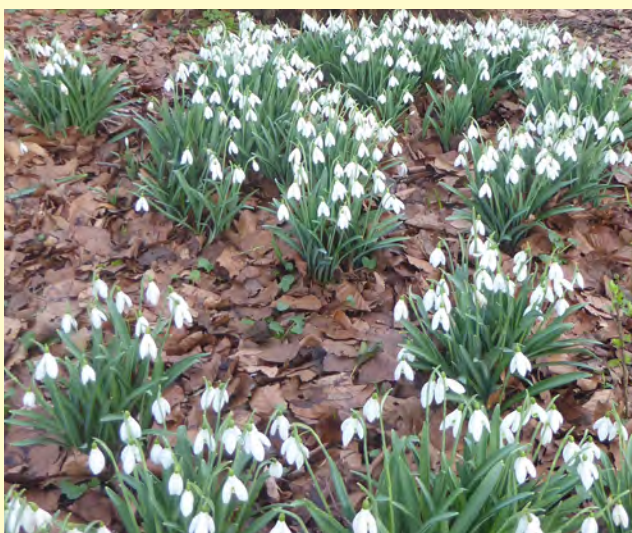


SPRING IS AROUND THE CORNER



Baltimore Park Snowdrops

photo P Chatfield

by Phil Chatfield

AS I WRITE we have again entered a period of lockdown, with the NHS under enormous pressure. Vaccinations are due to start in Caversham in days – for many it has been a constant source of conversation. Once again, we are grateful to NHS staff and to all the key workers - in our shops, keeping public transport and the post moving, working in schools, and a host of other essential services. But snowdrops are flowering and daffodils are pushing up through the soil. Spring is a time for re-birth and hope and, despite everything, we have reason to be optimistic this year.

February sees the start of Lent, traditionally a period of abstinence. In our Talking Point, Father Patrick reflects on what this can mean for all of us at this time (page 2).

This month we look at the impact of working from home on people used to working in offices (*see below*). Also we recognise the efforts so many people are making to help those less fortunate than themselves (page 5). We celebrate the opening of Fourbears Bookshop with a profile of the owner, Alex, and the first of his regular book reviews for us (page 6).

Happy Wanderer looks into the past with his article on the Snowflake Laundry (page 7), and we have our regular Les in the Garden feature (page 10). Stained glass forms the link between our Creative Caversham article (page 12) and an article on the First World War poet, Wilfred Owen (page 14).

If you would like to contribute to future editions of the paper, or have comments on any of our items, please contact us at editors@cavershambridge.org.

THE HOME OFFICE BATTLES THE VIRUS

by Phil Chatfield

FOR MANY people who work in offices, the last eleven months have seen a dramatic change in the way they work. The daily routine of travelling from home to office has been suspended, replaced by a trip from kitchen to dining room or spare room. The conviviality of the office, shared with familiar colleagues and friends, replaced by isolation and technology.

Working from home once or twice a week has become increasingly common. But this has been in the context of being part of a team who met regularly and know what is expected of them. When the lockdown was imposed in March 2020, work patterns were disrupted overnight, with almost no time for preparation. For many, the novelty of spending more time at home, without the need to commute, was at first welcome. Once equipment and communications issues were resolved, and a suitable place found to work in the home, office workers became home workers. But

no-one knew it would last so long.

I asked a number of home workers for their experiences and thoughts, and some common themes emerged. Some employers embraced the change, helping their staff to adapt to the new way of working. But others have been reluctant to adopt home working and have insisted on a return to offices as soon as it was allowed, to the concern of staff worried about health risks.

Most of those who responded usually travelled for about an hour to reach their offices. A walk or cycle ride to the station or office was often part of the journey. This daily exercise is something people miss. So for some, the commuting time saved is used for exercise – perhaps explaining the apparent increased number of runners and joggers on our streets!

Those who already worked from home were well equipped. Most people were able to start work from home very quickly, thanks to good internet connections, but for some it took up to three months to organise all the equipment needed, such as keyboards and chairs. Finding room to work

from home can be difficult – especially where two people need space. Home schooling has added another complexity – one person I spoke to was starting work very early so her daughter could use the desk later in the day! Dining room tables were put to use, but comfortable seating is essential for long periods spent working on a laptop. Some organisations provided staff with an allowance to assist with setting up their home office, to pay for seats, improved computer screens and lighting. A 'standing desk', which goes on a table and enables the user to stand rather than sit was one solution used.

Home workers have spent a lot of time on video calls and are developing new on-line meetings skills. However, these meetings can be very tiring, and people speak of 'Zoom Fatigue' after long or frequent meetings.

When asked what they miss about the office, the lack of variety in the days was identified. All miss their colleagues and the daily office interactions, such as impromptu conversations, face to face meetings and the chance to chat over coffee. Such



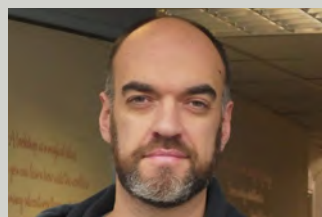
At the standing desk

photo S Rowe

continued on page 3

INSIDE

Four Bears
Reviews – p6



Community
Connections
– p11



Wilfred Owen
– p14



Forty Days & Forty Nights

FOR MANY people the season of Lent this year will make little difference to their lives. This is not because of indifference or because our secular values have successfully eroded so many of the practices which characterised the Christian religion. It is rather because many of us have been living an involuntary Lenten observance since the coronavirus made prolonged periods of lockdown imperative and suspended so much of the activity which was an unquestioned part of our lives. Many of us have discovered our inner Carthusian, or what it is like to be a hermit. Many of us too have found time heavy on our hands, and have turned to prayer, or at least to reflecting on the things that really matter to us in life, or have thought a little about God. Furthermore, the humming bush telephone, the spontaneous WhatsApp groups, the conversations across the garden fence (when weather permits), and the 8.00 pm clapping for the NHS workers all drew even the most misanthropic citizen into an appreciation of just how much our local neighbourhood mattered.



Talking Point by Patrick H Daly

The Church, inspired by what Jesus said in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5, 1 – 6 & 16 – 18), reminds us each year that the three great ‘works’ of Lent are: prayer, self-restraint/penance and alms-giving. And since March 2020 (Lent was in its third week when the first lockdown began) many of us have been performing these ‘works’ for the best part of a whole year.

The question then arises as to what those of us who are already living by a Lenten discipline, albeit involuntarily and in response to government orders (as well as common sense), can do to make Lent 2021

special, once Ash Wednesday comes around. Do we just ‘up the ante’ by spending additional time praying, denying ourselves even more and reaching even deeper into our pockets? Or is there a more imaginative way in which we can benefit from the opportunity which Lent 2021 offers us? Already on the first day of Lent the Church reminds us that it is ‘a time of grace’. It is a time of opportunity but, as we know, opportunities can slip between our fingers unless we grasp them.

Lent, unlike Advent, which is frantically busy and in any case evaporates so quickly, is long enough to be challenging and demanding. It is also long enough to accomplish a task with little to distract us and yet not so long that our enthusiasm will go off the boil. This year we might avail ourselves of what Lent offers us to accomplish a task we would not normally undertake: read Anna Karenina, write a letter to a friend every day, walk an extra mile when taking one’s allotted period of exercise, or read the four Passion narratives in the four Gospels and/or listen to the Passions of JS Bach. Let this Lent be a time when we do something extra for the glory of God (ad maiorem Dei gloriam) or for the benefit of our neighbour, especially if she/he is in particular need. That makes sense of Lent.

