Caversham Heights bus route 22: reactions to the revised service

Caversham Bridge (most recently in the February and March issues) has reported on the Reading Buses consultation on all the Caversham bus routes since proposals were made in October last year. The most radical changes made and implemented after Monday 19th February have been to the route 22 serving Caversham Heights. This service was previously branded Pink 22 reflecting its membership of the Caversham services as a whole. But now, it is detached from Pink and branded as Red 22 referencing a link to a route running to Lower Earley, although not yet listed as a destination on the route summary on the web page.

Reader and user reports indicate that the new timetable for the 22 bus route did not get off to the greatest of starts, with numerous breakdowns and many buses displaying their FULL signs during peak hours and on Sundays. The weekday service is still using a variety of buses in different brand colours, with only one bus yet branded Red at the start. Many of the buses used have fewer seats and standing spaces and different interior configurations. These appear to create difficulties for wheel chair users, blind and partially sighted users and those with pushchairs and walking frames. On the Sunday service a much smaller mini bus is used, and passengers have been turned away with an hour to wait, to walk or to take a taxi. What sort of impression does this create? The seamless

and consistent old Pink 22 service rarely presented these perturbations. A good number of passengers are keeping their own logs of observations on punctuality, lateness and crowding. Reading Buses have continually stated the reason for the changes is that the 22 bus does not carry enough passengers or make enough money: it is a fact that these views are assertions without visible evidence shared with the public. However, the busy buses over the first few weeks of the condensed service certainly highlight the fact that the services are very well used.

The extension of the Caversham route to Lower Earley for much of the peak hours and all of the off peak hours is certainly a cause of delay and creates knock-on effects. The recent poor weather has left many people waiting in the cold and rain (even the snow) for longer than is reasonable and comparable to other Reading Buses routes with higher frequencies. Passengers who have a smart device on a tablet or phone can use one of several apps to track the bus to reduce outside waits, identify delays, or to reassure themselves it is running to time. Customers can choose their methods, but there is nothing like reliable, frequent and regular interval services to make bus use a 'quality experience'. Some Caversham users feel a bit denied at the moment. And just a thought: has not Reading Buses metaphorically stolen a bit

of every bus user's time? With Pink 22 a user could make a quick round- trip to Caversham Centre or Town in about an hour. Now, it might take up to two hours or more! However, for those who wish to use the technology Reading Buses has a mobile app (a route map displaying where the bus is on the route and when it is due), Bus Checker (a list of all buses timetabled to arrive at any given bus stop nationally, not necessarily real time) and My Bus Reading (a similar offering to Bus Checker specific for Reading) can both be used. Use the web browser on your device and download.

A reminder of the frequency of buses running: Monday to Friday Peak: before 9:30am and after 3.15pm until 7.45 pm approximately every 30 – 40 minutes; Monday to Friday off peak: from 10.00 am until 3.15pm, then hourly and close to that frequency after 7.45 pm. Saturday: Hourly and Sunday: Hourly. It is good to have a copy of the printed timetable to hand available on buses and at the Broad Street Mall information point. Many copies of the timetable and explanatory leaflet were widely delivered by volunteers to households in Caversham Heights.

Reading Buses have promised to review the timetable around Easter and it is hoped after they have absorbed the impact of their changes that more buses will be provided to the service. *Caversham Bridge* readers wait in hope.

Air Quality in Caversham

Residents, cyclists and pedestrians in central Caversham are having to suffer increasingly high volumes of vehicles on our busy narrow streets. The inevitable noise of constant traffic is tolerated by most people, while the silent killer goes unnoticed. That unseen menace is poor air quality. In December 2017 Caversham GLOBE (Go Local On a Better Environment) group contributed to the national campaign for clean air by installing a nitrogen dioxide



Air quality monitoring station near Caversham Bridge

test tube for two weeks at the Church Road/St Anne's Road junction in central Caversham. The results of that test showed that the air quality registered 56.2 μ g/m3 (micrograms per cubic metre) of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2). This far exceeds many other locations and the legal limit for NO2 pollution, which is an annual mean of 40μ g/m3.

This reading of 56.2 NO2 for Church Road is but a snapshot over two weeks, so whether the 40NO2 annual mean is exceeded needs an accurate statistical sample. Nitrogen dioxide is a toxic gas that inflames the lining of the lungs. Even more dangerous are micro-particles

'PM2.5' which can enter and persist within the alveoli, the deepest part of the lungs.

Our nearest Reading Borough Council air quality testing apparatus, as many local people will know, is on Caversham Road just south of Caversham Bridge. This gives a

"low" reading on the national picture – see this link http://www.airqualityengland.co.uk/site/latest?site id=REA2

However, its site, on a wide road by a pedestrian crossing with fewer traffic queues may record lower pollution levels than near the narrow busy junctions of central Caversham.

The national campaign for clean air map can be seen via this link https://friendsoftheearth.

uk/clean-air/clean-air-campaign-air-monitoring-kit-results

The GLOBE group is also worked with the support of CADRA (Caversham and District Residents Association) to install for more test tubes in central Caversham to measure busy junctions during March.

