

Emmer Green fights Virus with Gazebos

by Phil Chatfield

The last few weeks have seen a transformation in our daily lives. Efforts to slow the spread of the Covid 19 pandemic have affected everyone. In a matter of days we learned to keep our distance from each other and to follow the simple rules to reduce the risk of infection. Trying to avoid touching your face is a real challenge and you become aware of how often we do so involuntarily.

In Caversham and Emmer Green we are now queueing in an orderly and well-spaced out manner for chemists, supermarkets and greengrocers. In Emmer Green, Dudmans the wholesale greengrocer has set up gazebos in front of their shop to sell fruit and vegetables, as well as taking orders for pre-packed boxes for collection. The shops which are open are limiting the number of customers allowed in at any one time and encouraging the use of contactless payments rather than cash. Most shops, cafes, pubs and the library are closed. As I have cycled around for exercise or for essential supplies, I have noticed how carefully people are keeping their distance. Dog walkers, joggers, those just walking through the parks and streets and families out looking for teddies in front windows as part of their daily exercise.

The reduction in traffic has been remarkable and has resulted in a noticeable improvement in air quality, which people have commented on. The lack of aircraft has both reduced noise and vapour trails, allowing us to enjoy clear blue skies in the first few days of our confinement.

Some people are walking about purposefully, avoiding eye contact, but others are exchanging greeting with strangers and even holding conversations, albeit from opposite sides of the road. Neighbours are chatting across garden fences or by phone. E-mail addresses and phone numbers are being shared and street level support groups being set up using social media. Hard to find



Dudman's Greengrocers, Emmer Green

photo Pam Chatfield

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Delivering your Caversham Bridge

by Phil Chatfield

Several people have asked if it is safe to deliver and receive the paper. Our volunteers made a real effort to deliver the April edition at a very worrying time. As an immediate response, the paper is now freely available on-line at: www.cavershambridge.org:5154 but, of course, some of our readers will not be internet users.

In whatever we do, we all need to follow the current Government advice. It has to be for individuals to decide, but it is in order for newspapers to be delivered as part of our daily exercise "allowance". They may also be delivered on the way to or from essential shopping. No one should take any unnecessary journeys or risks.

There is quite a bit of "false" news/information in circulation which can be quite alarming. It is important to consider the

source of any information you may see and to check the official sources such as Public Health England, the NHS and the Government. The BBC web site also provides many helpful links to information.

So, is it safe to receive a newspaper? The World Health Organisation (WHO) has provided widely reported advice from scientists and health experts which confirms newspapers are not transmitters of Covid-19, due to both the ink and the printing process that they go through. Virologist George Lomonosoff told BBC Radio Scotland on 10 March, "Newspapers are pretty sterile because of the way they are printed and the process they've been through (to be produced)." See Reference 1

Speaking on Good Morning Britain GP and health broadcaster, Dr Hilary Jones, also said: "For public health

information right now it's important people have access to information through newspapers." He added, "If someone physically picks them up and delivers them to a doorstep or letterbox it's safe."

WHO adds, "The likelihood of an infected person contaminating commercial goods is low and the risk of catching the virus that causes Covid-19 from a package that has been moved, travelled, and exposed to different conditions and temperature is also low". This reassurance extends to both Royal Mail and Amazon packages. Reference 2

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National Trust
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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas
Rev'd Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.
Tel: 947 8239.
www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrew
Rev'd Nigel Jones, St Andrew's Vicarage,
Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788
www.standrewscaversham.org

Caversham Thameside Ministry -
St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Rev'd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd John Dudley Tel: 9470265
Rev'd Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331810
Rev'd Judith Ryder Tel: 9473783
Rev'd Andy Storch Tel: 07365 555 905

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)
(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC)
Contact: Dr Alison Johnston
Tel: 0118 947 5152. www.cpv.org.uk

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY
Rev'd Martin Beukes, 72 Highmoor Road.
Tel: 0118 947 2223
Rev'd D Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH
Pastor Colin Baker
Church office tel 0118 954 5353
Email: secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)
www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

GRACE CHURCH
(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)
Pastor Keith Saynor
www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk Tel 9474529

ROMAN CATHOLIC
Our Lady and St Anne
Mgr Patrick Daly, The Presbytery,
2 South View Avenue. Tel: 947 1787.

St Michael
Fr Michael Sharkey, St Michaels,
Sonning Common Tel: 972 3418

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD
Rev'd H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009

TALKING POINT

by Keith Saynor



Appreciating the gift of life

"Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"
Matthew 6:27.

Some of you will remember the story of the 33 Chilean Miners who were rescued after being trapped for 69 days, 700 metres below the surface following a rock fall. The headline for the BBC news report on 14 October 2010 read; "Miners clock off 69-day shift from hell."

It is clear from reading the news stories that such a traumatic experience has caused many of those involved to reflect on what is really important in life. Perspectives have been changed. The sister of one of the miners commented; "I'm going to give him a really good kicking. He said the mine was crying (a term miners used when rocks fall from the roof of the tunnels) and he went in anyway. How stupid is that? Hopefully, this will teach us not to chase money but to be humble and treasure our friends and family instead." Her brother had not been due to work that day but had accepted a double shift at double pay. A nephew of another miner, after celebrating his uncle's rescue said this, "In this world we worry so much about insignificant things, while these 33 men were trapped underground just trying to survive. Maybe it's time we all started concentrating on the vital things of life and these two months have shown everyone counts."