*Patrick H. Daly, Parish Priest
Our Lady & St. Anne*

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Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Ministry

St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Rev’d Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Rd
Caversham RG4 7AD

Tel: 947 9505 rector@ctmparish.org.uk
Rev’d Penny Cuthbert Tel: 07825 331 810
Rev’d Andy Storch Tel: 07365 555 905

Parish Office

Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX
Tuesday and Friday 9.30 to 14.00
Tel: 947 1703 e-mail secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Current services

Sunday 09:30 – You Tube service - www.youtube.com/channel/UCYMgve_d64enHsm1FUfwntA
10:15 – Zoom service – <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84366839832?pwd=M2xJSUtFbGkycG1DbEFxQ1JGYWRsQT09>
11:15 – Zoom service - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82793512985>
Wednesday – 09:30 – Zoom morning Prayer - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/786384026>

St Andrew

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

Current services

Sunday – 18.00 - Service on the ‘St Andrew’s Caversham’ YouTube channel
Tuesday – 20.00 - Compline service by Zoom. E-mail the vicar to join - vicar@standrewscaversham.org

St Barnabas Emmer Green

Rev Lionel Onugha
Rev’d Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road.
Tel: 947 8239. Email: vicar@saintbarnabas.org.uk
www.facebook.com/StBarnabasEmmerGreen

Office

St Barnabas Centre, Emmer Green
Tuesday and Thursday 8.30 – 10.30
Tel: 947 6310

Current services

Sunday 09.30 - Morning Service on St. Barnabas Facebook & Website
Monday 14.00 - Busybees - for pre-school children and their carers on Youtube
Details on their web site - www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)

(Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and URC)
Contact: Dr Alison Johnston
Tel: 0118 947 5152 www.cavershamparkchurch.com

Current services

Sunday – 11.00 – Livestreaming on YouTube
Details on their web site at: <https://cpvc.org.uk:5152/live-stream>

METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

Rev’d Martin Beukes, 72 Highmoor Rd.
Tel: 0118 947 2223 <https://cavhmc.org.uk>
Rev’d David Jenkins Tel: 0118 327 1592

Current services

Sunday – 10.30 – Zoom service
E-mail the Minister for details martin.beukes@methodist.org.uk

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor: Colin Baker
Church office Tel 0118 954 5353
Email: secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

Current services

A link is placed on their website each week at: www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk
and on their YouTube channel
www.youtube.com/user/CavershamBaptist
Live broadcast starts at 10.30am each Sunday

GRACE CHURCH

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

Current services

See their web site for details: www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk

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Tel: 947 1787 www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk

Current services

See their web site for Father Patrick’s weekly homilies and details of opening for services at: www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk

St Michael Sonning Common

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

At the time of writing, church services are affected by the pandemic restrictions, disrupting normal worship. However, church communities have adapted to the circumstances and are alive and active in new ways.

Some churches are open in a limited way at present. Most have a range of on-line services, house groups and social meetings, using web based systems like YouTube and Zoom. For current information, see individual web sites for each church on this page or on the Churches Together in Caversham website: www.cavershamchurch.org.

The Caversham Bridge is a community newspaper produced by Caversham Christian News Ltd
Company details will be found on page 15

Future editions:

Contributions for the March 2021 issue should be submitted by 8 February and for the April edition by 15 March. These should be e-mailed to: editors@cavershambridge.org

Dates for advertising copy are 26 January for the March issue and 23 February for April. These should be e-mailed to advertising@cavershambridge.org

HOME OFFICE AND THE VIRUS

opportunities often provide valuable information, but sometimes are just about building teams and understanding people. It has been difficult for managers to support their teams remotely. Younger staff miss their social lives and often are moving back to their parents' homes, which can be difficult. One said, "If the technology goes wrong you can feel stressed quite quickly". For those living alone, being in one place all the time is very isolating, tiring and tedious.

There are benefits. One reported being, "Less tired without the commute and fewer winter bugs - eg colds". Some spend more time with family, another has more time with the cats. One commented, "I don't

need to dress up or wear make-up unless I want to".

In theory, the time spent commuting is saved, although people are often working longer hours. At the end of the day, "It's sometimes difficult to switch-off". One has established a routine of going for a short walk to mark the beginning and end of the working day.

For those who can, working from home has become an essential part of the battle with the virus, freeing up public transport for those who still have to travel to work. We do not know when it will be possible for offices to re-open. When they do, it seems likely many people will work from home much more than in the past.

Planning and the Caversham Bridge

by the Editors

A NUMBER of the readers who responded to our survey in the autumn suggested we should include more on planning matters affecting Caversham. These are already extensively covered in our daily and weekly papers and on the council web site. They are also scrutinised by our local Residents' Associations. We have included news of significant developments in the past and will continue to do so in the future. We aim to be impartial in our reporting, as some proposals can be very divisive in a community.

We are well served by our local Residents' Associations – the Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA), Warren and District (WADRA) and Emmer Green (EGRA). Each takes an interest in local planning matters, and they provide us with a valuable service in reviewing and commenting on applications. Membership costs for the associations are low, so why not join the one serving your area and learn more about what is going on locally and perhaps have a voice in running them?

CADRA has monthly meetings to consider planning matters across Caversham before emailing updates to members and posting a list on their website. Their chair, Helen Lambert, has agreed to provide a regular feature on planning for the Caversham Bridge. We aim to work with CADRA to make these topical. The first of these reviews is included on *page 4* this month.

For more information on our Residents' Associations, see their websites:

CADRA – www.cadra.org.uk

WADRA – www.wadra.org

Emmer Green Residents Association – www.egra.co.uk

A Winter Winner

by F Smith

MANY people made an extra effort to brighten up local streets with Christmas lights this year. But one house just off Donkin Hill took their outdoor decorations to the next level. Jo's Pocket Garden drew many visitors with its display of elves, snowmen and trees. Jo has been creating seasonal displays in her front garden for 3 years. She started with a Halloween display – we featured a photo of her 2020 display in our December edition. This year her Christmas display was awarded the title of *The Most Festive House in Britain* by the property website Zoopla.

Households from across the country entered the competition, and the home in Caversham was chosen by the judges as the very best.

On Jo's Facebook page she says "Just like last Christmas (and the Christmas before last Christmas), I am raising money for charity. This year's donations will be going to Reading Refocus, a local youth charity working to improve the lives of children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds."

The Garden has raised over £900 for the charity – but it also raised many smiles and happy faces in the process. Well done!

For more information, visit Jo's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/JosPocketGardenUK

For information on Reading Refocus, see www.facebook.com/ReadingRefocus



Jo's Pocket Garden

photo F Smith

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Alternatively copies of this paper can be purchased from: Caversham Emporium in Church Street and in Emmer Green at the True Food Community Co-Op in Grove Road, opposite St Barnabas church.

Mum and Daughter act on period poverty

by Caroline Herman

LAST DECEMBER, my daughter Cara and I were talking about periods, in part following the announcement by the Scottish Government to provide free sanitary products to women and girls needing them. It's a shocking fact, but many people cannot afford or do not have access to sanitary products, even in Berkshire. So we started the *All Yours* project to raise money to make 'Period Boxes' to help fight period poverty locally. We wanted to create a box that would provide a week's worth of sanitary products.

