 a year to fund this work, which receives no support from the NHS or UK government.

For more information about Footsteps telephone 01865 340376 or visit the website: www.footstepscentre.com

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ENVIRONMENT

THE CHICKEN OF THE WOODS

Last December, I wrote about the Turkeytail fungus, and about eating turkey at Christmas. I wrote that in the 1950s in our family, we ate chicken as a special treat at Christmas rather than turkey, so I thought that this year I'd write about the fungus called the Chicken of the Woods, and about chickens.

Our chicken at Christmas was usually a capon, bought by my father from a farmer, which he plucked and dressed at home. It was larger than a chicken, and was supposed to have tastier, more succulent meat. It was only later that I discovered that a capon was a castrated cockerel, which is a bit off-putting. I'd be even less likely to eat one now, if capons were still around, since I now know that one of the ways of carrying out the operation was to implant the unfortunate birds with pellets which released female sex hormones into their systems.

The nomenclature of chickens is all rather confusing. In earlier times, we seem to have called them fowls. The male bird is a cockerel in its first year, and a cock thereafter, except in the United States, where it's a rooster. The female bird is technically a chicken or pullet in its first year, and thereafter it's a hen. Very young birds are chicks, and a poussin is a young bird less than 28 days old.

Curiously, the word chicken was originally plural, the plural of the word chick. Then it came to mean young female birds, then a single young female bird, and then became the word for the whole race of domestic fowls. The old idea that "chicken" meant more than one bird hung on in dialect in some parts of the country: my old father-in-law, from Tyneside, rather than talking about feeding his chickens, said he was going to feed his chicken, although he had several of them.

Another strange thing about chickens is that they are here at all. They look distinctly alien and exotic. A cock, with its red comb and wattles and long iridescent tail-feathers is a fine sight. You get the impression that they don't really belong here, and wouldn't last long in the wild – and you'd be right. Their ancestors lived wild on the Indian subcontinent, and were gradually brought to the west in prehistoric times. They were used in the barbaric sport of cock-fighting, as well as for the table. By 3,000 B.C. they had reached eastern Europe, via Turkey, Greece and the Balkans, and it took a further 2,000 years for them to get here.

The fungus called the Chicken of the Woods grows on old trees – especially oak and yew. It first appears as a series of brackets, one below the other, which tend to grow fatter and merge into one another. When it's young, it's reckoned to be good to eat, especially in Germany and North America, and to taste like chicken. But beware! A few people have suffered unpleasant consequences from eating the Chicken of the Woods, and some say that it's all right to eat it when growing on oak, but not when growing on yew. So I have resisted the temptation to try it, and cannot vouch for the fact that it tastes like chicken – though in a chicken casserole I'm pretty sure it would!

Happy Wandere



Brownies visit Reading station

On a wet night in October the St Peter's Brownies visited the Reading station development site. They were invited by Catherine Dunford, civil engineer working on the station redevelopment and also guide leader with the 1st Emmer Green Guides. After a safety talk the girls split into two groups; one group donned hard hats, safety goggles, hi viz jackets and gloves and went out to see where all the work was going on while the other group stayed in and built structures with straws and marshmallows. They swapped over later. The outside group, under the watchful eyes of Catherine, Alex and Paul went out to what will be platforms 12 and 13 to have a look at all the work going on, at all the machinery, and to wave to the trains going past. They were told about how the work was carried out, often at night, and about the new passenger bridge which looked very tall from where they were standing. The inside group were set a task by Sharon to build a structure capable of holding a pack of Post It notes using just straws and marshmallows. This proved to be sticky, tricky work and some were more successful than others. Catherine, Paul, Alex, Dan and Sharon made the trip very enjoyable and informative.