Sometimes going through a crisis will change our perspective and highlight the important things in life. In December 2016 I underwent open heart surgery for a torn mitral valve. The operation was successful, and they managed to repair the valve. However, during the immediate recovery, I spent four days on a ventilator in ICU as my lungs would not re-inflate fully. During that time when I realised I could not breathe unaided I reflected on two things. Firstly, I realised how fragile life is and that every day is a gift from God (James 1:17). Secondly, I thought about trust and where it needs to be placed when going through the trials of life. There was only one place I could turn for help; to God. During my recovery this was reinforced for me when I read through some of the psalms and was struck that whatever the author David was going through, he often ended by expressing his trust in God. Psalm 27 is a great example of one where David places his absolute trust in God; "I would have despaired unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the Lord." (v 13,14)

Jesus would agree with both the comments of the wife and the nephew of the two miners on what is really important, and He would encourage each one of us at this time to turn to Him and trust Him. This current global COVID-19 crisis, which is full of trauma and anxiety for many, helps us to focus in this way also. Let me encourage you to read Jesus' teaching and perspective in Matthew 6 v 19-24 on money, Matthew 6 v 25-34 on anxiety, Matthew 18 v 1-6 on humility, and John 15 v 9-17 on friendship and loving others. As you do, allow the Holy Spirit to minister; to bring hope and peace in place of any discouragement or anxiety you may be feeling, and to bring a perspective on what in life are the things that really matter.

Keith Saynor

Pastor Grace Church Caversham

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SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

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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 Holy Communion with Healing Prayers usually 1st Sunday, Evensong (usually Choral on second Sunday)

St John, 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, 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, Harrogate Road

8.00am 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

10.30am Morning Worship each Sunday
6.30pm House of Prayer (praise and prayer) –
2nd Sunday each month
3.45pm 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

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Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm
Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

St Michael, Sonning Common

5.30pm Saturday
9.00am and 10.30am Sunday

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10.30am (House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

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Church Street, Caversham

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6.00pm Evening Service

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Tel: 947 1703 email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

ST BARNABAS

St Barnabas Centre
Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am-10.30am
Tel: 947 6310 Website: www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

Caversham Bridge

The Caversham Bridge is sold for 40p per copy and is available in Caversham at the Caversham Emporium in Church Street and in Emmer Green at the True Food Community Co-Op in Grove Road, opposite St Barnabas church.

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Advertising copy for the June 2020 issue should be sent **Friday 24th April**. The date for the July 2020 issue **Friday 29th May**.
Email address is: advertising@cavershambridge.org

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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 reserve the right to edit contributions submitted for matters of style, grammar, vocabulary and factual correctness, and to conform to the standards of our established editorial practice. In cases of difference the editors will endeavour to refer back to the submitter of content for resolution.

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Emmer Green fights Virus with Gazebos

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commodities, such as eggs, have been shared around and those who cannot do their own shopping have been helped.

Buses are still running, but with very few passengers. They provide an essential service for the many key workers who need to travel to work – from those in health care and the food supply chain to our dustmen and the water industry. A neighbour commented to me “Our gardens will be better this year than ever before” as those with gardens make the most of the warmer and longer days to sow seeds and deal with the weeds. Long postponed jobs, such as tidying garages and sheds are being tackled. I expect the queues for the Civic Amenity Site will be huge when we can once again take our recycling there. Hopefully charity shops will also benefit, although the

closure will impact on their earnings and the support they provide to their causes.

Many people have put rainbow posters in their windows to show support for the National Health Service. The “Clap For Our Carers” events brought people out onto the streets on Thursdays 26 at 8pm. This provides us with a way to thank NHS workers who are looking after our loved ones and battling the coronavirus pandemic. The message has been circulating widely on social media and there were reports of tired hospital staff on their way home being moved to tears.

One impact of the ban on meetings has been the closure of all our places of worship. For Christians, the preparation for, and celebration of, Easter are a central part of their faith. The churches are still alive and active, and many have organised on-line resources and services. But for some stopping regular worship is very painful, as the habits of a lifetime have been disrupted.

Delivering your Caversham Bridge – continued from page 1

For those making deliveries, it is useful to take account of the information from Royal Mail. In line with guidance from Public Health England, they advise their colleagues that good hand hygiene is the first and most important line of defence. Disposable gloves are also made available to their people on request. Those delivering newspapers are advised to follow the general rules on social distancing, hand hygiene and not touching the face. They should avoid touching door-knobs, gates or other hard surfaces. Wearing gloves will clearly help. For those who are extremely vulnerable, the NHS advice is for people to stay at home. If you are in this category, you should have received

a letter from the NHS. For more information on this, see the NHS web site. Reference 3

Reference 1: BBC Scotland: www.broadcastdownload.precise.co.uk/assets/174136/NewsUK_BBCRadioScotland_10.03.2020_11.47.mp3

Reference 2: WHO Covid 19 Frequently asked questions: www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses

Reference 3: NHS Web site: www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/advice-for-people-at-high-risk/
Web sites accessed 3 April 2020

Reponses to the virus in Caversham



photos C Moloney, Pam and Phil Chatfield

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Alternatively copies of this paper can be purchased from: Caversham Emporium in Church Street, and The True Food Co-op in Grove Road, Emmer Green.

Your views matter

by Phil Chatfield

Last month we announced we would be including a reader survey in this, the May edition. We still plan to carry out the survey, but feel now is not the right time. We all have a lot of other important things on our minds at the moment. So we have postponed the survey until later in the year. However, we will make the survey form available from 1 May through our web site at: cavershambridge.org:5154/Readers-survey-2020

Churches adapt to the challenge

by Phil Chatfield

Our churches have had to close their doors during the Covid-19 outbreak, possibly for the first time ever. For some, their normal pattern of regular worship has been disrupted, something which is particularly difficult in Lent and through Easter.

Churches and clergy have been finding new ways to connect with their members and the wider community. The ubiquity of smart phones and laptops with cameras make virtual links much easier. It is not the same as physically worshipping together, but is providing a way we can see one another as we share in on-line services. Services have been recorded and made available on YouTube – for example the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu has recorded services from his home, one of which he starts with drumming - the traditional Ugandan call to prayer.

Churches in Caversham have broadcast live services over the internet (Caversham Baptist Church and the Caversham Park Church). These include a "virtual Communion" on Easter Sunday for the latter. A number of Catholic churches have live streams of scheduled masses, including SS Gregory & Augustine Parish, Oxford and St Bede's Basingstoke, which are available on Church TV. Grace Church is using its Facebook members' site as a central hub for communication. Regular updates, prayer requests, video messages and other items are being posted. Their website is being

used to post weekly sermons and the blog pages are also being regularly updated. Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish has a YouTube channel for its services.