What should residents do about this issue? Raise the matter with RBC ward Councillors? Request analysis of traffic flows, which will get worse once Cow Lane bridges are completed? Work with residents' groups



like CADRA for joint action? Raise at other RBC forums such as the Caversham Safer Neighbourhood Forum? Obtain more test tubes for other locations or join the nationwide clean air campaign? Or will the silent majority stay as silent as Poor Air Quality, the unseen killer lurking on our local roads?

For more about Caversham GLOBE see http://www.cavershamglobe.org.uk/

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Caversham Clergy

St Barnabas

Revd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.

Tel: 947 8239.

www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrews

Revd Nigel Jones, St Andrews Vicarage,

Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788 www.standrewscaversham.org

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Revd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,

Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505

rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Revd Marion Pyke Tel: 947 5834 Revd John Dudley Tel: 9470265

Revd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331810

Revd Judith Ryder Tel: 9473783

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)

(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC)

Contact: Dr Alison Johnston Tel: 0118 947 5152. www.cpvc.org.uk

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

Revd Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road.

Tel: 947 2223

Revd D Jenkins Tel:0118 327 1592

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Transitional Minister Revd Jonathan Edwards

Church office tel 954 5353

Email Secretary: sue.cantwell@cavershambaptist church.org.uk

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)

www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

GRACE CHURCH

(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel) www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk Tel 9474529

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Mgr Patrick Daly, The Presbytery,

2 South View Avenue.

Tel: 947 1787

Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michaels, Sonning Com-

mon

Tel: 972 3418

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD Revd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009

The newspaper produced by the members of the Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Cavershan 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

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 Judith Ryder

The Journey with **Jesus Continues**

The Lenten journey is over, the journeys of Palm Sunday and Good Friday, even the journey to the tomb on Easter Day, have all been and gone. But as we know, to borrow from Tolkein, 'the road goes ever on': the journey continues.

Some people complain about modern over-use of the word 'journey'. But there is one very good reason the word is used a lot: it makes sense. Faith as a journey was an idea rather missing in my early life and discovering it I found really helpful.

But how do we find our way on this journey?

People find their way around in different ways. The first thing I do in a new place is get a detailed map. I like to get to know an area quickly, to understand and visualise how it fits together. Google Earth makes that even more satisfying these days.

Other people have very different ways of finding their way around. Some, of course, are only interested in knowing a very small area, what they need for day-to-day life. But that's not true of many people nowadays, and there are plenty of ways of navigating to some degree, without looking at the map: signposts and other landmarks; asking directions; relying on memory and innate sense of direction; understanding the lie of the land. There is, of course, also SatNav.

Maps are still the guickest way to get a clear and complete overview; but sitting looking at a map doesn't actually get us anywhere, and when we do set out, we have to make use of a lot of the other signs around to make the connection between the map and the journey. How much we have to keep going back to the map might depend on how much we've fixed it in our minds already. Most of us don't have great memories, so will find it helpful to keep taking a look.

What analogies can be drawn between this and our faith journey?

We could look on the Bible as the map – the quickest way of getting the big picture, of seeing the connections, of not just limiting ourselves to our own locality.

Many people, of course, feel that they have no need of this 'map': the world around, other people, and our own instincts give us all the indications we need to journey through life. And this 'map' might look rather out of date to some ...

A balanced Christian view, of course, would be that both need to work together. If the Bible is the map, it's there to make the journey possible; but when we set out, we will always be using other helps along the way to make the connection between Scripture and our own lives.

The key point, however, is that this is about the journey, about where we are going and how we get there. Maps help, other signs and information help, but two things particularly help any journey. One is knowing where you want to go. The other is having someone with you has already been there and knows the way – that takes all the anxiety out of any journey. For us Christians, the goal of the journey is God, the person who already knows the way and travels with us is Jesus. Knowing these two things, we can relax and enjoy the journey, look around us, take each stage as it comes, see what needs to be done on the way, who we can help along the way, and live in eager anticipation of the promised end.

Disclaimer: analogies can be a helpful way of seeing things a bit differently, but only go so far. However, once the analogy if there, if it works, the reader or listener is likely to see all sorts of new directions it can be taken in. Give it a go when you've finished reading this. For example, in this analogy, what would SatNav be? Or other modern technological tools? And who makes the map in the first place? And how do we bring 'out of date' maps up to date?

Revd Judith Rvder, Curate at St Peters



SUNDAY SERVICES

St Peter's, St Peter's Hill
8.00am Holy Communion – BCP (first, second and fourth

Sundays)

Matins – BCP (Third Sunday)

9.30am Holy Communion (second, third and fourth Sundays)
Service of the Word (First Sunday)
6.30pm Evensong (usually Choral on second Sunday)

Fifth Sunday – Parish wide service (check website for details)

St John's, Gosbrook Road

9.30am Holy Communion (first, third and fourth Sundays)

9.30am All Age Worship (second Sunday))

Fifth Sunday - Parish wide service (check website for details)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.15am Holy Communion (first, second and fourth Sundays) Morning Worship (third Sunday) Fifth Sunday - Parish wide service (check website for details)

St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

The Eucharist 10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung) First Sunday, Family Eucharist 11.30am The Eucharist first Sunday BCP

St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

8.00am Said Communion (BCP) 9.30am Parish Communion

9.30am COGS for all ages (1st Sunday of Month)

RIVERSIDE CHURCH(READING)