We set up a Crowd Funding page and used social media to establish the project. The initial response was unbelievable, and we had made up 487 boxes by the beginning of January. Our dining room has become a sanitary products warehouse. The boxes were distributed through the West Berks Food Bank, Berkshire Women's Aid in Addison Road, and other organisations and individuals across Berkshire.

We have two types of box: one for adult women

who have experience with their periods and contains a mix of tampons and sanitary towels, and the other is for teenage and younger girls who are just getting to grips with their periods. These contain sanitary pads specifically designed for younger people.

From a 'mum and daughter' chat this has developed into a worthwhile project supporting those in need in our area. Because of both the amazing support we have had and the clear needs of many people, we have decided to continue. We are currently Crowd Funded, but I am now taking steps to set *All Yours* up as a charity. Although we are based in West Berkshire, we aim to work across Berkshire as a whole.

If you would like to support the *All Yours* project and help fight period poverty, visit our website at www.allyoursbox.co.uk where there are details of how to donate or send sanitary products directly. Just as importantly, you can use our website to request a box. Our website also has a link to our Facebook page, which we keep updated so you can see the boxes we are sending out and find out more about which organisations we are supporting.

WHAT'S ON

THERE are a number of events planned for February. With the imposition of a further lockdown, it becomes more important than ever to check to see if events are running. Our on-line events diaries are updated regularly, so it is worth checking to see what has been added at

www.cavershambridge.org:5154/local-info/whats-on

If you have an event planned, send details to editors@cavershambridge.org

Mondays – Time for U pram push 10:00-11.30 Caversham Baptist Church. Term time only. www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

Sunday 7 February – Farmer's Market and Artisan Fair 10:00 – 15:00 Caversham precinct www.facebook.com/CAFMarket

Sunday 21 February - Farmer's Market and Artisan Fair 10:00 – 15:00 Caversham precinct www.facebook.com/CAFMarket

Caversham Library is open for booked appointments. Limited opening: 10.00 -13.00 Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, 13.00 - 16.00 Thursday

www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/libraries-reopening

Building our community

Planning update from Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA)

This is the first of a new feature for the Caversham Bridge, bringing you a summary of planning and transport matters affecting our area.

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE'S new Local Plan has now been adopted. While some controversial elements remain, for Caversham, the main news is all the big housing sites are well away from our boundary.

The application for up to 260 new homes on the Reading Golf Club was withdrawn, but we understand it has been re-submitted. Details are not yet available, but we will post them in our next edition. If you commented before, your comments will not be carried forward automatically: if you want your views to be heard, you will need to comment again.

Plans are in for a welcome rebuild of Rivermead Leisure Centre, including a new pool. CADRA has stressed that this should be an opportunity for a proper plan to landscape the whole Thames meadow area, rather than ad hoc landscaping plans for this and any other developments, like the school proposed nearby.

CADRA and local residents are following developments at Chazey Wood, where an extension to the current paintballing site would affect this lovely woodland.

There is a series of big proposals across the river at Station Hill, the SSE and Royal Mail sites and elsewhere. Details can be found via a link on the CADRA website www.cadra.org.uk

The Council is also considering a number of new waiting restrictions, including some here in Caversham. Details are on www.reading.gov.uk

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www.cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk
0118 948 3466

Monday to Friday 9.30am–11.30am
Church House 59 Church Street Caversham RG4 8AX



IT'S ALL HAPPENING

A thank you from Reading Family Aid

by Anna Waite

READING FAMILY AID want to say a huge thank you to Caversham Bridge readers and everyone else who supported our *Christmas Toys & Teens* appeal for 2020, including our sponsors, The Reading Chronicle, Berkshire Freemasons, Big Yellow and Caversham Vehicle Hire.

During December, our team and volunteers were busy ordering, packing, sorting, delivering and unloading toys and presents. At the end of a difficult year, we were really touched by peoples'

generosity and goodwill. The GoFundMe page received just over £20,000 in donations (well above our £15,000 target!), with a further substantial amount donated directly. This meant 1,400 disadvantaged children in Reading and the surrounding areas received gifts this Christmas.

Your donations will have made so much difference to these children's Christmas Day. From them, from their parents, and from all at Reading Family Aid, thank you.

Easy as ABC

by Marcia Rowlinson

OUR READING based charity, Assisting Berkshire Children to read (ABC to read), is recruiting volunteers who we will train to become reading mentors for children who struggle with reading.

At the moment we are training volunteers online. We aim to place them into schools once we are able to do so, to work with the children on a one to one basis each week during the school term. However, whilst we are facing the pandemic restrictions, we are offering volunteers the opportunity to support children online in the schools instead. Either way, we would like to recruit more volunteers because, when it is safe for volunteers to return, our work will be needed more than ever.

Prior to the pandemic, we were supporting 500 children each year with 120 volunteers. By the end of 2020 we were only able to place 50 of those volunteers into schools due to their own vulnerability. All the volunteers are still with us but now waiting until it is safe for them to return to schools.

To find out more about us, visit our website at www.abctoread.org.uk

If you think you could help a child find the fun in reading, gaining an essential life skill, please contact us at:

info@abctoread.org.uk

A course for Lent – The Parables



The Rev Andy Storch is running a series of evening Zoom meetings through Lent on the subject of the Parables from the New Testament. Andy will be leading those attending through five Parables:

1. The Prodigal son

2. The Labourers in the vineyard
3. The Good Samaritan
4. The Talents
5. The sower

The course runs from Tuesday 23rd February 2021 To Tuesday 23rd March 2021 Inclusive. Andy advises the participants they will benefit from some optional preparation for weeks 2-5. The course aims to help participants to develop skill in interpreting the Bible, being open to the working of the Holy Spirit and to be able to clearly articulate how their faith and love for God affects their day to day lives

For more information, or to register, email Andy@CTMParish.org.uk

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Fourbears Books

by Phil Chatfield

IN OUR January edition we included a brief report on the opening of a bookshop in Caversham – *Fourbears Books* in Prospect Street.

The owner of the shop is Alex Forbes, who has lived in Caversham for 10 years and grew up in Woodley. Alex was working in financial services in Reading town centre, but three years ago it became apparent his work would be coming to an end before long. He asked himself what he would like to do if there were no limitations, and thought about running a bookshop. At first this appeared impractical but, through a writer friend, he gained some insight into the business and what goes on 'behind the scenes'.

His research showed independent bookshops were doing well. It also identified a geographical gap – there are no independent bookshops between Henley,

Hungerford and Wallingford. He left his previous job in May and, despite the lockdown in place at the time, decided to make it work. Strangely, *Fourbears* is located next to *Chapters Bar*, which was a bookshop for many years.

With help from friends, family and his girlfriend, he has fitted out the former betting shop and filled it with stock. Alex is pleased to be joining the ranks of the many independent traders in Caversham and is already enjoying the short walk to work along the river. He commented "Caversham is a great place to live, with short walks to beautiful scenery in the area and all the facilities you need readily to hand".

In addition to the stock in the shop, Alex is able to order books for delivery, usually within a day or two.

Alex has agreed to provide a regular book review column for the Caversham Bridge, the first of which is published below. He talks about books with a passion and promises to provide us with some interesting reads!



For your bookshelf....

Strangers in the night

by Alex Forbes

Welcome to 'Fourbears Reviews', where we briefly review a couple of chosen titles from our bookshop 'Fourbears Books' on Prospect Street. Each month we will pick a children's book and an adult book that we think deserve to be heard about and read if you are a fan of that particular genre.