The on-line meeting application Zoom enables meetings with many participants. The Methodist Church in Caversham has used this for services. It has the advantage of enabling everyone participating to see one another and to sing and pray together whilst being apart. The Methodist Minister, Martin Beukes is also sending regular "Church where We Are" e-mails with news, services and reflections from church members.

Some clergy have live streamed their own daily prayers. Many are making a point of keeping in contact with people who do not have access to e-mail or the internet, delivering newsletters or making phone calls.

Archbishop of York: www.archbishopofyork.org/news/news-2020/morning-service-bishopthorpe-palace

Church TV: www.churchservices.tv

Caversham Park Church: Cavershamparkchurch.com

Grace Church Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/GraceChurchCaversham

Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish (St John, St Peter and St Margaret): www.youtube.com/channel/UCYMgve_d64enHsm1FUfwntA

A prayer about the outbreak

Lord Jesus Christ,

You taught us to love our neighbour;

and to care for those in need

as if we were caring for You.

In this time of anxiety, give us strength

to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick,

and to assure the isolated

of our love, and Your love,

for Your Name's sake.

Amen.

Taken from the Church of England web site

Kids Corner

Anna Clarke, Children & Families Worker at St John's, Caversham, has been working on some on-line resources for children at this time while churches are closed.

She has produced three short programmes which are available on YouTube:

Psalm 23 and Lord's Prayer:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ddErr12Te4&t=8s

Jesus and the Children:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAXr7bfiWkK

Armour of God:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xGTY5oow4E

Watch out for new programmes!

For loads more ideas for things to do at home with children,

Anna also recommends: flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/p/things-to-do-at-home.html

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Support your local National Trust properties

by Phil Chatfield

I am writing at the beginning of April as we enter the second week of the Coronavirus "lockdown". Right now it is difficult to think too far ahead. But we all hope for a return to something more normal later in the summer, and perhaps it is time to plan for some local trips out.

Like many other charities and businesses, the National Trust has been hit hard by the impact of the pandemic. We are very fortunate in Caversham in having a number of their properties within 10-12 miles of us. All would make a great trip out by bike or car and, with the exception of West Green House, they have catering facilities for morning coffee, lunch or an afternoon tea. Once the current "Stay at home" restrictions are lifted, these properties will need as much support as possible. So take time now to browse the National Trust web site and plan your trips.

In the meantime, their web site has a host of suggestions for back garden activities for all the family – see www.nationaltrust.org.uk/things-to-do

Greys Court – This picturesque 16th-century mansion and gardens were home to the Brunner family until recent years. The house exudes a welcoming atmosphere with a well-stocked kitchen and homely living rooms. The series of walled gardens is a colourful patchwork of interest set amid medieval ruins. Buildings from earlier eras include the Great Tower from the 14th century and a rare Tudor donkey wheel, in use until the early 20th century.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court

Basildon Park – An estate saved from almost certain demolition and lovingly restored. An 18th-century house sitting in 162 hectares (400 acres) of historic parkland and gardens. It was purchased by Lord and Lady Iliffe in the 1950s. The Iliffes brought Basildon Park back to life,

acquiring a collection of fine furnishings and carefully selected Old Masters. The wooded parkland offers glorious seasonal colour, while the landscape has been carefully restored to offer wonderful views, peaceful trails and picnic places, with areas for children to run and play.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/basildon-park

Nuffield Place – The home of William Morris, Lord Nuffield, the founder of Morris Motors and one of the great men of the 20th Century. Incredibly successful but a real philanthropist, he provided extensive support to health care facilities, including our own Royal Berkshire Hospital. Explore the garden and local woodland walks.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/nuffield-place



Wildflower meadow, The Vyne

photo P Chatfield

The Vyne – A Tudor house turned 17th century home set in gardens, woodlands and wetlands. In addition to the garden, there is a walled garden which is partly planted as a wildflower meadow, and extensive walks by the lake and through the woods. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/the-vyne

West Green House Garden – A celebrated garden with an intriguing collection of follies. The garden has many original features, including a grand water staircase, created by Marylyn Abbott, which provides the focal point for the Nymphaeum Fountain designed by Quinlan Terry.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/west-green-house-garden



West Green House Garden

photo P Chatfield

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Tackling Loneliness – the Firtree Club

By Colin Ferguson – Firtree Chairman

Loneliness is a major problem for older people nowadays, especially after bereavement, when it is hard to cope with the many changes that will be needed in your life. Retirement also brings many challenges and opportunities, but learning a new way of living is not easy for many people. There are many groups set up in Reading, especially under the Age UK umbrella, or U3A and the local authority. Local churches are very good at setting up lunch clubs and giving pastoral support as well as opportunities for older people to meet together.

The main challenge is to take the steps to join in. It is not just a problem for today as, back in the 70s, the Reading Retirement Club was founded (1972) to meet the need by providing a range of opportunities for people who had retired and wanted to meet socially. That club still exists after forty-eight years. It has changed as the years have passed and no longer meets in Reading centre, but is now hosted by the Church of Latter-Day Saints (commonly known as the Mormons) and at the YMCA.

It is now called the Firtree Club, (Friends In Retirement Taking Relaxation, Exercise and Education) - an acronym invented some forty years ago. Over the years, the club has had to move, mainly due to financial restrictions. Firtree currently has a programme of meetings across the week, bridge group on Mondays and a monthly garden circle which moves around to different centres and always seems to find tea and cake. On Tuesdays we meet for a chat before listening to an interesting talk, followed by scrabble or bridge and table tennis in the afternoon. Wednesdays include movement to music (gentle exercises), a songster's group, whist, and craftwork. We play bowls on Thursdays - at Prospect Park in the summer and at Rivermead in the winter. We also have an occasional outing and an annual holiday.

What is different then, about us? Our meetings are open to anyone who is retired or part retired in the Reading post code area and, though we meet in a church, we are not a church based or political group. We have no paid staff, nor do we have any regular financial support from the council or anyone else, and we are

run by a committee elected annually by our members. We fund ourselves by an annual subscription of £35.00 (which for most members is less than £1.00 a session). New members are welcome to come for free before committing to membership. Generally speaking, we are older people doing it for ourselves.