Meeting at Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham

10.00am Morning Worship & Teaching

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 South Street

Morning Worship each Sunday 8.00 pmHouse of Prayer (praise and prayer) -2nd Sunday each month Messy Church – for all the family

Fourth Sunday of the month

GRACE CHURCH Old Peppard Road

10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road

9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am 6.30pm (second and fourth Sundays)

Gosbrook Road

10.30am 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

St Michaels, Sonning Common

5.30pm Saturday 9.00 and 10.30am Monday

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 May 2018 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by Monday 2nd April. The date for the June 2018 issue is Monday 30th April. Email address is editors@cavershambridge.org Advertising copy for the May 2018 issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by Friday 30th March. The date for the June 2018 issue is Friday 27th April. Email address is: advertising@cavershambridge.org

PARISH OFFICES

PARISH OF CAVERSHAM THAMESIDE AND MAPLEDURHAM

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ST BARNABAS

St Barnabas Centre

Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am-10.30am

Tel: 947 6310 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

Moldywarp at Clayfield Copse



'Friends of', on their way to their monthly task, [clearing a glade amongst the ash re-growth] passed the mole conurbation at the edge of the flower meadow and noticed signs of recent activity there.

It is March 5th the day after the previous week of sub-zero temperatures and snow, and a mole is very active. There seem to be three development sites each with about 30 hills, with fresh soil on top! Spring cleaning the corridors, larders and nest accommodation or maybe the future nurseries? With their solid cylindrical furry 6-inch body with short limbs ending in shovels, the mole is the ultimate tunnelling machine, similar in shape to the tunnelling machines currently being used for Crossrail! [see Youtube videos!]

But mole is just one of the amazing creatures living at Clayfield.

'Friends of' meet on 1st Sunday of the month 10 a.m. The next task is working along The Ride parallel with Kiln Rd. Visit website www.econetreading.org.uk

Your local park needs you!



We conservation volunteers need help. Those bluebells at Clayfield Copse are struggling to be seen under brambles. This year the volunteers have spent about 40 working hours clearing brambles from an area there called Blackhouse Wood. A real chore but essential, Brambles are super invasive! But, so rewarding come April and so much more could be done there. We also spend regular sessions keeping the footpaths wide, for obvious reasons! removing branches where we can. We tend an area that has been planted for wild flowers, we build habitat piles for stag beetles and lots more.

The local council has no money or time to do these jobs. We meet for 3 hours once a month, provide tools, instructions and insurance. We work at our own level (we are aged 16 to 80,) have a cup of coffee, discuss the wild life there, put the world to right and enjoy the fresh outdoors, etc. What's not to like?

Look on our website www.econetreading.org.uk for times and details. Look forward to seeing you. Friends of Clayfield Copse

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Croquet Day comes to Albert Road

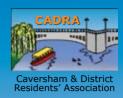
Did you know that Caversham boasts a thriving Croquet Club at the Albert Road recreation ground, and membership is inexpensive and open to all?

Croquet is a great sport for all ages. Ask people what they know about croquet, and the usual answers are either (a) something to do with vicarage tea parties and cucumber sandwiches, or (b) "it's a vicious sport, you know". The reality falls between these extremes! It's a game that involves skill and tactics and gives you light exercise and fresh air, and it's very sociable. It's one of the few sports where men and women compete on an equal basis, and where age is no barrier. The Caversham Club focuses on friendly play rather than winning competitions, though there are also opportunities to compete with other clubs if you're ambitious. A handicap system means that you're always in with a chance of winning, whatever your level of experience. Newcomers are offered free informal coaching, often just by pairing them up with someone more experienced in a doubles game.

May 13th is National Croquet Day, and the club will be open to all new comers who want to try their hand at scoring a few hoops. All equipment is provided, and no experience needed - just turn up wearing flat-soled shoes.

For more information, please visit: http:// cavershamcroquet.uk/

Terry Marsh - Chair, Caversham Croquet Club



AGM & OPEN MEETING The Chilterns **Area of Natural Beauty (AONB)**

Speaker: Sue Holden, Chief Officer, Conservation Board



Tuesday 17 April 2018 7.30pm

Thameside Primary School, Harley Road ALL WELCOME

www.cadra.org.uk

Bible Friends

Peter lets Jesus down

"Jesus, I will always be your friend," said Peter. Jesus was sad.

"Tomorrow," he said, "before the cockerel crows for a new day, you will have said three times that you don't know me."

"No!" replied Peter. "I would never say that!"

That night, some soldiers came and took Jesus away. Peter went to see what was happening.

"You're a friend of Jesus, aren't you?" asked a girl.

Peter was frightened. "No, I'm not," he whispered.

The girl told a man, "I'm sure he's a friend of Jesus."

"No, I'm not!" said Peter.

"Are you a friend of Jesus?" asked the man.

"NO! I'm not!" insisted Peter.

Cock-a-doodle-doo! The cockerel crowed! It was a new day.

And Peter remembered what Jesus had said! Peter felt so sad – he loved Jesus but he had pretended he did not know him!



Caversham Arts Trail is back!

Caversham Arts Trail is back! After a break of two years, Caversham artists and friends will be opening their homes and studios to members of the public on 12th, 13th, 19th and 20th May (yes, we realise that one of these dates clashes with a certain wedding - but we planned this before they did!) with some venues also opening on 18th May. Admission is free, and all venues are open from 11am-5pm.

