

# Caversham Bridge

No 679

[www.cavershambridge.org](http://www.cavershambridge.org)

September 2021

## CAVERSHAM ARTISAN & FARMERS MARKET

by Martin Andrews

Janina's drawing this month is not about permanent buildings but a 'temporary shopping centre' of independent retailers and us, individuals, friends and families, enjoying a Sunday visit to the Caversham Artisan & Farmers Market.

It's rather ironic that one of the effects of lock-down, despite isolating, has been to bring communities together – whether at a social distance, in person or on-line. We increasingly identify with our locality, and the growing success of our local market is part of that feeling. It is raining now but I am about to go and get my bag full of delicious fare and ethical products. The stall holders have been in the car park behind the precinct (why don't we call it something stylish like 'The Square') since eight o'clock this morning off-loading produce and struggling with a variety of gazebos and tent structures and arranging their stalls ready for opening to the public at 10.00.

The market was the vision of Jodie and Claire, who have a business called Nood, and first opened four years ago. It managed to stay open over lock-down and became a much-needed venue to get out of the house and see people. Now greatly expanded it is the perfect meeting place and has recently started to open every Sunday.

The sun has come out and I am off to get my favourite focaccia bread for lunch.



Drawing by Janina Maher

[www.janinamaher.artweb.com](http://www.janinamaher.artweb.com)

## Celebrations and Commemorations

by Phil Chatfield

**T**HIS MONTH we have a bumper edition of the Caversham Bridge for you (20 pages). With the lifting of most lockdown restrictions, some of the activities we have

missed for the last 18 months are restarting. Clubs are planning for a future without the need for Zoom, and musicians are preparing to make music together. Local orchestra the Langtree Symphonia is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year and is seeking players (p17), whilst the South Chiltern Choral Society celebrates its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary (p16).

Gwyn Arch played an important part in the history of the Society and our obituary celebrates his life (p16).

Our artists and crafts people have been busy through lockdown and at last have an opportunity to display their work. We report on the success of local artist Nina O'Connell at the Reading Guild of Artists Exhibition in July (p10), and of the first Artists & Makers Fair at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church Hall (p5). We also have an article about the 'Art in the Arbour' events (p11) hosted by Liz Real as well as the latest offering from Janina Maher (*this page*). This drawing emphasises the part local businesses play in our community. Our shops have, on the whole, weathered the pandemic well, but they continue to need support. This month we have articles from the True Food Co-op (p15), Fourbears

Books (p6), and about the new Nood Shop (p3) in Church Street, all of which stock this paper.

Our regular features include the last of William Cecil's Wildlife series. Sadly, 'William' passed away in May and we can now unmask his real identity (p8). Laura Harmsworth's informative series on CVs and job applications emphasises the importance of tailoring CVs and applications for the specific post applied for (p18). The natural world is the focus of Happy Wanderer's article this month (p7), together with the articles on Rewilding at Clayfield Copse (p12) and the View Island cannibals (p13).

This is your local paper, so do contact us with feedback and contributions at:

[editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)



South Chbiltern Choral Society performance

photo SCCS

### INSIDE

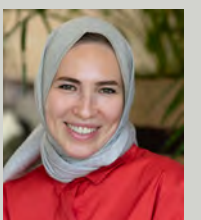
*The Nood Shop*  
– p3



*Crafty ways to*  
*raise funds*  
– p11



*Community*  
*Connections*  
*Fazilet Secgin*  
– p15





# I've been reflecting on **Opening Up** and **Taking Risks**

AS SOCIETY opens up and more of the events and places we related to before March 2020 become available again, so the risks of being infected by Covid 19 or one of its variants increase. Some of us may have been safer during a time of National Lockdown than we will be now.

One of the arguments for opening up is that, not only will people's jobs and the economy benefit, but so will our mental health and quality of life.

What I've been considering is how opening up in various areas of life inevitably involves taking risks and, like the scientists and Government who have been seeking to guide us through the pandemic, we have to weigh up whether or not it's wise to take the risks of opening up.

A young woman is weighing up whether to tell her mother that her sexual orientation is towards other women, when she knows that her mother has been



Talking Point – by David Jenkins

looking forward to her daughter's white wedding and to becoming a grandmother herself.

Another young woman is wondering whether to risk contacting the Police when she has been raped. Although she wants to see justice done and the man not harming anyone else, the process she would go through could involve considerable stress.

A man is wondering whether he should tell his wife about his affair, when he is unsure what effect it will have on their subsequent relationship.

There are many areas of life in which opening up entails risks for people.