We don't see ourselves being in competition with anyone else, just providing what we have always sought to do – an opportunity for people who are retired and want to meet together, or quite simply to save people from being alone. It isn't always easy, as we are bound, as are all charities, to operate within the law, and finding members who have the skills to do our accounts and other necessary work while keeping to our constitution is a challenge. We also work with the other agencies and the Council officers on the wider issues affecting older people in Reading, and we are recognised as a valuable addition to our community resources.

A small number of us live in Caversham and yes - it is a bit of a journey unless you have a car (we have plenty of parking space). And it is two buses (on Route 33 – Church End Lane). The friendship and relaxed atmosphere make it a good place to be. If this applies to you, just come along or contact me for more information. or look on our website www.firtree-reading.com

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photo P Chatfield

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HAPPY WANDERER

Do you like butter?

by Happy Wanderer

For the merry month of May, I thought I'd write about a plant that you won't have to travel far to see, and that might remind you of "normal" times when you could get to see it growing en masse, as here, without feeling guilty.

There are three common species of Buttercup that grow in grassland in our area. The most frequent, the Creeping Buttercup, is actually a nuisance weed in some gardens, spreading by runners, a bit like strawberries. Meadow Buttercups are taller and more upright, and Bulbous Buttercups grow from swollen leaf-bases, just below the soil, that look like bulbs. In woods round here, the Goldilocks Buttercup is fairly common. It has very small petals, some, most, or all of which seem to be missing, while the Celery-leaved Buttercup grows by ponds and streams.

Buttercups, with yellow, reflective petals are instantly recognisable. In cow pastures, their presence has been thought to enrich the cream of the cows, and to improve the colour of the butter made from it. On May Day, it was traditional to rub buttercup flowers on the cows' udders, to make sure that this happened. But that was in Ireland, and it seems distinctly fanciful, since cows tend to avoid eating Buttercups, because in large quantities they are poisonous.

Geoffrey Grigson, in his "Englishman's Flora," wrote that in Berkshire and neighbouring counties they called them Crazies, Crazy, Crazy Bet or Crazy Weed. Had the public library been open, I might well have gone down into town to find out the origin of the name of the area near Wargrave known as Crazies Hill. Maybe it was the hill where Buttercups grew.

When I was a child, and we were expected to go out most days (Sundays excepted) and play with the neighbours' children, we still held Buttercup flowers under someone's chin, to see if they liked butter. If the petals reflected yellow under the chin, then they liked butter. I never knew the test to fail – but then I never came across anyone who didn't like butter! Butter was a treat: we were more used to the taste of margarine in those days. Households also saved the dripping from the Sunday beef joint, and that was spread on toast instead of butter.

Only once have I eaten butter made from unpasteurised cream, and it was something

of a revelation. I was returning from a holiday on Orkney, and it was midsummer. The people at the guest house said I should go to a certain shop in Kirkwall, and buy at least a pound of farmhouse butter to take home. It had to be the farmhouse butter. Back in Caversham, I tasted a scraping from the paper in which it was wrapped. I turned up my nose – it had gone "off." Then gradually I realised that what I was tasting was vaguely familiar. It was like tasting the smell of cows. I was sent back to the golden days of childhood, when you could get cream that was cream in colour and tasted like this from the farm. And I was sorry when the butter was all eaten.



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The Bells of St Peter's and St Margaret's

by Doug Beaumont, Tower Captain

If you live in the vicinity of St Peter's Church you may well be familiar with the sound of the church bells. The church has eight bells, the heaviest of which weighs 8 hundredweight (400 Kilogrammes), in its bell chamber. The bells are controlled by ringers in the ringing chamber below the bells. They use ropes with special grips woven into them called 'Sallies'. These help the ringers grip the rope and at St Peters are made from yellow and purple wool. There is a substantial floor between the ringing and bell chambers so the sound of the bells is not too loud.

There is a thriving bell ringing community at the church which meets on Tuesday evenings for practice.



Bell Ringers ready for action

photo D Beaumont

Experienced bell ringers teach novices this quintessential English art. Ringing is just as much about team work, fun and friendship as practice.

The sound is created by ringing the bells in a particular pattern. Most ringers begin by ringing what's known as 'rounds', which is the typical ringing tune many people associate with ringing. There are many more complex patterns which can be 'called' by a member of the bell ringing team.

Once the coronavirus restrictions have been lifted and we resume bell ringing, any readers who would like to visit us on a practice night to see the bellringers in action, would be very welcome - just email the secretary, David Sumner, on bells@stpetercaversham.org.uk to say you'd like to visit. Our practice night is on Tuesdays, 7.30-9.00pm. A visit would last from 20 minutes to as long as you wish to stay at the practice.

World Book Day at St Anne's school

by Jane Shaw

At the beginning of March, St Anne's School celebrated books for a whole week about but 'World Book Day' was very special. As Head teacher, Sarah Bento, said in her newsletter, "The children had vanished; they were nowhere to be seen and, in their place, appeared a myriad of characters from the magical to the devilish, from princesses to burglars and from super grannies to enchanted animals."

Staff joined in the fun and appeared in a variety of disguises and enjoyed the day as much as the children who were delighted to see their teachers and other staff all dressed up. The children paraded into assembly showing off their costumes to start off the day which will be remembered fondly as one of the happiest of the school year.



Dressed up for World Book Day photo J Wright

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Kicking the plastic habit

by Anne-Marie Evans



Unnecessary wrapping collected at the "Unwrap" event.

A number of local residents have set up a group to steer Caversham towards becoming an accredited plastic free community. Their aim is to protect the environment by reducing our plastic footprint. They are part of a nationwide initiative organised by the marine conservation group Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) which brings together and empowers individuals, small businesses, local government, schools and community groups. The Plastic Free Caversham campaign, backed by Reading Council, was launched last September at Reading Civic offices.

The campaign is about ending our addiction to the non-essential single use plastics such as carrier bags, cups, straws, bottles, etc. It is not about eliminating all plastic from our lives, but focuses on the disposable plastic which is causing untold harm to marine life. The world's rivers, oceans and coastlines are choking with plastic pollution, and it needs the power of group action to eliminate it from our communities.