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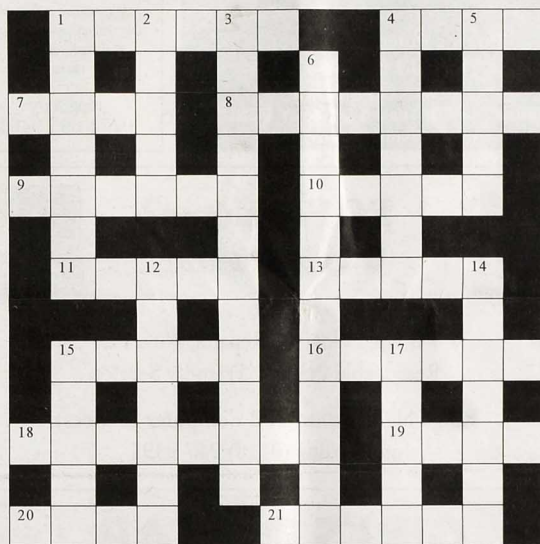
St Andrew's Church was packed on Saturday 13th October for a
 programme of piano and wind chamber music, including Poulenc's trio for
 piano, oboe and bassoon, Vintner's Hunter's Moon for horn and piano and
 Mozart's quintet for 4 wind and piano. There were also some less familiar
 works, one of which was by Andrew Lloyd Weber's father, William. The
 musicianship of Adrienne Black (piano), Tim Watts (oboe), Joy Farrall
 (clarinet), John Orford (bassoon) and Tim Anderson (French horn) was
 mellifluously superb. The audience were rewarded with a quintet encore
 by a mysterious 'Mr Rice', a 19th century composer not believed to be
 related in any way to the rather better known Tim.

St Andrew's Church is a perfect setting for small scale chamber concerts,
 with seating for up to two hundred - a beautiful space in which everyone
 can enjoy listening to wonderful chamber-music. This was a real
 community event as well as a rewarding musical one. Whilst Concerts in
 Caversham uses St Andrew's Church to host the concerts, and many of the
 church community volunteer their services, the concerts do not raise
 money for the church: any profit is used to promote the next concert in the
 series. What a wonderful way for the church to reach out to all the people
 of Caversham!

Elaine Guy

Caversham Bridge Crossword No 1

We invite you to solve the crossword, for which many of the clues have a
 Christmas theme. Answers next month



Across

- 1 Once a year (6)
- 4 New-born Infant (4)
- 7 Led the Kings to the manger (4)
- 8 Christmas decorations (8)
- 9 "___ it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born" (2,4)
- 10 "He shall be ___ Jesus" (5)
- 11 Plant cultivated for its foliage (5)
- 13 Area of archery target next to bull (5)
- 15 e.g. Jordan, Thames (5)
- 16 What the manger was used as (6)
- 18 From the time of James 1st (8)
- 19 "Come and worship Christ the newborn ___"
 (4)
- 20 An Islamic ruler (4)
- 21 Used to decorate a crown (6)

Down

- 1 City in Southern Turkey; early centre of
 Christianity (7)
- 2 Tend the sick (5)
- 3 The bearer of glad tidings (5,7)
- 4 A famous cricketer (7)
- 5 Foretold, prophesised (5)
- 6 Gift brought to the baby Jesus (12)
- 12 "He shall be the ___ of the world" (7)
- 14 Mends a broken chain (7)
- 15 "Angels from the ___s of Glory" (5)
- 17 Lower leg joint (5)

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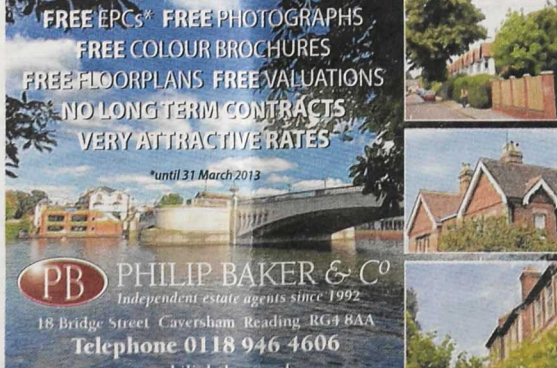


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