It may be someone opening up their life to God, saying their 'Yes' to God, as Mary did. What risks might that involve? Where might life go then?

There are no easy answers and rarely straightforward routes to travel. As with the pandemic it means weighing up one set of risks alongside another. As well as needing guidance ourselves it may be helpful to become more aware of the struggles others (and we ourselves) can face.

*Revd. David Jenkins is a member of the Methodist Team Ministry*

## Local clergy and church services

### ANGLICAN

#### 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](mailto: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](mailto:secretary@ctmparish.org.uk)

#### Current services

Services will be held on Sundays at:  
St Peter's Church – 9:30  
St John's Church – 9:30  
St Margaret's Church Mapledurham – 11:15  
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](http://www.standrewscaversham.org)

#### Current services

St Andrew's weekly services are Sundays at 8 and 10am.  
The 10 is also livestreamed on the St Andrew's YouTube channel. Prayer Book Communion at 11:30 on the first Sunday of each month. More info on the parish website.  
[www.standrewscaversham.org/services](http://www.standrewscaversham.org/services)  
Tuesday 8pm Compline (in church only)

#### St Barnabas Emmer Green

David Howell (Churchwarden)  
Email: [churchwarden@saintbarnabas.org.uk](mailto:churchwarden@saintbarnabas.org.uk)

#### Services from August 2021

1st, 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays of the month at 9:30:  
Parish Communion  
1st Sunday of the month at 11:30: All Age Service  
3rd Sunday of the month at 9:30: Service of the Word  
Every Wednesday at 10:30: Midweek Communion

### CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (LEP)

(United Reformed Church, Methodist and Baptist)  
Contact: Dr Alison Johnston  
Tel: 0118 947 5152 [www.cavershamparkchurch.com](http://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](mailto:martin.beukes@methodist.org.uk)

### CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor: Colin Baker  
Church office Tel 0118 954 5353  
Email: [secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)  
**Current services**  
A link is placed on their website each week at:  
[www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk](http://www.cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk)  
and on their YouTube channel  
[www.youtube.com/user/CavershamBaptist](http://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](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

#### Current services

See their web site for details:  
[www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk](http://www.gracechurchcaversham.org.uk)

### RIVERSIDE CHURCH (Reading)

[www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk](http://www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk)

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Tel: 947 1787 [www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk)  
**Current services**  
See their web site for services at:  
[www.ourladyandstanne.org.uk](http://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](http://www.cavershamchurch.org).

The Caversham Bridge is a community newspaper produced by Caversham Christian News Ltd

#### Future editions:

Contributions for the October 2021 issue should be submitted by 13 September and for the November edition by 11 October. These should be e-mailed to:  
[editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)

Dates for advertising copy are 24 August for the October issue and 5 October for November. These should be e-mailed to [advertising@cavershambridge.org](mailto:advertising@cavershambridge.org)



# Fragrant Flowers



NOOD STORES, Caversham's newest shop, has opened its doors to sell a range of sustainable living items for the home. Nood Skin, the team behind Caversham's weekly Sunday Artisan and Farmer's Market have linked up with The F\* Word and Midrib Plants to supply fresh and dried flowers, a wide range of houseplants, and eco-friendly soaps and cleaning items. There is a refill station, with all the items produced in Caversham, as well as jewellery and art. The Nood Stores Team transformed the interior in five days, and celebrated their hard work with friends and patrons.

*photos and article by Jean Harper*

## Singing together

LOCAL CHOIR Rivarate are now preparing to go back into rehearsal and plan to present their next concert in Caversham Heights in November, as well as singing traditional Christmas carols in the Caversham Precinct in December. They are looking to recruit new singers to join in these and future musical ventures

Newcomers are welcome and are not expected to be able to read music or to take an audition as a condition of joining. All they ask is for them to turn up regularly to rehearse, to be prepared to make a consistent effort and to be willing to relax and enjoy singing together! They meet on Tuesday evenings in Caversham Heights Methodist Church in Highmoor Road, starting at 19:00. Have a look at their website and see if Rivarate appeals to you - <http://rivarate.com>

## CAVERSHAM BRIDGE - COULD YOU BE PART OF THE PICTURE?

FOR MANY years, Carol Moloney has undertaken the distribution of the Caversham Bridge, taking delivery of the paper from the printer and distributing them to our volunteer deliverers. She has now stepped down from the role. We take this opportunity to thank Carol for all her efforts to maintain the Caversham Bridge over the years and wish her well for the future. We are now looking for one or two volunteers who could help with the distribution of the paper. It is usually delivered to around 12 key distributors in Emmer Green and Caversham. If you think you could spare about one day a month to help with this, please contact us at: [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org) to find out more. If you have any queries regarding the delivery of your paper, please e-mail: [circulation@cavershambridge.org](mailto:circulation@cavershambridge.org)

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Alternatively copies of this paper can be purchased from:

The Nood Store and Fourbears Books and  
at the True Food Community Co-Op in Grove Road,  
opposite St Barnabas church.