To become a fully accredited Plastic Free Town, local businesses, schools, and community organisations need to remove a minimum of three items of single use plastic that can be replaced by suitable sustainable alternatives. Making sustainable alternatives available to customers will bring about much needed change and reduce the amount of throwaway plastic in our society.

The campaign is fully supported by Caversham Traders' Association. Several members - local businesses, Hemdean House School and the Weller Centre - have all received plastic free champion awards from SAS. These efforts by individual businesses and organisations will help Caversham to accomplish its overall standing as a plastic free community.

The campaign is also about volunteer actions, such as the litter pick reported in the April edition of the Caversham Bridge, and awareness-raising events targeting the plastic problem. The group staged a "mass unwrap" event in Waitrose recently. A team of volunteers encouraged customers to unwrap unnecessary plastic from their shopping. At the end of the event there were four trollies piled high with plastic. Reading Councillor Ayo Sokale and local MP Matt Roda were there to support the event. It was a great way to show the scale of the challenge and to send a clear message to supermarkets that more action is needed.

If you would like to be involved in the Plastic Free Caversham group, please contact Anne-Marie Evans on 07707 470336, or engage through the Facebook page, www.facebook.com/plasticfreecaversham and Instagram @plasticfreecaversham

For information on Surfers Against Sewage, see their web site, www.sas.org.uk #plasticfreecommunities



Give your clothes a second chance

by Phil Chatfield

Every year an estimated 336,000 tonnes of used clothing goes to landfill in the UK. And it is thought we have £30 billion worth of unused clothes in our wardrobes. The Waste and Resources Action Programme report "Valuing our clothes" presents estimates for the carbon, water and waste footprints of clothing. The annual footprint of a household's newly bought clothing, along with the washing and cleaning of its clothes, is thought to be equivalent to the:

- carbon emissions from driving an average modern car for 6,000 miles
- water needed to fill over 1,000 bathtubs
- weight of over 100 pairs of jeans

A lot of us have been using some of our enforced time at home in recent weeks to go through our cupboards and drawers. So what should we do with the clothes we no longer want or need?

The "Love your clothes" web site has a lot of useful ideas aimed at reducing our clothing waste. The site provides advice on buying clothes, care and repair and, ultimately, disposal. It suggests selling, swapping, donating or recycling the clothes, and provides useful links to online resources to help with these.

In Caversham and Emmer Green there are plenty of charity shops which aim to give your clothes a second chance and raise funds for good causes. There are also a number of clothes banks. No matter how worn clothes are, there is always a way to keep them out of the dustbin.

For more information, see:

www.loveyourclothes.org.uk/

www.wrap.org.uk/content/clothing-waste-prevention

www.oxfam.org.uk/donate/donate-goods/what-happens-to-your-donation/wastesaver



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LES COOPER IN THE GARDEN



Lupins

In June 1937 an exhibition in the Royal Horticultural Society's Vincent Square Hall caused a mini sensation. It was all about lupins. On a stand of five hundred square feet were great numbers of beautiful and stately lupins. They were, of course, Russell lupins.

It is hard for us to understand the excitement of that time. We are now well used to new flower introductions with novelties coming out every year and, as a cynic might say, being forgotten the next.

The story behind their introduction is fascinating. George Russell worked as a gardener in York and, in 1911 at the age of 55, became interested in the lupins available at that time. He grew them on an allotment (later two allotments) and they were blue, white or pink flowered and George thought he could improve them. As they flowered some were a little better than others and were saved while the rest were dumped before any pollen was formed. After a while he became dissatisfied and thought he could do better. There is uncertainty about what followed, but it seems as though George grew annual lupins with more colour. Despite setbacks such as good plants lacking perenniality he persevered. Amazingly he never hand pollinated nor did he take cuttings. Eventually word got around and James Baker, a nurseryman from Codsall near Wolverhampton, learned of these wonders and, after a good deal of gentle persuasion, managed to acquire all the lupin plants. Then every plant was moved from the allotment to Bakers Nursery at Codsall where propagation took place to increase the number for sale.

Russell lupins became very popular, but then Bakers Nursery discontinued and no new plants were being raised and the old stock deteriorated badly. Russell lupins were never long-lived perennials. However, during the last few years, several people have introduced new plants and some good seed is obtainable. Lupins are easy to grow from seed, especially if you chit the seed, that is gently ease a small piece of the hard shell off the seed. Alternatively you can soak the seed in water for a short time to soften the hard casing. Lupins are not long-lived and they do not like limey soil. Finally a warning that in latter years a new big ugly aphid has appeared from somewhere and you may need to spray to get rid of it.



Lupins in all their glory

The end of an era

by Alan Wright



Whitings shop, Coldicutt Street

photo JWright

At the end of March, Whitings the Butcher in Coldicutt Street, Lower Caversham, finally closed its doors after a century of trading. The business was originally set up by a Frederick Coldicutt, after whom the street was named. It was carried on by a Mr. Liddiard, and then Mr. Townsend, before Mr. Whiting took it over some 50 years ago. The present owner Martin Howarth, nephew of Mr. Whiting, took over the business and retained the name. Due to his ill health the shop has been run for the last two years by his son, Daniel. Throughout its time the shop has specialised in responsibly sourced meat of high quality.

Daniel reminisces about the number of small shops which used to exist in this area of Caversham, including the well-loved sweet shop. Whitings is the last to close. Daniel and Martin wish to thank all their customers for their loyalty and support over the years and, in turn, we wish Daniel well in the new career he is about to begin.

A tale of two museums

by Keith Watson

Caversham Heights Society

The meetings or events of the Society are now suspended because of the corona virus restrictions. For further information, see the web site at www.cavershamheights.org or cavershambridge.org:5154/local-info/whats-on in the "What's On" pages on the Caversham Bridge web site.

The Caversham Heights Society held two events during March before the decision was taken to cancel future events until further notice. The last three lectures of the season will now hopefully be rearranged for next season, which should begin in September. The mini-holiday in Kent planned for May has also been cancelled.