The trail gives visitors the opportunity to meet the artists in their own studios, learn about their techniques and buy work directly from them (without paying gallery commission charges). Unlike many other arts trails, the Caversham Trail is special in that all the venues are in the artists' homes and gardens (and some of the gardens are worth seeing!). There will be a huge variety of work on display to suit all tastes and pockets: ceramics, painting, collage, stained glass, découpage, woven textiles, printmaking, jewellery, sculpture and so

Visitors to the trail will also be able to watch demonstrations by the artists and even have a go themselves at some venues. Refreshments (including home-made cake) will be on offer at a number of venues.

This year the Trail will include 17 venues across Caversham and Emmer Green with 37 artists taking part. Many of the artists are familiar faces but there are also several new artists including a book binder, furniture

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Email: martinturner1066@gmail.com Phone: 07599 045361 or 07513 071953 maker, The School of Jewellery and Craft and local garden designer, Florence Gardening. There will also be a special sale of the work of the late Jacqueline Currell who was a printmaker and sadly died of Motor Neurone Disease in 2017. All proceeds of her work will be donated to the Motor Neuron Disease Charity.

Caversham Arts Trail is also pleased to be supporting two other local charities, Launchpad Reading and The Royal Berkshire Hospital Charity.

Details of all artists can be found on the website www. cavershamartstrail.co.uk where there will be a map of the trail to download. Much of the trail is walkable and on local cycle routes. You can also follow the trail on

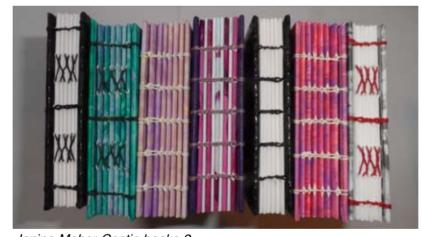
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BEE-FLIES

It's only in recent years that I've noticed these strange-looking insects in my Caversham garden. They appear in April, when the sun is shining, and go away in June. I first came across them around twenty years ago in France and suspect that they may be spreading northwards in the wake of global warming, though it's possible that I haven't been observant enough to notice them before. It's certainly true that in Britain, they become less common, the farther north you go.

Though they have hairy bodies, and mimic bees, they are flies. They have two wings, rather than four. It is thought that the furry body makes them less likely to be eaten by other creatures which think they might get stung. Their long 'noses,' which make them look as though they might sting are in fact used for collecting nectar from flowers – their food – and in fact they are completely harmless to humans.

Another of their extraordinary attributes is their ability to hover, and then dart off in any direction. When feeding, their very long legs do actually touch the flowers, but their wings continue to beat, so fast that you can't see them. This makes them rather like the humming-bird hawk moths, which we occasionally see later in the year. I've never seen a bee-fly at rest, but pictures on the internet reveal that some of them have dark patterns on the front edges of their wings. This is certainly the case with the largest and commonest of the species found in the country, the Large, or Dark-Edged Bee-Fly.

There are several species in this country, but they're hard to identify, because their wings beat so fast, and they never seem to settle on anything.

Though the adult insects look rather comical, their life-style is decidedly gruesome. Their larvae feed on the larvae of ground-nesting solitary bees and wasps. At the right time of year, the female bee-fly collects particles of dust and sand on the tip of her abdomen. These she uses to coat her eggs, which weights them down and camouflages them. Then she flicks her eggs, one at a time, into the nest-holes of her victims. The eggs hatch when the larvae of the hosts are fully-grown, and the bee-fly larvae (or grubs) move onto their host larvae, and feed on their vital juices. All of this presumably happens between June, when the bee-fly adults disappear, and the following April. Whether the adult bees and wasps ever spot the intruders and throw them out I don't know. In fact, there's probably a great deal we don't know about the life-cycle of these funny-looking insects.

Despite its predatory life-style, there is something almost endearing about a bee-fly, with its long proboscis, big round eyes and long legs. It is a pollinator of the flowers it visits, and when you see it, you know that spring is well on the way!

Happy Wanderer

Generous gift to Caversham Methodist Church

The church in Gosbrook Road has been delighted to receive funding for a life saving defibrillator from the Reading Lions charity.

Thanks to John Rowe a member of the Church Art Group, we were able



John Rowe of Reading Lions with Eunice Cooper of the Methodist church to contact the Lions to ask to be considered for help with the purchase of a very important piece of equipment. Given that during the week and at weekends the premises are in use most of the time, by young and old, it was felt that it was important to provide this facility if needed, for anyone using the building.

For babies and toddlers to the eldest in the church services, for Guides and Brownies, community choir and pre-school, dancing lessons and Hungarian School,

Art group and coffee mornings. Therefore, the Reading Lions have provided the whole package, making things safer for the many people using the premises.

We will be forever grateful for the defibrillator and wish to record our thanks to the Reading Lions for this generous and important gift.

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Open 9.30am to 2.30pm on Tuesdays in St John's Church, Gosbrook Road, Caversham. Espresso coffees, teas, soft drinks, hot snacks, cakes and biscuits. Takeaways also available

Funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund and by Springboard, Reading

History of Reading Society

The subject of the February talk was the History of the Abbey Baptist Church, Reading. The speakers were members of the congregation. The talk began with a brief history of the Baptists in England.