FIRST UP this month, the book for adults I have selected is Will Carver's *Good Samaritans*, published by Orenda Books. It's about a man called Seth who can't sleep. He phones strangers in the night before one night he connects with a suicidal Hadley while she thinks she is talking to the Samaritans. Will Carver is a local author and has produced a dark, edgy noir thriller with this book. The short chapters make *Good Samaritans* very difficult to put down and it has a few juicy turns throughout to keep you hooked. This is the first book of a loose series by Carver and we are delighted to be stocking his books as he

is genuinely a gem of a talent destined for big things.

My choice for younger readers (age 3-7) is *My Shadow is Pink*, written and illustrated by Scott Stuart, published by Larriken House. The story is about a boy who lives in a world where most people's shadows are blue, but he has a pink shadow and feels different. The essence of this beautiful uplifting picture book is that you can dare to be different and should have the courage to be true to yourself. You are loved exactly as you are. For me that's a message that transcends all ages. It's written in rhyme, which supports some of the humour and makes it easy for kids to read or to be read to.

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Write to the editors

Scuppered celebration saved

One of our readers sent in the following article. It made us wonder what other innovative ways our readers may have found to make the most of special events over the last year. Write to editors@cavershambridge.org to share your story.

"My 70th birthday celebration last November was scuppered by Covid. Sunday lunch for thirty-two members of the family at one of my favourite venues had to be cancelled.

So, the big day came and there was to be just my husband, my 'bubble' son, and me. But wait! Without my knowledge, my husband and two sons had contacted members of the family, as well as close friends, asking each to send me a video birthday message on WhatsApp on the morning of my birthday. Even a junior school friend from 1957! Well - I'm sure you can imagine how overwhelmed I was, not to mention being unable to hold back the tears after hearing the touching sentiments and their personal memories of me.

There were still only the three of us at home on the day, but I was pampered, which left me the freedom to replay the video messages several times. So, instead of thirty-two attending my birthday lunch, forty-five made an appearance on the day, albeit virtually. My son has since transferred all the messages to a DVD for me, with some of my favourite songs playing quietly in the background. I'm not a big fan of technology, but because of it I now have this treasured keepsake."



The Bear recommends photo Alex Forbes

Gill Madeley NAHort.

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Happy Wanderer ponders...

IT WAS in April last year I wrote about the old Reading and Caversham Laundry on George Street, where there is still a laundry on the same site. It is only recently that I learned of another laundry in Caversham, in South View Avenue. By curious coincidence, someone gave me a copy of the catalogue for the sale of this laundry, which took place on 27 October 1952. Around a week after receiving this, one of the editors of 'The Bridge' sent me scans of the pages of the St Peter's Church Magazine for February 1914, which had an advertisement for the laundry in it.

Open air drying

The picture in the advert shows a horse-drawn van with its driver, outside what appears to be a large house, faced with Bath stone like those on King's Road in Reading. It doesn't reproduce very well, but it's very much of its era.

By 1914, we were at the beginning of the motor age. Deliveries were 'by horse and motor'. 'Open air drying' is mentioned, probably because it was the time-honoured way of doing things, and thought to be somehow better than drying in a machine.

So I have visions of that building, on the south side of the Avenue, surrounded by drying grounds across which were stretched long washing lines, supported at intervals by props. Doubtless, indoors, there would have been rows of women in white overalls, dashing away with smoothing-irons, heated over gas jets. The advertisement says: 'Shirts, collars, bed and table linen, blouses, dresses, white petticoats and lingerie beautifully got up.' (I love the expression 'got up' – today we'd probably have expected 'presented'.)

South View Avenue was so-called because when first developed in the 1890s, the houses were built along the north side only, giving them views over the Thames – from the upper floors, at any rate. It was also one of the streets that the old Caversham Urban District Council was notoriously slow to pave. Around 1910, during the arguments over whether or not Caversham should become a part of the Borough of Reading, this street and others in the area had given rise to the nickname of our village, 'Caversham-in-the-Mud.'

The Snowflake Laundry belonged to the Berkshire Laundry Company. They had another 'Snowflake' branch at 38 Oxford Road, on the corner of Cheapside, with McIlroy's department store on the opposite corner. The 1914 advertisement does not mention the Reading branch. The manageress in Caversham was

Mrs. Langford, with the telephone number Reading 1041.

The sale catalogue for the Caversham Laundry and Dry Cleaning Plant ran to 22 pages, with 372 lots. These included: 3 typewriters, one of them an Underwood 'noiseless' model; 3 water softening units; 2 Lancashire boilers; 2 horizontal steam engines, one of them 100 horsepower, the other 12 horsepower; 2 electric motors; line shafting and pulleys; 19 rotary washing machines; 9 'hydro extractors'; a neckband starcher; 2 automatic collar blocking machines; a steam-heated silk finishing unit; numerous garment presses; and 8 delivery vans. It's no wonder that half way through, there was a 'luncheon interval' with light refreshments provided.



Snowflake Laundry van

photo Happy Wanderer

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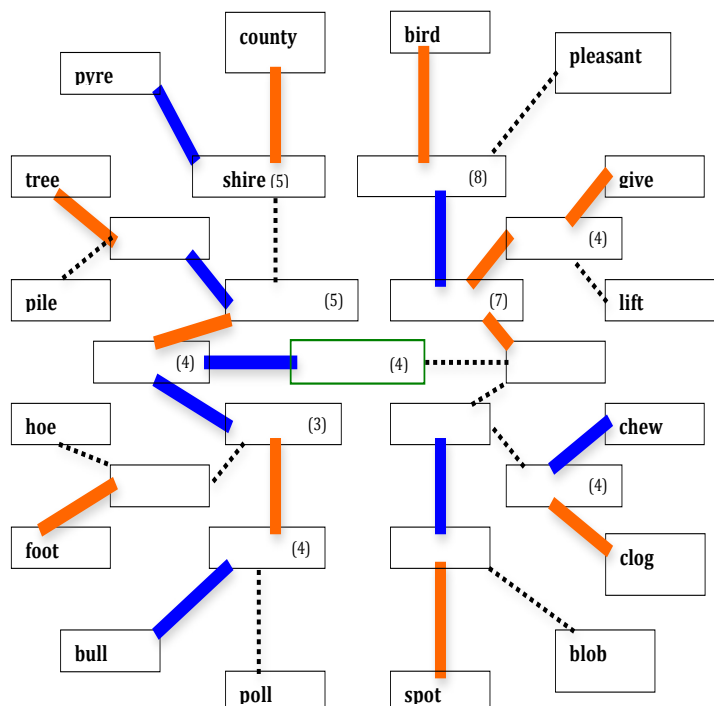
Word puzzles

WORD PUZZLE

By Rachael

Find the word that has the same meaning as the clue; or rhymes with; or has one letter that is different. For example: *shire* has 5 letters, rhymes with *pyre* and means *county*.

Rhyme ———
Letter change
Meaning ———



Word Ladder

by Cloistered

Change ROOT into CROP by altering one letter at a time in four moves.
For example CAT into DOG in three moves: cat/cot/cog/dog.

FOUR MOVES

ROOT

CROP

SWIM

WEAR

FIVE MOVES

FOOT

FALL

SIX MOVES

HEAD

TAIL

All answers on page 15

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Californian Quail

THE QUAIL WITH A TUFT ON THE TOP

Wildlife by William Cecil

So I was startled when what was obviously a quail pushed its way through the bottom hedge. It was sporting a jaunty topknot, and it should have long ago been winging its way to sunny North Africa. How come?