The first of the March events was a lecture on the Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH) Medical Museum by Richard Havelock, the Chair of the Museum Trustees. Richard spoke about the history of the Museum on 4 March at short notice, as the scheduled speaker was ill. The RBH was opened in 1839, at the height of a cholera epidemic, and the museum was opened in the old laundry, where it is still located, in 1881.

The Museum was originally meant to house the archives of the hospital. These are now supplemented by a display which traces the history of developments in medicine over the past nearly 200 years. In the early years patients were bled using leeches, some of which are still on display. It was believed they sucked out poisons and other infections. Richard showed different gadgets and equipment, some of which looked pretty gruesome, used for carrying out operations. Different types of anaesthetic for sedation were described. Modern keyhole surgery, much of which has been pioneered by staff at the RBH was also covered. The evolution of prosthetic limbs from rather crude appliances developed to help victims of the first World War, to modern ones which are now unbelievably realistic was shown.

The Museum also shows how operating theatres, as

well as doctors and nurses clothing, have changed over the years and illustrates how medicines and pills, as well as pharmacies, have changed. One of the most intriguing exhibits is an iron lung that was developed by William Morris, Lord Nuffield, to help victims of poliomyelitis. Lord Nuffield developed quite strong links with the RBH and even paid for several consultancy appointments and chairs in different fields of medicine.

Richard's ended his illuminating talk by saying that the Museum is open to visitors on the first and third Sunday of the month between 2.00 and 4.30pm.

The second event was a visit to the British Motor Museum at Gaydon in Warwickshire on March 11. This was a tour down memory lane for members of the Society, showing the development of the British motor car over the years. The highlight for many was a talk on the history of the Mini, entitled 'Wizardry on Wheels'. It has been described as the most successful car of the last century and the fact that it is still being produced and driven is testament to its durability. We will have a more detailed report of the visit in our June edition.



Photo British Motor Museum

Morris Mini Cooper S, Monte Carlo 1967 winner

Butterfly bonus on the allotment

by William Cecil

Caversham boasts several allotments – which, thankfully, allotment holders have been allowed to tend during 'lockdown'.

Not only do the allotment holders grow a range of vegetables, fruit and flowers, the allotments can also be a place to encourage and enjoy a diverse range of wildlife.

One Caversham allotment holder has combined managing her allotment with attracting a spectacular range of butterflies.

Due to a steep slope, she needed to create a barrier around her plot in order to stop the soil tumbling on to the paths, so she planted a border of oregano (marjoram) – which has proved a butterfly magnet. "I try my best to keep my bit wildlife friendly

as possible, especially for butterflies - so far this year I have seen orange tips, brimstones, cabbage white, and peacocks. I edged the border of my beds with oregano, and later in the year there will be a lot of other species to enjoy!"

As the summer progresses, the plot will be alive with butterflies – including holly blues, common blues, small copper, gatekeepers, meadow browns, ringlets, red admirals, commas, and small tortoiseshells.

Allotments clearly provide a range of benefits – "The exercise does me good – but enjoying the butterflies is the big plus. It's what keeps me going!"

And as for the produce – the allotment holder grows a wide range

of vegetables, as well as soft fruit and grapes, plus cut flowers to fill her house – "Well, that is a bonus."



Peacock Butterfly

Photo P Chatfield

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Proposed development at Reading Golf Club

by Phil Chatfield,

based on information from Keep Emmer Green

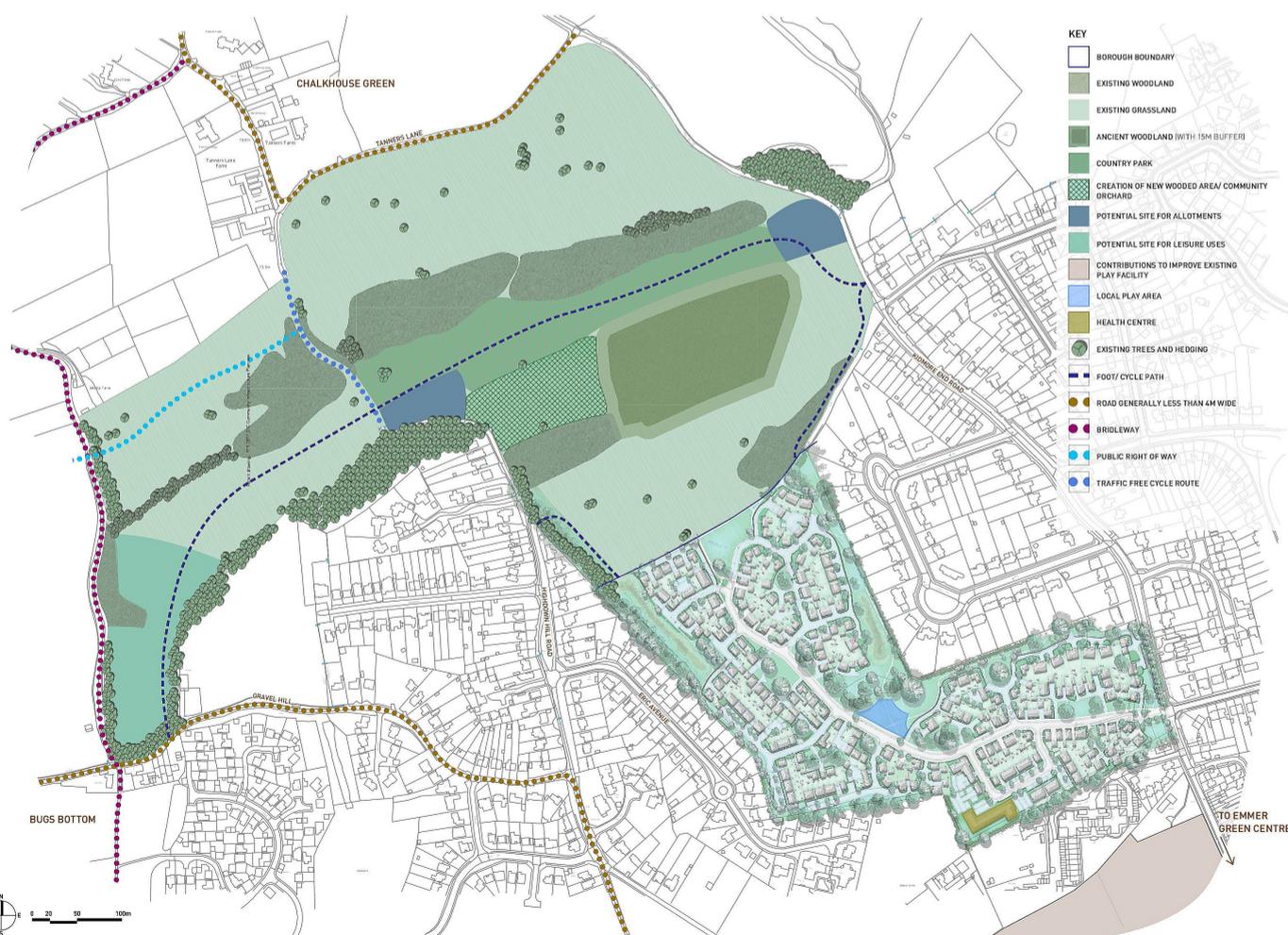
Proposals for the construction of nearly 250 new homes on the Reading Golf Club (RGC) site were the subject of a public exhibition in early February. The club is in Emmer Green, although the golf course includes a substantial area in Oxfordshire.