# God's love is bigger than a burger...

by Anna Clarke

IF YOU'VE BEEN going to bed humming "God's love is bigger than a burger" over the past weeks then you probably know what this is about. If not, read on...

Due to Covid-19, Churches Together in Caversham (CTC) were unable to offer the usual week-long holiday club we do every summer. So instead, this

year we planned an event at six different churches in Caversham to take place on Friday mornings throughout the summer.

We got off to a brilliant start at the beginning of the summer holidays with our first venue being Caversham Baptist Church, where we explored the theme of God's love being 'Taller than the mountains!' The following week we moved to Caversham Methodist Church where we heard the story of Jesus and the big catch of fish. There was, of course, plenty of fish-related fun with a magnet fishing rod competition, fishy sand art and seaside suncatchers. I think it's fair to say we had a wonderful holiday time... all we were missing was the sun!

Every morning has ended with a free lunch for all involved, where we have enjoyed fellowship and friendship with both old and new friends. It's been a brilliant opportunity to connect with others after these periods of lockdown. It has also been a great chance to share Bible stories with families in our community, and to express the love of Jesus through our actions and our hospitality. We hope and pray that everyone who has attended has felt welcomed and loved.

Other venues this summer included Grace Church, St John's Church, St Barnabas' Church and St Andrew's Church.



Outdoor fun at Grace Church

photo A Clarke

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## A PLACE TO LISTEN AND SHARE

by Gillian Wilson

BEREAVEMENT CAFÉS have been running for some time throughout the UK. They provide a place to find others who have suffered loss and are able to appreciate something of each other's experiences. Everyone's experience of grief is personal. Cafés such as these provide a space to talk about the pain of loss and to find mutual support and encouragement when people most need it. The Bereavement Café format is not a form of counselling, as most bereaved people don't need formal counselling. Bereavement is not a problem to be solved or recovered from, but something you learn to live with. At Bereavement Cafés the bereaved will find people who will listen and respect the individual's story and won't be upset by tears.

St Barnabas Church is hosting a Bereavement Café on the first Friday of each month from 14:00 to 15:30 in St Barnabas Parish Centre, 20 St Barnabas Road, Emmer Green, Reading, RG4 8RA. The first will be on Friday, 1 October 2021, and anyone who has been bereaved, no matter when, is most welcome to attend.

If any further information is required, please contact Gillian Wilson, 0118 9478772.

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# WHAT'S ON

HOPEFULLY the relaxation of lockdown will enable a resumption of many events in the coming months. Be sure to tell us well in advance!

Check our online What's On, which is updated regularly, to see what has been added at: [cavershambridge.org:5154/local-info/whats-on](http://cavershambridge.org:5154/local-info/whats-on)

If you have an event planned, please send details to [editors@cavershambridge.org](mailto:editors@cavershambridge.org)

**Organic September** - a month-long campaign called 'It's what the planet would choose', to promote and educate people about organic food and farming practices. See the article on page 12 for details.

**Cycle September** - a fun, global competition to help more people realise the benefits of riding a bike. Get fitter, be happier, help save our planet – ride a bike for Cycle September! To find out how you can join in, visit [www.lovetoride.net/uk](http://www.lovetoride.net/uk)

**Second-hand September** – Oxfam campaign to help people and the planet. Pledge to say no to new clothes for 30 days – See <https://oxfamapps.org/secondhandseptember> or visit their shop in Prospect Street.

**Caversham Library** has limited opening: 09:00 -14:00 Tuesday and Friday, 13:00 – 17:00 Thursday and 10:00 – 15:00 Saturday

[www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/all-libraries/caversham-library](http://www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/all-libraries/caversham-library)

**Sundays** – Caversham Artisan & Farmers Market 10:00 – 15:00 Caversham precinct [www.facebook.com/CAFMarket](http://www.facebook.com/CAFMarket)

**Monday 6 September** - Caversham Park Bridge Club re-opening at the Milestone Centre, 19:15 for 19:30 start. Phone Lin 9477820 for further information.