The Baptist church emerged in the religious reforms which swept through Europe in the sixteenth century in the wake of the proclamations of the German monk Martin Luther. Luther and his followers believed the Roman Catholic Church had become corrupt and its theology debased through the worship of saints and other religious images and which they considered to be forbidden in the Ten Commandments', instead they wanted a form of worship that would focus on the scriptures contained in

In about 1640 it is thought that a small



King's Road Baptist Church Reading.

group of Baptists, or Anabaptists as they were then known, established their first place of worship in Reading at a rented house in Pigney Lane near Castle Street; they had no minister to lead them and little money to support themselves.

Baptists at this time were still persecuted by the Established Church and were known in derision as dissenters. The Reading born Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, would dispatch his spies to raid places where dissenters were thought to worship: behind the house in Pigney Lane a wooden bridge was thrown across the Holy Brook to effect a swift escape during a raid.

In 1678 John Rance was elected their first Minister and in 1686 they acquired the freehold of a building in Church Street off London Street which comprised: a meeting house, accommodation for the minister and a burial ground. A notable event in its history occurred in 1688 when shortly before his death, the writer and puritan preacher, John Bunyan, read his penultimate sermon there.

At the start of the eighteenth century the congregation had swelled to 38 gentlemen and 66 ladies, and so a new meeting house was opened at Hosier's Lane (today's Hosier Street) on Easter Day 1752, Thomas Whitewood was its first minister. The lease on this building was due to expire in 1834 so a site for a new church was purchased at King's Road, Reading in 1832 for £310. John James Cooper, a local architect, designed

The new church could accommodate over 900 worshippers and benefited from gas lighting. Later a Sunday school was added. At King's Road the Baptist ministry in Reading would reach its zenith; daughterchurches were established elsewhere in Reading: Wycliffe Church at Cemetery Junction; at Carey Street and the Anderson Memorial at Amhurst Road to name but a few. At Wokingham the Baptist burial ground was established where people could be buried side by side regardless of gender or social status.

Among the King's Road congregation of note were Edward Phillip Collier the brick manufacturer and Edward Jackson founder of the Jackson's department store; Jackson would become the first Baptist mayor of Reading. In 1980 the congregation moved to a new building across the Holy Brook and the old church was demolished in 1983. Today the church is shared with Baptists from Ghana, Portugal and Sri Lanka.

The subject of the next talk, which will be preceded by the AGM, will be Coley and Coley Park. The speakers will be Mike Cooper and Katie Amos. It will take place at Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading on Wednesday 21st March at 7.30pm. All are welcome but there is a charge of £2 to non-members.



King's Road Baptist Church Reading February 1981

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Reading Abbey ruins open soon and the link to Caversham

The much anticipated re-opening date of Reading's oldest gem, the Abbey Ruins, has been announced. The ruins closed in 2009 as they were no longer safe to be open to the public. After nine years and thanks to £1.77 million funding support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and match funding of £1.38million from the Council, the ambitious project to reinvigorate Reading's pre-eminent and nationally important heritage site will be complete.

The 'Abbey Ruins Revealed' celebration will take place on Saturday 16th June 2018, following a three year, £3.15 million conservation project. The date was formally announced the launch event for Reading Museum's new Reading Abbey gallery. The fascinating new permanent display begins with objects highlighting the town's history before the Abbey was established. It then focuses on the history of the Abbey leading up to its closure in 1539. The re-opening ceremony will be a focal point of this year's Water Fest, Reading's annual celebration of the town's waterways. The Abbey gallery launch is the first in a series of major openings as part of the Reading Abbey Revealed project, with the Abbey Gateway complete in April and the Abbey Ruins open in June.

The Abbey Quarter in central Reading brings together nationally important heritage within the former grounds of Reading Abbey, once one of Europe's largest royal monasteries. The conservation of the Grade I listed, scheduled Abbey Ruins and Abbey Gateway are central to Reading Council's vision to transform the Abbey Quarter into a unique historical destination.

The ambitious scope of the project has conserved the remains of Reading Abbey

and the Abbey Gateway, and has provided opportunities through events, volunteering and education. Site-wide interpretation of the Abbey Quarter has included the opening of the new Abbey gallery at Reading Museum and will include installing new information points across the town. The accompanying activity programme will continue beyond the Abbey opening until the end of 2020.

The Abbey Gateway will be complete in April 2018 with Reading Museum's popular Victorian Schoolroom experience moving into the space in September 2018, and the Abbey ruins will re-open to the public on 16th June 2018.

Reading Abbey has played a very significant part in the life of Caversham since the Norman Conquest. The historic shrine to Our Lady of Caversham and the Chapel on the Bridge were part of the fabric of Christian worship until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539 and the establishment of the Church of England. The return of public worship in the Roman Catholic Church in Caversham after 1896 led to the restoration of the shrine in the church of Our Lady and St Anne in 1956. As readers of Caversham Bridge know, the modern shrine has recently been refurbished, and its rededication will take place on May 6th this year. So, 2018 is a red letter year for church history in both Reading and Caversham.