I reached for the bird books and, after a long search, I found the answer: a Californian quail. But how did this Yankee visitor find its way to not-so-sunny Caversham?

So far as I know they have not settled in the wild, but it is possible to buy chicks for around £25 a pair. My Californian quail must have gone walk-about from a neighbour's garden aviary.

Its forward curving crest is made up of 4-6 feathers, black on the male, brown on the female.

Otherwise they are fairly similar to the European quail.

They love dust baths and wriggle around in soft soil creating clouds of dust. They eat seeds, leaves, berries and some insects. If alarmed they can rise in a covey of short, rapid flight, although they usually prefer to run away. Quail live in extended families with a couple or more females and several males.

In season the quail has always been a popular game bird. Jane Seymour, Henry VIII's third wife, demanded a constant diet of broiled quail when she was pregnant with the future King Edward VI in 1537, so much so that all the courtiers and even our diplomats abroad were called in to help supply her craving.

I hope my quail with the tuft on top found its way home, and didn't fall victim to the big, black monster - or a hungry pregnant queen.

THE QUAIL is one of our more modest game birds. It is not dramatic like the stripy partridge. No trailing pheasant tail. No flashy white fantail like the black grouse.

photo B Imhoff

WALK WORKS

if you go down to the woods today.....

by Caroline Gratrix

LIZ AND I met 14 years ago when we had our first child, we both then had our second child very quickly, in fact a mere 5 days apart. A (much needed) weekly coffee and baby chat with our group of friends bonded us all amidst the busyness of babies and toddlers.

We have both always loved walking and being outdoors, and we're both lucky to have partners and children that share our passion, so walking and exploring for us is easy.

Over lockdown, many of us walked our local areas extensively, then one day Liz invited me to do a 'new' walk with her. It was around the woods and area of the Wyfold Estate. Being enthralled by the Gothic mansion, I came home and poured over details of the estate, the house, and its history. I was fascinated to discover that it had featured in a book I had just read, about the incredible refugee, entrepreneur and philanthropist, Dame Stephanie Shirley.

From then on, Liz and I would walk together every week and on weekends with our families. We were

keen to share our new routes and facts with each other, and started to think there must be others with a similar interest. We decided to set up a small business to share our passion for the outdoors, exploring, learning, keeping fit, enhancing mental wellbeing and enjoying the



Woodland path

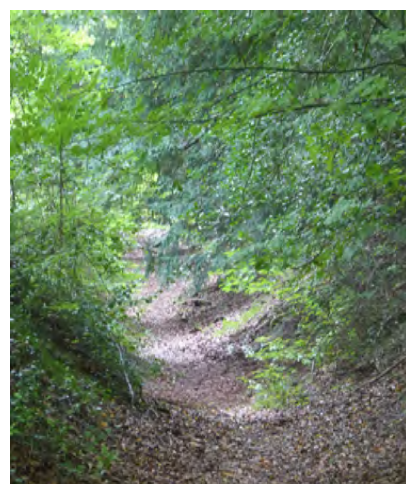
photo P Chatfield

interaction that comes from talking with new people. So *Walk Works* became a reality. For a small charge, we will guide you safely on an exploration of our local area.

Subject to the current Coronavirus restrictions, we will be walking every Tuesday morning for approximately 2 hours and Wednesday mornings for a gentler 1 hour, both walks will be advertised in advance and can be booked via our Facebook page.

If you share our enthusiasm for the great outdoors and exploring our locality, without worrying about being alone or carrying a map or following an app, then do join us. Please like our pages on Facebook, WALK WORKS and Instagram @walkworks.

We look forward to walking with you soon.



Leafy glade

photo P Chatfield

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A beautiful return

by Phil Chatfield

ACCORDING to a Zero Waste Week¹ report in 2018, the global cosmetics industry produces over 120 billion units of packaging each year. Many beauty products are packaged in materials that can't be put into our recycling bins. This means much of it ends up being incinerated or sent to landfill.

Recycling beauty packaging can be complicated, although Reading Borough Council do accept clean and empty shampoo bottles and soap dispenser bottles which show a recycling symbol, as well as cardboard packaging. But they do not take the caps or trigger spray pumps, flexible plastic tubes, plastic pots or their lids, flexible plastic wipes packaging and a multitude of other, hard to recycle, materials.

Increasingly recycling schemes for many of these items are being set up. Some beauty brands are now willing to take back your empty containers and ensure they go to specialist recycling centres.

Terracycle is a recycling company which works with brands like The Body Shop, L'Occitane and Garnier to bring recycling options to the high street so you can keep empty beauty product packaging from waste bins. They also work with voluntary groups who host collection points around the UK. Locally, Caversham Heights Pre-School² and Caversham Heights Methodist Church operate a collection point at 74 Highmoor Road, Caversham.

These collection points accept empty, clean and dry beauty packaging from any brand. Some stores even offer rewards if customers return their brand's products. So do find your nearest recycling point and save this packaging to give it a chance to make a beautiful return!

1. www.zerowastweek.co.uk/welcome-to-zero-waste-week-2018-day-two

2. www.facebook.com/CavershamHeights/services

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Bee kind in the winter

– Late Winter Plants for Pollinators

by Tricia Marcouse

PLANTS THAT benefit pollinators in winter provide colour and scent for us to enjoy as well. Snowdrops, winter aconites and winter crocus will naturalise and give carpets of colour during January and February. Snowdrops and aconites like partial shade and moist soils, whereas



Crocus and bee photo Rob Stallard

crocus want sunny, free-draining soils to open up and share their nectar and pollen with grateful bees, and sometimes provide a safe resting place for the night when closed. Purple *Crocus tommasinianus* varieties naturalise fastest, but *Crocus chrysanthus* varieties have a wider colour range, and some are perfumed as well.

Taller are the hellebores in a wide range of colours. The Christmas Rose, *Helleborus niger*, grows well on rich alkaline soils, but



Hellibore photo Rob Stallard

it is varieties of *Helleborus orientalis* that provide the colour range and multiply in most lightly shaded soils. Choose single-



Winter Aconite photo Rob Stallard

flowered varieties if you want to please the bees.

Winter honeysuckles throw fragrance around the garden whether grown as a free standing shrub or used in a hedge, and have multiple uses for wildlife. As well as providing nectar and pollen for the buff tailed bumblebee, the stringy, flaking bark gives an excellent home for overwintering insects, and a good feeding spot for small insectivorous birds. *Lonicera purpusii* also produces copious soft red berries for birds during the summer. Daphnes are another group of amazingly scented winter shrubs.

Finally, look at evergreen, scented winter flowering clematis to cover a south or west facing fence in any free draining soil. This provides nectar for pollinators and shelter for insects and small birds. *Clematis cirrhosa* varieties are good.

Feed your soul during lockdown exercise in Caversham.

Late winter flowers raise our spirits as well as being good for wildlife. Get ideas by looking into other gardens on your lockdown exercise slot, or aim for a special spot in Caversham.

St Peter's churchyard on The Warren is still a mass of snowdrops in early February. Middle to late February sees the white froth of Blackthorn and Bullace flowers in the hedge lines and copses along Bugs Bottom and Clayfield Copse. Nothing can compare with that sight against a blue sky in early Spring.