[www.bridgewebs.com/cavershampark](http://www.bridgewebs.com/cavershampark)

**Wednesday 8 September** – Art in the Arbour 10:00 – 16:00 12 Longhurst Close, RG4 5ER. Liz Real hosts a pop-up gallery of her art and cards, with crafts from Pam Chatfield - Facebook @lizrealart Instagram @lizreal2

**Saturday 11 September** - Caversham Horticultural Society - Autumn Show at Emmer Green Primary School 14:00 – 16:30 [www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk](http://www.caversham-horticultural.org.uk)

**Saturday 11 September** – Artists & Makers Fair – 10:00-16:00 – Caversham Methodist Church Hall, 272 Gosbrook Road. Local artists and craftspeople display their work for sale. Free entry. Phone Jean 07808 966928 for information.

**Sunday 19 September** – Poetry reading and book launch - Fourbears Books in Prospect Street, 16:00 [www.facebook.com/fourbearsbooksuk](http://www.facebook.com/fourbearsbooksuk)

**Monday 20 – Sunday 26 September** – Reading Climate Festival. A week-long programme of free virtual and live events to inspire action on climate change in Reading. [www.readingcan.org.uk](http://www.readingcan.org.uk) and [www.facebook.com/ReadingClimateActionNetwork](http://www.facebook.com/ReadingClimateActionNetwork)

Advance notice: Caversham Traders Association have agreed to hold a pre-Christmas late night shopping evening on Friday 3 December. Details to follow. Check their web site: [www.choosecaversham.co.uk](http://www.choosecaversham.co.uk)

## IT'S ALL HAPPENING

CAVERSHAM'S FIRST Artists & Makers Fair at Caversham Methodist Church Hall in July was a resounding success. There was a wide range of locally made arts and crafts on show, from wood turning to jewellery, water colours and sketches, with a constant stream of customers. The Fair proved so popular it will now become a regular event, on the second Saturday of every month in the hall, which is on the corner of Gosbrook Road and Ardler Road. Admission is free and the next Fair will be on Saturday 11 September.

## A flying start



If anyone is interested in taking a stall, please contact [jean@alljazzedup.com](mailto:jean@alljazzedup.com)

## Muddy Stilettos in the bookshop?

LESS THAN a year after opening, Fourbears Bookshop has been recognised with the 'Muddy Stilettos' Best Bookshop in Berkshire Award. Owner Alex Forbes was "a little bit shocked to win" but incredibly grateful to everyone who voted. Muddy Stilettos is an online business which aims to become the ultimate 'urban guide to the countryside' for women living outside London, providing

an insider's guide to the very best food, walks, boutiques, day trips, hotels, interiors and events. It currently operates in 26 counties including Berkshire. For more information, see <https://berkshire.muddystilettos.co.uk>



## Building our community

*Planning update from Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA), bringing you a summary of planning and transport matters affecting the RG4 area*

Changes in planning law continue, as we anticipate the alterations the proposed planning bill may bring. From 1 August 2021 new "Permitted Development" rights were introduced. These allow change from commercial, business or service use to residential. Only a light touch application for prior approval is required and this also applies within Conservation Areas.

<https://consult.reading.gov.uk/> lists the ongoing Council consultations. There is a very welcome draft Design Guide on how planning applications affecting shop fronts will be decided. This closes 24 September. Another important consultation concerns the future goals for Reading's libraries. This closes 17 September – see <https://consult.reading.gov.uk/dens/reading-libraries-consultation/>. Please do respond if you can.

The application for housing on Reading Golf Club was considered by the Planning Committee in July. KEG (Keep Emmer Green), the Emmer Green Residents Association and CADRA spoke to raise concerns and the committee voted unanimously to refuse. Adjacent to the building work for a nursing home on Henley Road, there are plans for 60 retirement apartments. The application number is 210975 and CADRA is reviewing the plans. CADRA worked with the previous owners of the Priory Avenue Surgery to achieve a conversion to apartments which would preserve the exceptional Arts and Crafts interior. The wonderful stained glass window will remain but sadly a revised application has been approved which will remove the original staircase. As always, you can find links to current significant applications on the Latest Planning List at [www.cadra.org.uk](http://www.cadra.org.uk)



Cynthia and her garden

photo J Offord

## Garden Glory

FOLLOWING our Eco Tip on front gardens last month, we were sent this photo of regular reader Cynthia Neave with her front garden filled with California Poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*). These are not only colourful, but also great for pollinating insects.

by F Smith

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*For your bookshelf....* by Alex Forbes



# DRAWING KIDS INTO READING

Welcome to 'Fourbears Recommends' where we briefly review a couple of chosen titles from our bookshop Fourbears Books on Prospect Street. As restrictions have started to relax, we have started having author events in the shop. On 19 September we have local Poet Robin Thomas giving a reading from his new book.