Our March edition included a letter from the Club Chairman, Colin Reed, seeking local support for the proposals. He stated that "remaining in Emmer Green would mean imminent insolvency and collapse for the club". He emphasised the benefits of a proposed new healthcare centre, new public access land, improved walking and cycling links between Emmer Green and Caversham, and funding towards public transport and play space provision.

However, the Keep Emmer Green (KEG) campaign group have expressed shock, anger and sadness at the proposals. They are highly critical of the management of the Club, claiming it has failed to address the need to change with the times and make the club more attractive to potential members. They believe the Club has under-performed in comparison with other clubs in England. According to England Golf, the body representing golf clubs in England, the average club derives around 21% of its income from visitors, whereas RGC manages only 7% to 8%. Elsewhere, improved marketing and investment in modern facilities to make clubs more family friendly are seen as the formula for successful golf clubs. The Club has been in existence for more than 100 years and has survived two World Wars and major financial crises. But it now seems set on moving to Caversham Heath, with the expectation of a 'six-figure' sum of money for each member following the sale of the land.

Many local residents are not convinced of the benefits. They believe the local infrastructure could not cope with the number of new residents. With space allocated for up to 500 cars in the development proposals, neighbours have warned of the impact of so many extra cars on narrow streets. They said local schools are oversubscribed. They have expressed doubts about the proposed medical centre being built, citing the failure to deliver proposals for a medical centre and school as part of the nearby Bugs Bottom development.

KEG claim the Golf Club was a willing participant in the Reading Local Plan, approved by the Council and signed off by a Government Inspector in November 2019. The local plan provides for building between 90 and 130 houses on a small part of the Golf Club land which would secure the future of golf on the remainder. Cash from the development of the land could enable the RGC to continue for many years to come, with a new clubhouse and additional land to replace the land lost to housing. Numerous alternative options were presented to the Club to demonstrate how the course could be re-structured to continue as a beautiful parkland 18-hole course. These suggestions and the Council Local Plan appear to have been ignored in the proposals put forward in February. Their plan shows 250 homes on part of the land within the Reading Borough Council boundary and a ten year option has been granted to Fairfax Properties to develop the remaining land, which all lies within South Oxfordshire.



Plan of the proposed golf course development

Summary of the proposals

A total of 249 new homes

About 200 houses, most with three or more bedrooms

Around 75 of the new homes will be affordable housing spread across the site
The development will be solely on land in RBC, which is about a third of the 109 acre RGC site

Green space will account for just over 60 per cent of the development site
A planning application will be sent to the Council this spring following consideration of feedback from club members and the public.



photo Philip Chatfield

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School's out – but not for all

Most of our school children have been sent home, although schools have remained open to provide for the children of key workers and some others. For those who cannot attend school, a whole new world of home learning has opened up. For many of these pupils, learning in structured sessions continues with on-line lessons: P.E. with Joe Wicks (on YouTube) and work submitted by e-mail or as photos sent to teachers. Here we bring you some different views on this new world.

Home Schooling – a pupil's view

by Erin, aged 12

This is my second week of home schooling and I have done Joe Wicks' work out throughout this week. Home schooling can be very boring at times because I'm away from all my friends, but it can also be fun, and you can spend quality time with your family.

I have been baking in my spare time but only foods that don't use too many ingredients because we are trying to save some in case shops close at some point. The teachers are setting quite a lot of homework, some of which is optional. Personally I think they are setting harder stuff than we normally do in class, so I end up asking my friends for help on our daily calls to each other. My classmates and I mainly keep in touch by text but sometimes we use WhatsApp to call each other.

Most of the schoolwork set is supposed to be submitted on-line so we have to take a photo of it then submit it using an App, but sometimes it is really glitchy.

Some schools are doing face time lessons but, whereas our school is just setting work, I think it would be easier to complete



The new classroom photo *J Outhwaite*

the work if we were doing face time but some people don't have access to face time or to Skype. Overall home schooling feels very weird but I'm starting to get used to it.

Home learning – what do parents think?

By Jackie Outhwaite and
Nicky Lister

It can be hard to motivate pupils who were due to take exams this summer. These pupils will be given an assessed mark by their teachers based on their work to date and standardised by the exam boards. They will have the option to sit exams later in the year or next summer if they wish – perhaps because the assessment mark was low. Their teachers are setting a lot of work, including past exam papers. But, until they know if and when they will be sitting their exams, there seems little point in working through these papers now.

For University students, lectures continue, but now on-line, and course work must be completed as normal. Some will even have online exams. Most students are at home, but some, especially those in their final year, are still in their student accommodation, even though they cannot attend lectures.

As a family we have a daily routine with

a time for exercise, school work, creative tasks and chores. This is working well as the kids know what is coming. We have all been enjoying Joe Wicks to get us going in the morning and, as a change to school work, other on-line programs, from Steve Backshall to craft classes.