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Beware of those serpents



by Les Cooper

THIS IS the time of year when our gardening genes are stimulated and we feel the urge to recreate the Garden of Eden in our own backyard. Now I have been interested in gardening for a great number of years and I

feel it is my duty to educate any newcomers about some of the temptations. You see there are serpents out there, just waiting to entice us into trouble and despair. Some of these serpents are called catalogues and some are called gardening articles: yes, with words dripping with honey, they attempt to lure us into growing trees, flowers and vegetables.

So here is my endeavour to put readers straight about some of the ways these sirens try to entrap you.

For a start, beware of the pictures of flowers in catalogues. There are at least two difficulties; the first being that you will never grow the darned things as well as the expert who did. Secondly, it's probably a close up anyway. They do like to enlarge their pictures. Many a time I have raised flowers that look like tiny miniatures compared with those shown in the catalogue.

Watch out for certain words in catalogues:

'Spreading' - means your plants will try to take over the garden.

'Tender' applies to plants that will die the moment autumn arrives, or plants that the slugs and snails will gobble up the moment they are planted.

'Rampant' plants will take over your garden.

'Vigorous' slightly less rampant and will settle for half your garden.

'Slow growing' means you will never live to see them flower.

Think carefully about buying turf to make a path or to patch a lawn. The reason I am cagey about this is because I am convinced I introduced couch grass into my garden by buying in some turf for my paths. I was lazy, the turf was cheap, and now I am paying a different price. Sowing your own grass is hard work, but safer and very enjoyable when you do it well.

Be very, very careful about friends bearing gifts. I mean gifts of plants taken from their gardens. I have a curse called *Arum italicum* a kind pal gave me and that now pops up just everywhere. It is an unbridled disaster and, try as I might to kill it, the ghastly thing springs up all over the place - most particularly next to any special favourite flower.

Lastly, take no notice of grumpy old men like me who try to tell you how to do things. Half the fun with gardening is finding out the hard way.



Arum italicum

photo E Cooper

A warming winter soup

by Diana Earnshaw

For our February recipe, we asked the True Food Co-op in Emmer Green if they would like to provide us with something suitably seasonal. They suggested:

COCK-A-LEEKIE SOUP

This is a winter warming soup, originating from Scotland. There are probably as many recipes for cock-a-leekie soup as there are cooks! Some use rice or even a couple of tablespoons of porridge oats (which will thicken the soup a little) instead of barley, some omit the prunes and the bacon, and some use a bay leaf instead of thyme. Whatever you choose to do, it is a hearty soup which can serve as a main course.

Serves 6

Ingredients:

1.5kg chicken pieces on the bone (preferable free range organic)



Photograph Pixabay.

2 litres stock or water (add a splash of dry white wine if you wish!)

4 leeks sliced into pieces about 2cm thick

2 carrots, cut into small dice

150g smoked bacon, chopped

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon dried thyme

30g dried prunes, chopped

100g pot or pearl barley

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and add the chicken pieces. Brown on all sides then place them into a stock pot.
2. Cover them with the stock or water. Add the thyme. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 2 hours.
3. Meanwhile, fry the bacon pieces until crisp.
4. Remove the chicken pieces to a plate then add the barley, leeks and carrots. Simmer for a further 15-20 minutes.
5. Whilst the soup is simmering, remove the chicken flesh from the bones and cut into mouthful-sized pieces.
6. Add the chicken, bacon and prunes and continue simmering for another 5 minutes.

Note:

It may be best to add salt at the end of cooking. The bacon will add salt, so taste before adding.

Serve with crusty bread.

For more information on the True Food Co-op, visit their website at www.truefood.coop



Time for bed – and so to sleep

by Rachael Staines

*'A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky –
I've thought of all by turns, and still I lie
Sleepless...'*

William Wordsworth, *To Sleep*

IT APPEARS that many of us are back to counting sheep, as difficulty sleeping has become more of an issue in lockdown. Caused perhaps by a lack of routine or the demands of a more challenging routine of home schooling, balanced with

working from home and everything in-between. It is no wonder sleep patterns have changed for many over recent months.

If you are one of those whose days are blighted by the effects of poor sleep, then you may wish to try the following.

Setting a gentle alarm for the same time each morning so there is a habit in place to wake up at the same time. This is as important as a regular bedtime too, routine is key to a healthy sleep pattern.

Thirty minutes before going to bed, make a small cup of chamomile tea, this is a natural sedative which may help you to cross the bridge from wakefulness to sleep.

Write down any worries or thoughts that are on your mind, anything that you keep being drawn back to. There is lots of therapeutic evidence to suggest that the simple act of

writing troubles down can help to remove them and put them into perspective. Set boundaries for what you listen to and limit your news intake, so you're not overwhelmed.

If you are unable to sleep after an hour or so, get back up out of bed, put on a low level light and for about fifteen minutes do an absorbing but simple activity which keeps you in the present moment, such as tidying a sock drawer or putting books into alphabetical order, then return to bed and give yourself permission to sleep.

Deep breathing combined with a body scan exercise (squeezing your muscles from your toes all the way up to your head on an in-breath and exhaling and letting go on the out-breath) can be calming too. Above all, try to go easy on yourself, be compassionate and kind to yourself and the simple act of sleep will return...



Community Connections

by Caroline Gratrix

This month we get to know something about Caversham resident Sarah Roy



Sarah Roy photo C Gratrix

FORMER primary school teacher Sarah put a request on social media for friends' excess fruit and started making jam during the summer holidays of 2016. A few friends suggested she start to sell her lovely jams and, after striking up a friendship with former *Nomad Café* owner Laura Mariel Gonzalez, *The Caversham Jam Lady* was born. Since those early days, Sarah

has grown her hobby into a thriving small business with over 4,000 followers on social media. Homes all over Reading and Caversham have her jams on their breakfast tables!

Sarah stocks her jams in four counties, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hampshire. You can buy them via her Facebook page, *The Jam Lady*, Caversham, or pick them up from local stockists, *GeoCafé*, *Loddon Brewery*, *The MERL* and *Fidget & Bob*.

Community is very important to Sarah; she was part of the research consultation team for the Weller Centre in Caversham and she volunteers there regularly.

Sarah, tell us a bit about you.

How long have you lived in Caversham?

I moved to Caversham 15 years ago. I was brought up in East Berkshire, but went to school in Reading, and a lot of my friends came from Caversham, so I remember visiting a lot as a teenager.

What's your favourite thing about Caversham?

There's so much I love about living in Caversham. The great schools my kids go to, the open spaces I can walk my dog in, the sense of community I enjoy being part of. Having been brought up in Winkfield, just outside Bracknell, I certainly feel the same 'village-ness' about living in Caversham.

Caversham's best coffee shop?

We are so lucky to have some great independent cafés in Caversham. My favourite has to be *GeoCafé* on Prospect Street where you'll always get a cheery welcome from Ket. They stock my jars there and the coffee is really good - a decaf flat white is my on-the-go cuppa. My favourite dish from the menu would have to be a khachapuri - a Georgian cheesy flatbread. Once tasted, never forgotten!

Where to eat in Caversham?

When eating out with the kids, we usually go to *Alto Lounge*. They have a varied menu and great service. My favourite dishes lately have been either the Brooklyn Brunch or the Spinach & Feta Shakshuka. So tasty! As a couple, we miss *Mya Lacarte*, so usually pop over the river to the *Lido* for special nights out.

Where to shop in Caversham?

Terry's is a must for every eventuality in life! From picture frames, batteries, cards and wrapping paper, to helping Santa with stocking presents, the list is endless! I also love the *Caversham Emporium* and the Artisan and Farmers Market. Again, we are so lucky to have great independent businesses to buy from.