The Bear is in the seat

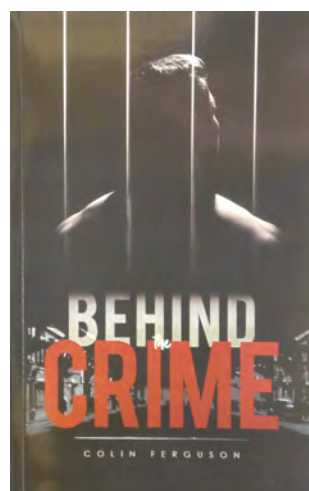
photo A Forbes

FIRST UP is a lovely, funny picture book called 'The Day the Crayons Quit' by Drew Daywalt. One day Duncan opens up his box of crayons to find a letter from each crayon saying they had quit! Each crayon has its own reason; Blue is tired from colouring all that water, Pink doesn't feel like it's ever used, and the list goes on. Drew Daywalt has created a fun, imaginative story for youngsters, and I'm sure after reading this book children will play with their crayons in a whole new way. There are other books in the series, including some baby/toddler books which have the same characters but cover more educational subjects for the toddler, like colours, numbers and feelings. The Crayons Christmas book last year was also very popular!

The adult book is 'Ash Mountain' by Helen Fitzgerald. The book is set in a town in Australia as the wild bush fires are approaching. Fran is returning to her hometown, Ash Mountain, which she left many years ago and has hated ever since. But her dad is ill and needs Fran to look after him. Soon after Fran returns, she has to start facing

some of the reasons why she left. This is a lovely read. It has a nice pace to it and the descriptions of the approaching bush fires do a wonderful job in conveying the feelings of the townspeople. The flashbacks to Fran's childhood and teenage years are also perfectly told, so you feel the awkwardness we all remember from the adolescent years.

Whatever you are reading, I hope you enjoy it. Do pop into the shop to tell us about your latest books and you can contact the shop on social media, or by email at: [info@fourbearsbooks.uk](mailto:info@fourbearsbooks.uk) for all your book needs.



## The inside story

CAVERSHAM resident Colin Ferguson spent thirty years as a Probation Officer, the last ten in Reading. In his book 'Behind the crime', Colin tells the story of his journey into crime when he moved from the safe environs of the Bank of England to the

chaos of disordered lives.

Whatever the crime, there is a human story behind it and, though many crimes are frightening and even horrifying, most of them are stories of human failure. This book is full of the people with whom he worked from the late 60s until his move to Reading in 1979. This was South London, reeling from the power of the Krays and Richardson gangs, and the arrival of young children from the Caribbean joining the parents who had come ten years before. For over two years he was a welfare officer working in Holloway prison. They are only pen pictures and are not meant to go into great depth, neither do they excuse the crimes that brought these prisoners to court. They are simply a look behind the crimes to meet the real people. The setting may be historical but similar stories are still being re-lived today.

Comments by those who have read the book:

'This book looks at those who have been labelled criminal by society, but it does so with great compassion.'

'Colin's book is one of the most Christian books I have read without being religious.'

Published by Austin Macauley and available in the Fourbears Bookshop in Caversham.

by Fred Smith

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## Happy Wanderer on the trail of

# Autumn Lady's Tresses

THIS UNASSUMING little plant is an orchid, as you can see if you get down to peer at it, and it's the last of our wild orchids to flower, so September is a good time to look for it. It's probably far more widespread around Reading than is generally realised. Growing in short grass, and itself only 3-6 inches tall (8-15 cm), it's easily overlooked.

I remember how, some years ago when Thames Water was selling off the old water tower and reservoirs at Bath Road in Reading, the protestors cited a colony of Autumn Lady's Tresses orchids as a reason why the site should not be sold off.

The best site to see it reasonably nearby is the former airfield on Greenham Common, now a nature reserve to the south of Newbury and Thatcham. The plant obviously likes the dry habitat created by the crushing up of the old concrete runways, and it's hard to walk around parts of the site without treading on orchids in September. Most visitors probably never notice them at all.

The Lady's Tresses orchids are an interesting group. Three species occur in the British Isles, and also occur in North America. The Irish Lady's Tresses is in Ireland and the Hebrides and, though not present in continental Europe, is widespread in North America. The Creeping Lady's Tresses is

at home in Caledonian pine forests, and the Autumn Lady's Tresses is mainly in the southern half of England. A fourth species, the Summer Lady's Tresses used to occur on a few sites in the New Forest, but it is now thought to be extinct.