Both the Reading Abbey display and Reading Museum are free to visit. www. readingmuseum.org.uk keep up to date with the project by visiting the Abbey Quarter's website www.readingabbeyquarter.org.uk and www.readingmuseum.org.uk Also use www.facebook.com/ReadingAbbeyQuarter and follow on twitter @RdgAbbey

Enjoying family and social history

Do you love social history or are interested in tracing your own family history? Berkshire Family History Society's new Centre for Heritage and Family History has some events coming up you might be interested in. On Wednesday 11th April, local historian Mike Cooper will be talking about Southcote Manor, its history, and its significance during the English Civil War. On Saturday 14th April, Debbie Kennett will be talking about getting started with DNA. And on Wednesday 25th April, social historian Catherine Sampson will be talking about living through the Civil War and particularly the experiences of those who lived in and around Reading. You can find the Centre for Heritage and Family History on the second floor of Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading RG1 3BQ. All talks start at 2pm and tickets cost £5 (£4 for society members). Price includes the talk and also tea and cake afterwards. You can just turn up on the day and pay at the door (subject to availability) but for more information and to pre-book tickets – see www.berksfhs.org.uk

Also at the centre, on Saturday 21 April, between 11am and 1pm, Tony Roberts will be running a workshop on census records and their value to family historians. This workshop explores how to get the best out of census documents, discusses the pitfalls and limitations in using census data and also considers what the future holds for census. Tickets cost £10 (£9 for society members) and must be pre-booked as places are limited. For more information and to book tickets, visit www.berksfhs.org.uk. Berkshire Family History Society is a registered charity.

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Caversham Horticultural Society

Whilst writing this in a cold gloomy February day, I, like many gardeners had look forward to the burst of Spring flowering plants that started March which finally signalled that Winter was over. To help us to achieve this, Caversham Horticultural Society's April talk on the 25th is given by Rosie Hardy of Hardy Cottage Plants, Whitchurch, Hampshire. In this illustrated talk she will inspire and inform us about suitable Spring flowering perennials for the garden. The talk starts at 7.45pm and is held at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road, Caversham. Cost to non-members is £3.00 but why not join on the evening for an annual membership of £5.00 (or £3.00 for over 60-year olds) and thus enjoy free admission to all the society's 2018 talks. Members can also make use of the Society's Trading Shed to purchase compost, manure and other gardening sundries at competitive prices.

FRIENDS OF CAVERSHAM COURT GARDENS

The annual general meeting will be held on Wednesday 25th April, 7 for 7.30pm at Reading Canoe Club, The Warren, Caversham RG4 7TF

All are very welcome to attend.

The briefest possible business meeting will be followed by an illustrated talk by Dr Kate Felus, author of The Secret Life of the Georgian Garden.

Light refreshments from 7pm.

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Coppice and bean poles

For hundreds of years hazel trees have been used by man. An area of hazel was cut down to provide people with material for building, furniture, fodder, fencing and fuel. A fence would then be built around the 'coupe' to protect the new growth from nibbling deer and rabbits. The Hazel would be ready for re-cut in seven to ten years' time.

These days much of the woodland coppice has been neglected, but conservationists are aware of the wildlife value of coppice woodland, and some areas are being restored. Great news for bluebells, fritillary butterflies and dormice!

The Econet conservation volunteers are continuing the coppice tradition in local managed sites, cutting the stems low, and then to size for bean poles, the rest used for pea sticks and plant supports, stakes and binders for hedgelaying. A few stems are left to encourage new



growth, and maybe some stems are layered to increase the numbers, lastly carefully covering the 'stool' with twigs to deter the pesky nibbling deer.

Econet, in conjunction with many local environmentally friendly gardening groups [including BBOWT] will be holding a wildlife gardening friendly event again at Caversham Court on Saturday April 21st. Bean poles will be for sale with pea sticks etc.

A good traditional product, [hazel has a rough bark, good for tender tendrils to hang on to], and by purchasing these you support our natural coppice habitats.

To help restore and preserve the coppice tradition and other conservation projects join the conservation volunteers econet www. econetreading.org.uk or BBOWT www.bbowt.org.uk

Beanpole Day: 21st April Get your garden ready for summer!

Econet's annual gardening event takes place on April 21st at Caversham Court Gardens by the River Thames from 10-3. Come and buy very reasonably priced plants and plant stakes whilst supporting local charitable organisations, enjoying the views and, perhaps, learning something new from interacting with environmental organisations, including bee-friendly and wildlife gardening and grow-your-own. We have vegetables (this is the place to buy a large range of tomato plants and grow on the assortment of shapes, colours and flavours promoted by chefs), wildflowers and ornamental plants. Our beanpoles, peasticks and plant stakes come from locally managed coppiced woodland and wetland, and your purchase helps maintain this traditional technique.

The local beekeepers, Wildlife Trust, FoE, Food4families, RSPB and others are all on site to answer any questions you may have on environmental matters. FairTrade offer you a range of products to buy with a clear conscience, and there are a range of activities all day including activities for children, demonstrations of products made using traditionally managed wood and waste wood, and the chance to make your own plant supports.