If you could bring anything to Caversham, what would it be?

I was really excited when the initial plans for the precinct development included a cinema. I'm not sure what has happened to that idea, but I think it would be a great addition. Something like the *Playhouse* in Henley would be wonderful.



Sarah's Jam! photo C Gratrix

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SHINING THE LIGHT



by Elestr Lee

STAINED glass windows have been a feature of cathedrals since the Middle Ages; Victorian and Edwardian architects introduced the craft to front doors and porches, some of which are now in need of restoration. This month, we meet stained glass artist Nicola Kantorowicz (left), whose work adds a magical touch to the streets of Caversham.

Many of us have discovered that an unexpected benefit of lockdown has been the opportunity to spend far more time walking around our own neighbourhoods, appreciating

the surroundings which previously we had so little time to notice. As well as being able to enjoy the changing seasons, we have had a chance to linger and enjoy details of buildings near to where we live and where many of us now work.

Winter is a great time to notice some of the spectacular stained glass which is a feature of many of the Victorian and Edwardian houses in the area. As the sun sets and lights are switched on, there is a stunning display that can be seen in many of the older houses of the area. Some may be the original glass but, over the years where the glass has been damaged



all photos N Kantorowicz

This month in our Creative Caversham feature, Nicola Kantorowicz tells us about her lifelong passion for stained glass – the eye-catching feature which brightens up so many doors and windows in this area.

or removed, some householders have chosen to replace the glass with a new design by a modern stained glass artist. Nicola Kantorowicz, who lives in Sonning Common, is one such artist. "I have made many stained glass door panels for period properties in the area," Nicola says. "Restoration of existing door panels is a great way to enhance the appearance of Edwardian and Victorian houses."

Nicola also works on bigger commissions, creating stained glass windows for churches, although so far, she hasn't worked on any in this area. "The nearest church project would be St George's Church in Owlsmoor, near to Sandhurst - or in Oxfordshire, St Peter's Church in Marsh Baldon, not far from Nuneham Courtenay."

Nicola trained originally as a textile artist in the 1980s but found herself drawn to the qualities of colour and light that glass produces. Having spent time working in the studios



of Goddard and Gibbs in London, she studied at the Central School of Art in London, and eventually set up on her own. She now divides her time between working on commissions, and creating pieces for open studios and arts trails, as well as teaching her craft to others. "Unfortunately, I have been unable to resume any classes yet," Nicola explains. "Stained glass teaching requires quite a lot of one to one guidance which doesn't suit social distancing. However, when things improve, I hope to be back at Maiden Erlegh School where I run weekly evening classes." Nicola also teaches at Ardington School of Crafts near Abingdon, as well as Micklems Farm, near Maidenhead.

Like many local artists, Nicola found the past year frustrating but with unexpected upsides. "This year has been a difficult one for everyone," she comments. "With all my teaching sessions halted, art weeks and exhibitions cancelled as well, I have had more time to spend in the studio. I have been able to get on with some new experimental pieces. It's been great to be able to explore new designs and try things out without any deadlines."

So what does 2021 hold in store for Nicola? Obviously, there is still a lot of uncertainty and we are all having to come to terms with disruption to many of our plans. But Nicola is upbeat: "Looking ahead to 2021, I am currently working towards a group exhibition with other glass artists which we hope will be on display at the Stained Glass Museum in Ely Cathedral. There are also several commissioned projects which I hope will go ahead, but it's too early to confirm!"

Find out more about Nicola by visiting her website: www.nicolakantorowicz.com

Robin and Eve Bentham

by Elisa del Galdo

IT IS WITH overwhelming sadness that the Warren and District Residents' Association (WADRA) Committee announces the death of Robin Bentham, Chair of the Association between 1999 and 2019. Robin died of



natural causes at his home on 10 December, having been predeceased by his wife, Eve Bentham, who died on 30 November. Both Robin and Eve were pillars of our community and lived in The Warren for over 30 years. Most notably, Robin, in his position as Chair of WADRA for 20 of his 30

years on the Committee, led it from being an informal organisation, originally set up in 1964 to challenge inappropriate development in the area, to a more formal organization with multiple interests, campaigns, events and initiatives. Eve's support of Robin and all WADRA

has worked towards was invaluable. Her wit and wisdom can also not be forgotten and will be greatly missed.

During Robin's tenure as Chair, he oversaw Reading Borough Council's recognition of its responsibilities as Trustees of Mapledurham Playing Fields (MPF) and its pavilion, scrutinized too many planning applications to count, and worked collaboratively with WOMAD and Reading Festival for the benefit of our residents. He campaigned on numerous issues to stop inappropriate development, and set WADRA up as a formal organisation with a constitution. We will finally see his efforts come to fruition when the refurbishment of the MPF Pavilion is completed and available for all residents to use and enjoy.

Over the last five years, Robin led WADRA through some of its most turbulent times, always with integrity, diplomacy, wisdom and a calm that eludes most others. I don't think residents, our members and the committee could have thanked Robin enough for the generous contribution of his time, commitment, and leadership as Chair. Those of us who knew Robin well are grateful and privileged that he was part of our lives.

Both Robin and Eve will be greatly missed by all who knew them. Their family is planning to hold a memorial party in the Spring/Summer 2021, when COVID restrictions allow, when they hope that all those who knew them can join together to celebrate their lives.

In memory of Ute Lord 1933 - 2020

by Melanie Nunzet

OUR MOTHER, Ute Lord, moved to Priest Hill in October 1961 from Clapham. From the start she was happy in her new home, with three small children and the fourth on the way. It was heaven having her own garden and not having to struggle up and down five flights of stairs with babies, shopping, etc.

Mum hadn't seen the house before moving, and it was pitch dark when they arrived (the removal van broke down on the way from London!). We never knew how she managed, being seven months pregnant, and with three little ones to care for. The gas and electricity were off, so she couldn't see the house she was to live in for the next sixty years until the morning. Luckily, a friendly neighbour helped, providing candles and soup. Even today Priest Hill has a very friendly feeling.

Just down the hill, at the corner with Hemdean Road, was Clifford's Dairy, where Mum bought milk, eggs and cheese. She saw many changes at the site. She was a good friend of Vivian and Malcolm who lived there in the 1970s and ran a hairdresser's and a carpentry business in the yard. She usually made friends with whoever was in occupation and would pop in for a chat on her way past. She loved the Blue Duck Gallery, and was very sad to see Siblings Café close a few years ago. She always wondered what would come next.

Mum came to England when she was 17 as an au pair to



improve her English, working in Richmond. There she met our Dad, Tony Lord, and they were married in 1953.

For many years she worked at the Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH), first as a cytologist in the Pathology Lab and later as a Ward Clerk and in Occupational Therapy at Townlands and Peppard Hospital. She also worked for School Health for a time.

Her last involvement with the RBH was as a volunteer, first at the Heritage Museum and then on the reception desk, giving people directions, which she did until just five years ago.

Mum was due to go to St Luke's in the New Year but died on Christmas Day in her beloved home, which is what she always said she wanted.

A memorial web site has been set up at:
<https://utelord.muchloved.com>

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WE PUBLISH short obituaries in the paper providing we have space. They should generally be around 300-350 words long and should be accompanied by a suitable photograph and links to relevant details, such as memorial websites.