The small white autumnal flowers have evolved to be pollinated by insects – and by bees in particular. The lower petals provide a place on which to land, and small bundles of pollen attached to sticky tissue readily adhere to the unsuspecting pollinators, to be carried away to flowers on different plants. Thus self-pollination is avoided. I've also read that the plants will push out stems along the ground, which will take root at the ends, and enable them to spread without the need for setting seed at all.

....'a scent reminiscent of almonds...'

This autumn-flowering species is mentioned by William Turner in his book, 'The Names of Herbes', published in 1548. It grew near Syon House, by the Thames and opposite Kew Gardens where, he said, "It bryngeth forth whyte flowers in the ende of harvest, and is called Lady Traces." The flower-stems are twisted, so that the tubular flowers are arranged spirally up the stem, the whole effect reminding people of ladies with flowers in their plaited hair – or maybe they were thinking of Our Lady.

John Gerard was rather more down-to-earth. In the 1633 edition of his Herbal, revised by Thomas Johnson, he called it Sweet Cullions. They were sweet because of the flowers, with a scent reminiscent of almonds, and they were cullions because of the shape of the tubers from which they grew, which reminded people of testicles. Large, firm tubers from this plant, boiled in milk, were reckoned to be an aphrodisiac.



Autumn Lady's Tresses

photo Happy Wanderer

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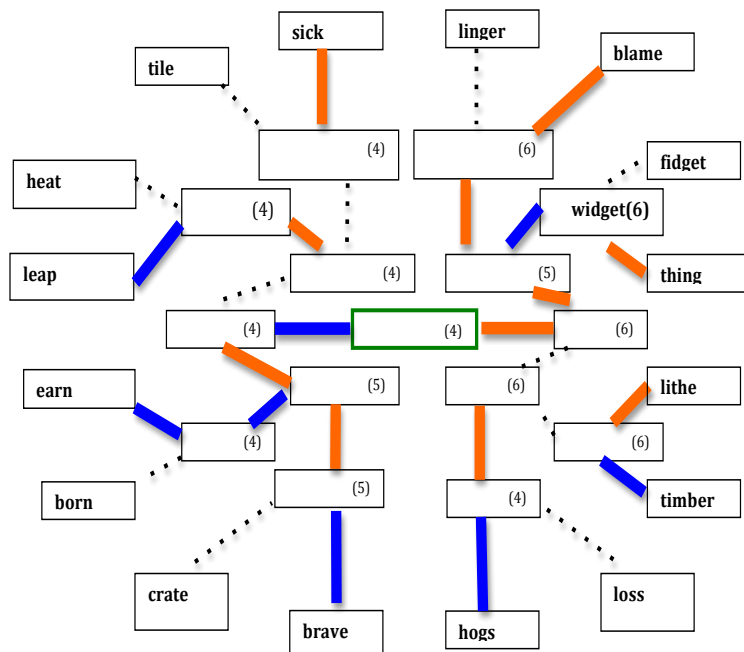
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## Puzzle Corner

### The Challenge

Find the word that has the same meaning as the clue; or rhymes with; or has one letter that is different. For example: *widget* has 6 letters; differs by one letter from *fidjet* and means *thing*.

Rhyme ———  
Letter change . . . . .  
Meaning ———



### WORD SEARCH

Can you find 18 common British trees in the grid?

H	O	R	N	B	E	A	M	G	L	N	H	N	A
H	C	N	E	H	N	A	R	A	R	D	S	D	O
N	A	L	S	N	P	S	R	N	N	Y	O	L	H
S	Y	Z	I	L	H	C	A	A	P	P	L	E	O
G	I	I	E	M	H	D	Y	E	R	H	H	S	A
I	U	L	R	L	E	K	N	A	L	D	E	R	P
U	K	A	O	H	S	I	L	G	N	E	A	O	S
M	Y	L	L	O	H	H	E	P	I	O	A	L	Y
I	I	C	O	P	P	E	R	B	E	E	C	H	C
E	U	H	C	R	I	B	R	E	V	L	I	S	A
W	A	L	N	U	T	M	D	S	H	A	M	A	M
L	O	N	D	O	N	P	L	A	N	E	M	I	O
H	O	R	S	E	C	H	E	S	T	N	U	T	R
R	H	T	E	E	N	I	P	S	T	O	C	S	E

Alder	Horse Chestnut
Apple	Larch
Ash	Lime
Copper Beech	London Plane
Elm	Maple
English Oak	Scots Pine
Hazel	Silver Birch
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Holly	Walnut

Answers on page 15



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# BRIAN CECIL LEE 1930 – 2021

WE CAN now unmask wildlife columnist William Cecil as the journalist Brian Lee, who died at the end of May this year. His final column appears below.