Bring your blunt tools for sharpening by our expert from Reading's repair café and the garden kiosk is open for light refreshments

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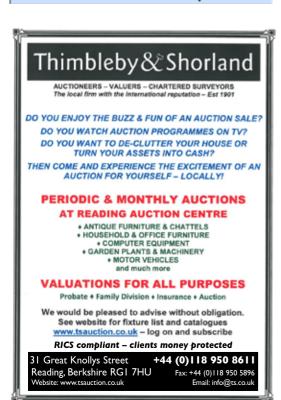


Since 2011, Thursday is Fisherman day.

Every Thursday 2-6pm St Andrew's Church Hall, Albert Road

The Caversham Heights café, named after our patron saint, St Andrew the fisherman, serves high quality teas, Italian-style coffees, homemade cakes, soft drinks, snacks and more!

A warm welcome awaits you.



Concert at St Barnabas Church, Emmer Green

On Sunday 29th April, Glass Ensemble make a welcome return to St. Barnabas Church, Emmer Green RG4 8RA, for their Spring Concert.

The concert will feature Renaissance motets by Victoria, Palestrina and Josquin des Prez, contrasted with folk songs from across the world, including Kenya, America, India and the British Isles. Experience the masters of the Western Choral tradition, alongside both ancient and modern songs representing five continents. There may even be a chance to get involved...!

The concert takes place at 4.00pm, and tickets cost £12 and can be purchased in advance from Susie 0118 947 9997 or via www.facebook.com/GlassEnsembleBerkshire

Easter Egg Trail in **Caversham Court**

Come along to Caversham Court on Saturday 31 March from 2-4pm. When the Friends of Caversham Court Gardens will be hosting an Easter Egg trail on a nature theme in the lovely riverside gardens. All young competitors will win an Easter egg prize or a non-dairy treat. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Entry is free, but donations to the Friends will be appreciated. The tea kiosk will be open for refreshments all afternoon. Further information from the Friends of Caversham Court Gardens - friends@fccg.org.uk

News from St. Barnabas Church

Easter Day on the 1st April will be celebrated with three services at St. Barnabas Church. Dawn Communion will be held at 5.30.a.m. This will be followed by a light breakfast. Subsequent services will take place at the usual time of 8.00am and 9.30am. It is planned to have a St. George's Day Parade non-communion service at 9.30am on the 22nd April. Sunday worship will be rounded off on the 29th April with a combined Benefice Service at 11.00am at Caversham Park Church.

Caversham WI

For Caversham WI's February meeting, we welcomed John and Lindsay Mullaney to talk about Reading Abbey. The talk set the scene of what Reading Abbey would most likely have looked like, and even sounded like, before covering the most recent discoveries and some of the stones found through the Hidden Abbey Stones project. It is not so surprising that some of the most visibly interesting stones from the abbey ruins have made their way into personal collections or into the safe keeping of local churches, over the many years it has been abandoned.

Next month, we will be holding our Annual Meeting - where the results of the year-long competition will be announced, a new committee will be elected, a few shared decisions will be made for the year ahead and we will follow this with a traditional quiz.

Ladies are very welcome to visit our friendly group. We hold meetings on the third Thursday of the month, at 7.30pm - which helps avoid child-care issues. There is usually easy parking and a lift to the first floor meeting room at Church House, Prospect Street. More details can be found online at https://tinyurl.com/hwzj6zy or search for "Caversham WI"

For enquiries please contact our Secretary, on 947 5176.

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Caversham Heights Society

There was only one meeting of the society during February which, appropriately enough, was a talk on 100 years of Reading Weather. Despite the bitter cold there was a good turnout to hear Dr Stephen Burt, from the department of meteorology at the university, talk about the weather records that have been kept since 1907. Rainfall and climate recordings were made at the London Road site of the university from 1908 until 1963 before they were moved to the geography department. Now there is a large observatory site, monitored daily on the Whiteknights campus. Rainfall has been measured since 1908; grass frost since 1960; and the wind speed and direction more recently. Barometric pressure and hours of sunshine are logged every second and sent to the Meteorology Office. This used to be in Bracknell but was moved to Exeter several years ago. Even so, because of Reading's work over the years and the presence of the European Weather Station on the Shinfield Road, and because the instruments used have improved in sensitivity and accuracy, the university's meteorology department is still the largest in Europe.

Because there is a detailed daily log of Reading's weather over the past century it has been possible to identify any unusual patterns or blips. For example 1903 was the wettest year but November 2014 to November 2016 saw the wettest two year period. 1903 also coincided with a period of Saharan dust blowing across the town. 1927, 1947, 1940, 1962/3, 1981/2, 2008 and 2010/11 saw very heavy snowfalls. [We should also include March 2018!] February 1929 saw the coldest day until 2010 although 6th January 1987 was the coldest day on record. 10th January 1940 saw the Thames freeze over and the winter of 1962/3 saw children

News from St Anne's School

At the beginning of February, 23 pupils from years one to four at St Anne's School took part in a Change4Life Sports Festival at the John Madejski Academy. They engaged in a wide range of physical activities, practising skills such as throwing, catching, hitting targets and scoring goals to increase their agility, balance and co-ordination. Stamina and endurance were also improved.

St Anne's pupils competed against seven other local primary schools and displayed both individual flair and strong team work with the result that the Year one and two team won their competition and will take part in the Berkshire Youth Games to be held at Bisham Abbey at the end of March.