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Wilfred Owen Window Appeal

by David Woodward, Dunsden Owen Association

RENOWNED First World War poet Wilfred Owen (1893 - 1918), lived locally, in Dunsden, from 1911 to 1913. His parents and sister are buried in Dunsden churchyard.

In 2014 the Dunsden Owen Association launched a special trail around the local places Wilfred knew, and installed an interpretation board on the village green. The Association has now partnered with the parish of Shiplake with Dunsden and the Glaziers' Company to launch a project to design and install a stained glass window in All Saints church to commemorate the poet's time in the village. The design of the window will be the subject of a competition, run by the Worshipful Company of Glaziers and Painters of Glass.

Six prize-winners will be announced early in 2022, and local people will choose the design of the new window. However, the Association need to raise £25,000 for the project to go ahead, so they are now launching an appeal for funds.

Wilfred Owen was 18 when he arrived in Dunsden to assist the vicar, hoping to fulfil his vocation to be a churchman. Born in Shropshire, he was educated in Shrewsbury and Birkenhead, and passed the entrance exam for the University of London in 1911. However, without a scholarship, he could not afford to attend. Instead, he came to Dunsden, where he lived in the vicarage and quickly engaged in village life, visiting the sick, helping to run the school and presenting lantern slide shows in the Mission Hall on the village green.

Owen was finding his voice as a poet during this time, and the shorter edition of his works includes around a dozen poems written or begun in Dunsden. During this time, he also attended classes at University College, Reading (now the University of Reading).

A tragic accident and the extreme contrast between the vicar's lavish lifestyle and the grinding poverty and disease suffered by the farmworkers living in the parish caused a crisis of faith for him. Over 14 villagers died during his time in Dunsden, including those who perished from common infectious diseases. In 1913 Wilfred left the parish and, after a period teaching in France, he enlisted in the Artists' Rifles. He was subsequently given the rank of Second Lieutenant in the Manchester Regiment.

After suffering severe shell shock, Owen was sent to a hospital near Edinburgh to recover. Here he met the poet Siegfried Sassoon who acted as his mentor and published Owen's poetry in the hospital magazine.

Owen insisted on being returned to the front line. On 1 October 1918, he led his men in attacks near the village of Joncourt. For his conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty he was awarded the Military Cross. He was



Wilfred Owen in Uniform



Dunsden Church interior

photo D Woodward

killed in action on 4 November 1918, exactly one week before the signing of the Armistice which ended the war.

For more on Wilfred Owen and his poetry, see www.bbc.co.uk/poetryseason/poets/wilfred_owen.shtml
To contact the Association to find out more about the appeal or make a donation, see the Association's website <http://owenindunsden.org/>
Phone 07802 433058 – email: window@owenindunsden.org

Creative space for healing, wellness and team-building

by Elestr Lee

IN OCTOBER 2019, less than 18 months ago, local artist and businesswoman Tamalia Reeves (below right) opened her new studio in Marsack Street, Caversham. Her vision was to build a creative space that brings local community together with local artists through the medium of art.

Since launching her business she has offered art and craft workshops for both adults and children, birthday parties, baby showers and hen dos, and co-ordinated a large workplace wellness event at Green Park – and moving forward is working with local businesses, where art and craft activities can be offered to employees as part of their wellbeing programmes. "We had a big workplace well-being event in Green Park," Tamalia recalls, "But then it was March 2020 - and we were temporarily closed due to COVID!"

In fact, the enforced closure of MADEbyTamalia gave her the opportunity to rethink her business; and her passion for using the arts for well-being, whether for individuals joining craft classes or for her business clients, is coming to fruition.

"Allowing yourself time to be creative has been scientifically proven to help with mental health. It gives you purpose. It allows you to express yourself in a non-conformist way. It opens your mind to new ideas. It connects people, whilst also allowing time for self-reflection," Tamalia says.

"I have been thinking about the sheer loneliness some people feel from working from home. Many companies are now far more aware of the importance of well-being among their employees. Last year was

horrendous for many people, so I have aimed to create a sanctuary where people can get away from the hustle and bustle, and find solace through creating something – while also having the opportunity to connect with other people," she explains.

Social distancing meant that Tamalia's original studio space wasn't practical. However, during last summer, adjacent floorspace became available, and Tamalia took the decision to expand, so that the studio space can now be utilised in different ways. "For example, a company could hold a team meeting in one room, then perhaps have a light lunch together, then move on to an art activity after lunch," she suggests.

New working practices mean that traditional offices have become fragmented, so team building is more important than ever. When Tamalia first launched her studio, her aim was to offer support to local artists – but now she feels the artists can use their talents to offer much-needed support to the wider community. "When I first opened, I didn't have much chance to concentrate on the well-being side. Now it is going to be the main focus - and that really makes me smile!"



Sue Reeves Suepix Photography

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Act locally for a global impact – Fairtrade Fortnight

by Katherine Meehan

NORMALLY at this time of year, the Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) in London Street would be ramping up to Fairtrade Fortnight, which takes place every year at the end of February. Founded in 1995 by the Fairtrade Foundation, this two-week festival brings together people and groups from all over the UK to raise awareness of trade justice and to celebrate craft producers and farmers from around the globe.

RISC has helped co-ordinate Fairtrade Fortnight for many years on behalf of Reading Fair Trade Town. Over the years, RISC's meeting rooms have hosted talks by a number of visiting fair trade producers, who have shared stories of the impact of fair trade on their lives. The café has held live music events and the World Shop has participated in fair trade breakfasts and food tastings. RISC has also helped produce a Reading Town Fairtrade Directory. But Fairtrade Fortnight doesn't just take place at RISC – it happens all over town. In a normal year there would be Traidcraft stalls in Caversham churches, lectures at the University, and fair trade displays at the Civic Centre.

Fairtrade Fortnight is an important part of our year at RISC because it provides an opportunity to renew our commitment to a fairer world, and scope to educate on

fair trade, which is one of our primary goals as a charity. However, as with most things in 2021, it's going to be a bit different – it's going online. Last year's Fairtrade Fortnight campaigned on behalf of cocoa farmers for a living income within their industry. This year, the Fairtrade Foundation makes the connection between fair trade and climate change, which disproportionately impacts farmers and workers in the global south. They will be hosting an online festival, the details of which are soon to be released.

Fairtrade Fortnight will take place 22 February to 7 March 2021. If you'd like to take part in this year's events in Reading, email volunteers@risc.org.uk. Look out for displays in shops in Emmer Green and Caversham. Many local shops sell Fair Trade products, including the True Food Co-op in Emmer Green, Co-op Stores on the Henley Road and Briants Avenue and Waitrose. The World Shop on London Street not only sells Fair Trade produce such as teas, coffees and chocolate, but also a wide range of beautiful crafts produced by artisans who are paid fairly for their skills.

For more information about Fairtrade Fortnight, head over to the Fairtrade Foundation website: www.fairtrade.org.uk/Get-Involved/Current-campaigns/Fairtrade-Fortnight. You can also find Reading Fair Trade on social media:

Facebook: [@ReadingFT](https://www.facebook.com/ReadingFT)

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Peruvian Coffee farmers planting trees

photo Fairtrade Foundation

WORD PUZZLE ANSWERS:

(from left to right) shire, pheasant, pine, gift, shine, present, glow, snow, show, tow, shot, toe, shoe, pull, blot,

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root/hoot/hoop/coop/crop
foot/fool/tool/toll/tail/fall
Swim/swam/seam/sear/wear
head/heal/hell/fell/fall/tail/tail

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