Brian was born in Kent and, as a young man, trained on his local newspaper, moving swiftly to Fleet Street after doing National Service. He switched from national newspapers to Weekend magazine, part of the Daily Mail and Associated Newspapers group, spending almost four decades with the company.

Following many happy years in Cambridgeshire, Brian and wife Betty moved to Caversham in 2012. Brian took to his new neighbourhood with enthusiasm. He supported local music groups and made new friends. In the spring of 2020, he was warned of a serious heart condition just as lockdown was imposed. However, at around the same time, he became interested in the Caversham Bridge, and readily offered support and advice to the then new company chair, Phil Chatfield – so frequent 'window meetings' ensued.

Phil says, "Brian was full of ideas and immediately offered to write regular wildlife articles, using the pen name 'William Cecil'. He could take an observation from his window and weave it into an amusing and informative story.

"Brian's career had included writing headlines. I often sent him an article, and asked if he had any suggestions – he rarely came back with less than three options, and these suggestions have enlivened the paper. His pleasure at playing with words was infectious. I treasure copies of the paper he'd critiqued with 'good heading' pencilled in on the headlines I had written!

"For me, Brian became a great friend and a generous mentor, with a lively mind bubbling with ideas right to the end. I count myself blessed to have known him – for me he was the right person in the right place at the right time."



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## Wildlife

by William Cecil

# HAMBURGER GOES ON WALKABOUT



Silver Spangled Hamburg

photo Ospr3yy at en.wikipedia

THE OTHER day a completely unexpected visitor shouldered its way through the bottom hedge. It was obviously a chicken but unlike any chicken I had seen before. It had silvery blackish breast feathers, a dramatic white tail with black spots, and a neat red comb to top the lot.

The bird was certainly not the usual product of any poultry farmers' free-range prairie, or from barn mass production. So I started leafing through dozens of pictures of rare breeds. Eventually it came down to the Hamburg.

These were first bred by the Dutch before the 14th century. This means it is quite possible, as some people think, that the two chickens, Chauntecleer and Pertelote, depicted in *The Nun's Priest's Tale* in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* were Hamburgs.

Since then, they have become very popular with those who

fancy keeping unusual breeds. As well as being handsome, Hamburgs are good layers, producing up to 200 eggs a year. Their eggs often weigh fifty grams each - an achievement one poultry farmer salutes with four exclamation marks on his website!

Where had my Hamburg come from? My suspicious mind immediately went back to the visit of the Californian quail with a tuft on top which I reported in the February issue. Had Tufty returned to my neighbour's garden aviary and been boasting of his jaunt?

Or was the Hamburg just another tripper out for a day in the sun, pecking around in the hopes of finding a discarded hamburger? Whatever it was up to, I trust it got home safely and did not fall fowl of the big black monster or a passing fox on the lookout for a chicken dinner...





# RECYCLING PLASTIC FILMS

by Tricia Marcouse

A NEW SCHEME aims to recycle most of the plastic bags, film, and pouches that are NOT accepted by the door-to-door recycling system, and to process these materials for reuse within the UK. This includes the bags for bread, vegetables, frozen food or dry goods, crinkly foil/plastic bags for crisps and coffee; pet food and baby food pouches, plastic magazine covers and a whole load more.

The scheme does not accept blister packs; biodegradable bags and wrappers; straws; disposable cutlery and any kind of foam or expanded polystyrene.

The plastic needs to be CLEAN and DRY, and adhesive labels and stickers should be removed.

It will be sorted into the different types of plastic for melting down and reuse. Please don't stuff lots of different types into a large plastic bag and tie the top, as this makes machine sorting impossible.

Sainsbury's have already set up collection points at Winnersh, Tilehurst, Calcot and Broad Street.

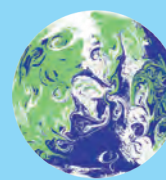
Waitrose is testing the system at their stores in the North-West to see what sorts of material, how much of each and what level of contamination is presented (just think of unwashed sachets of cat food during the summer months and shudder!). It will then revise its posters before rolling out the programme. They want to ensure that everything collected has an end market in the UK. Expect to see collection points by the end of the summer.

Finally, don't ignore existing collections in our area. Some schools, churches and other groups already collect many of these packaging materials and other used plastic products, such as toothpaste tubes and toothbrushes, for recycling and to help raise funds. Segregating your waste into different categories for these systems provides a small but steady income for local causes.