A newly-formed girls' football team had played at the John Madejski Academy a few days before. Despite having only played together a couple of times, they displayed football skills and team work that augur well for future success after further training and more practice as a team. They were rewarded with certificates at the next praise assembly.

website cavershamheights.org

have three months off school. In contrast July

1983 was the hottest month, even hotter than

2006, though one day in December 2015 was

the hottest December day ever in Reading.

Since 1840 there have been six tornadoes that

have hit Reading. Amongst all the charts and data we had been given, two stand out: the first

is that, since 1956 the decline of fog has been

dramatic; the second is that this century has seen

16 of the warmest years of the last 25. However

when we were shown a graph of the weather

over the past 100 years it was clear that fears of

a dramatic increase in global warming affecting Reading are exaggerated. While the audience

was given a mass of data, the pity is that more was not made of particularly dramatic weather

Meetings of CHS are held fortnightly on a

Wednesday evening in the hall at Caversham

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website www.tvaw.org.uk or call 01189 972 1871 or 01189 972 2082.

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ladies to go to!

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

Established as an afternoon women's group. We held our AGM and afternoon tea in March, when it was decided to move the starting time of our meeting from 2pm to 2.15pm to allow more time between the departure of the playgroup and setting things up for our meeting.

The social studies group enjoyed a fascinating talk by Alan Copeland about Eccentric London.

International Women's Day was celebrated this year by a lunch in Banbury. Members of our guild attended and were inspired by the speakers: a professor and expert on human metabolism, an Army major (the first woman bomb disposal officer), and a lady who lived in and eventually escaped from

As an escape from reality, we went to the Mill at Sonning to see The Hound of the Baskervilles where we were terrified in complete safety and enjoyed another lunch.

Our Luncheon Club continues to thrive, as do the ambling, cinema and scrabble groups.

The next meeting is on Wednesday 18th April and the talk is The Length and Breadth of Britain, by Jane Windmill (she assures us this is not about hiking). Please note this meeting is at 2.15pm in the Woodcote room, Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, 74 Highmoor Road.

Any ladies wishing to visit or join us will be very welcome.

Chazey WI

Our February meeting was well attended for a cold winter evening. A welcome was given to members, new members and Suzanne Stallard our Speaker for the evening.

Suzanne spoke about her love for knitting and yarns starting when young and learning to knit at the age of five





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10a Richfield Avenue, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 8 EQ fo@richfieldflooring.co.uk/www.richfield flooring.co.ul with her grandmother as her teacher. Suzanne had brought samples of her work to show us. Her Fair Isle knitting was amazing and her use of colours fascinating. Thank's were given to Suzanne by Valerie Holden.

Refreshments were available for everyone and then the business of the evening began. Jill Dibben gave a report on our visit to The Mill at Sonning to see My Fair Lady, a very good production which everyone enjoyed.

Quiz feedback was given by Margaret Keen and our team came second! Our team enjoyed the evening, second out of 40 teams in two locations. Social event dates were mentioned - coffee, lunch, Knitting, Book Group and the Art Group! A nice selection for our

The February competition was won by Ann Jones, with Hazel Blackburn as second and Kate Walmsley third.

Members were reminded about Bean Pole Day in Caversham Court with promises given to bring preserves for our stall.

We meet on the first Tuesday in the month at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall on the corner of Highmoor Road and Woodcote Road beginning at 7.45pm.

Rosehill WI

President Margaret Pyle welcomed all members and visitors to our February meeting on a cold but sunny afternoon.

She then handed over to secretary Mary Robinson, who drew our attention to various items in Berkshire WI News, including the Spring Annual Council meeting to be held on Monday 9th April at the Palmer Building of the University of Reading where the speaker will be Rabbi Baroness Julia Neuberger DBE. There will also be other speakers and topics covered so it should be an interesting morning. Mary also mentioned a photographic workshop (on Friday 23rd March) and a talk about glaucoma (on Tuesday 27th March), plus other items taking

Our treasurer Judith Sharp, then reminded us that the subscriptions for 2018 are now due, also the balance of the visit to The Mill at Sonning. Judith also told us that the raffle cleared £27 and the Bring and Buy table cleared £15.40 at the January meeting. Thanks to all who donated. Several blankets and baby clothes for the RBH were also donated – keep those knitting needles going, there are never enough!

Margaret Pyle then went on to tell us that unfortunately two of our members, Rita Bush and Jennifer Poska had passed away.

Next, we came to the various clubs: the book club will meet on the 13th February: Scrabble will be held on the 14th and 28th February: the film club hope to see Finding Your Feet on Tuesday, 27th February. They did manage to see The Darkest Hour during January, which was enjoyed by all.

Margaret then introduced our speaker for the afternoon Alix Booth, who spoke on Entertaining Children Through Puppets and this proved to be a very entertaining show. Alix had with her many different hand puppets, and she told a story about the sounds that animals make, and as we were supposed to be three-year-olds, it was very funny. Finally, all members present were give a hand puppet and Alix demonstrated how to use them, and the afternoon finished with about 50 women doing the Hokey Cokey with their puppets. Many thanks, Alix, for a very entertaining afternoon which put a smile on everyone's face.

Finally, we came to our usual cup of tea and biscuit, with the raffle being drawn before Margaret closed the meeting.

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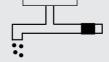
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