My girls at secondary school have been given work for most of the lessons they would have had at school. Details come via an App on their phones (I have a copy too) which was used for homework before the schools closed. For the eldest (Year 9) this works quite well. She is bright, enjoys school and does a lot of it with her friends on Skype. I'm not sure if it's a good thing, but is it worth a battle if she is getting the work done?

It's more difficult for my younger daughter, who generally finds school more difficult and isn't as organised. She struggles to get started with the set work and panics about the amount to do. So for her we need to break it down into daily manageable chunks.

Teachers all have email addresses the kids can use to submit work and ask for help. When we have contacted them, they have been amazing, with same-day responses. For some subjects, generally the core ones, they have also emailed me if homework has not been submitted.

My son is in Year 3 at junior school. Their term project is the Romans, so they have a number of Roman related tasks, from making a shield to writing about a day in the life of a Roman Soldier. They have maths books to work through and times tables and spellings to learn via games on the school website. Teachers have posted YouTube videos both to keep in touch and to offer challenges to the kids. More learning videos and tasks are being put together for after Easter. My son appears to enjoy these activities but, as the days go by, he seems to ask or mention friends and family more. It's so hard for him not to know how long it will be like this.

The children say the hardest part is not having someone to ask questions of when they are stuck and continually finding the motivation to work. I find it hard not always having the knowledge to help them

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School's out – but not for all

when needed. I am wondering if we are doing too little, too much, or not making enough of this time together.

For now, if we all can stay healthy, enjoy each other's company at least sometimes and keep talking to each other, we are winning. But if this break lasts until the autumn, how will children cope? Some may not have access to resources like laptops, printers or cameras to photograph their work. What will be the long-term effect on learning outcomes and school discipline?

Home learning - a teacher's experience

by Nicole Beukes

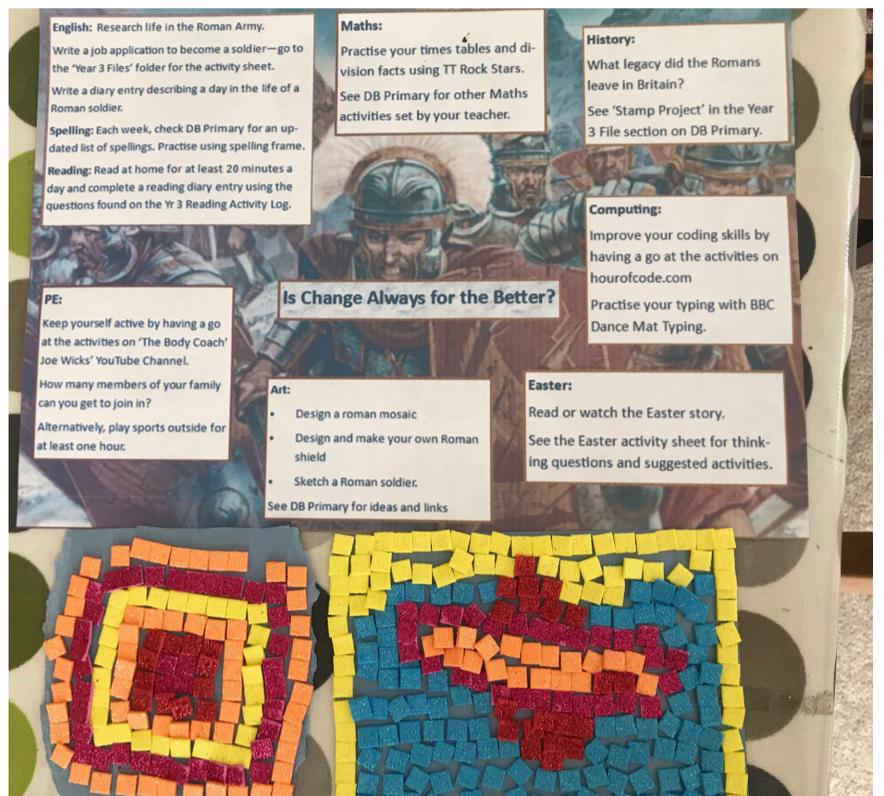
Schools and their staff had very little time to prepare for school closure and the consequences for home learning. My school had looked at experiences abroad and had started to plan for the possibility. However, we had just two clear days from the Government announcement to the closure of schools.

This resulted in a huge workload, particularly for school administration staff, in a very short time. For example, e-mail accounts had to be set up for teachers' "Classroom" mail, and new staff rotas established to ensure staff are available to be in school for the key workers' children and some others. Our school has set up a three-team rota. Each team spends a week at school and then two weeks working from home, which allows for self-isolation if anyone develops symptoms of the virus.

Teachers spend a lot of time planning lessons, often establishing different objectives for their pupils based on their individual needs. This becomes much more difficult when the lessons have to be loaded on the school website by 8.30am and must be done even during the week when a teacher is physically in school. At my school we have chosen to "register" the children, so we need to check they have done so. We also send an e-mail in the morning to parents about the work for the day and check the work submitted at the end of the day, along with dealing with any queries from parents.

For the children there are also problems. Many resources are on-line, for example YouTube videos. Not every family has broadband, adequate laptops or the capacity to print work sheets. For some children, school is printing resources for parents to collect. There are additional challenges if English is not a family's first language.

Most of the recent lessons have revised work done over the last term. After Easter we will begin a new term, with new learning objectives, providing another layer of complexity. Because schooling continually builds



Roman homework

photo N Lister

on a child's learning, it is vital the children keep up if they are not to be disadvantaged when starting the next academic year.

I think this break in schooling will have a lasting impact. Much will depend on the capacity of parents to help their children. Some may flourish but others may make limited progress.

The sudden transition is tough on all staff. Teachers are working long hours and their daily pattern of work has changed entirely. The family worker, who was already busy, has even more work – for example following up if a child has not registered for three consecutive days. Admin staff are working hard to support teaching staff and parents.

Wordsearch

Springtime

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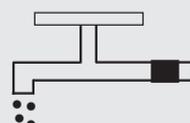
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