To find local collection schemes, visit [www.terracycle.com/en-GB](http://www.terracycle.com/en-GB)

## Can Reading lead the way on Climate Change?

by Lauren Shute



UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE UK 2021  
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THE DATES for the Reading Climate Festival have been announced by Reading Climate Action Network for 2021. This year the Festival will be part of the national Great Big Green Week. From 20 to 26 September there will be talks, performances, art installations and more to inspire action on climate change.

We launched Reading Climate Festival last year during lockdown and hosted almost 50 online events. This year the festival will include an extensive programme of free virtual and live events, ensuring there is something for everyone! Hear about how to live a more plastic free life, and listen to inspiring speakers, including Jean Baylock, from Global Justice Now.

At a time where climate change is the greatest environmental challenge the world has ever faced, Reading Climate Festival is your chance to learn new eco-tips and to get involved with tackling climate change in your local area. Come along to Reading Climate Festival 2021 and join the call to action towards making Reading a carbon-free, climate-resilient town by 2030.

If you would like to attend Reading Climate Festival 2021, watch our Facebook page and website for more information.

[www.readingcan.org.uk/reading-climate-festival-2021](http://www.readingcan.org.uk/reading-climate-festival-2021)

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# Creative Caversham

September '21/Art on tour

## ARTISTS TAKE TO THE ROAD

**LOCKDOWN HAS not dampened local artists' determination to create. With no arts trail, many have taken the opportunity to show their work in venues elsewhere, reports ELESTR LEE. And for one, with prize-winning results!**

This summer, there have been great opportunities to catch up with the work of local artists – the only snag being that we have needed to travel to view the exhibitions. Many of the artists we feature on this page not only take part in the Caversham Arts Trail, but are also members of the Reading Guild of Artists. The RGA doesn't have a permanent exhibition space – Reading itself doesn't currently boast a commercial art gallery – so the guild takes its exhibitions to a variety of locations. This year marked its 90th anniversary, and the annual exhibition, called Reconnected, took place in Henley's Old Fire Station gallery (top, far right), timed to coincide with Henley's art trail, back in July.

Not only did this offer the chance to loyal Caversham art-lovers to view the art in the Henley gallery; but also artists had the chance to meet new art-lovers, and to take advantage of the different location. There was also the excitement of the annual presentation of the Marie Dyson Award, which this year was jointly awarded to Jenny Halstead for *Colette*, and to Caversham's own Nina

O'Connell for her batik, *Earth Dreaming*. The award was judged and presented by BBC Radio 3's Fiona Talkington, who said, "As I walked round, I was struck by the tremendous skill and imagination within every work; I was both inspired and humbled. The Reading Guild of Artists has shown, once again, why art is so important, not just for those who produce all this amazing work, but the effect on us as visitors."

Nina was thrilled by her win. "It was a terrific surprise! When I noticed it was the RGA's 90th anniversary show, I thought I must put something in. I'd only just finished *Earth Dreaming*, so I rushed off to get it framed. I've entered things before, but normally it's just a case of collecting them at the end. I found out I'd won from a friend, so it was quite delightful!"

Plenty of other Caversham-based artists could be viewed at the Old Fire Station exhibition, including



Lou Jessop, Roger Smalley, Martin Andrews and Janina Maher. Liz Real created a collage inspired by seeing the Rabble Theatre's theatrical production, *The Last Abbot* by Beth Flintoff in the Abbey ruins earlier this summer.

"I was allowed to sketch during the dress rehearsal, and I was struck by the scene when Henry VIII announces the end of Reading Abbey while a monk is praying – with the backdrop of the current Reading Gaol behind him – so my paper collage is called *The Last Abbot Lending his prayers to Save Reading Gaol*," Liz explained, (above).

As well as exhibiting in Henley, RGA artists have been out and about, showing their works on the walls of the Royal Berkshire Hospital. The annual Corridor Exhibition began in early July and was on view until 28 August. Organised by the Royal Berks Charity, 25% of sales are in support of the hospital. Both Janina Maher and Liz Real were among artists whose works have been enhancing the 2nd floor link corridor of the central block at the hospital. "I exhibited a still-life of fruit, as well as a collage of some apples," recalls Liz, while Janina's depiction of flowers was titled *Purple Profusion* (right).

Having the chance to show their work has



certainly given local artists a boost. "It was great meeting the other artists as we arrived to drop off and then later to collect," recalls Nina. "It has been hard not being able to see people during the past year-plus."

And for Liz, it was the chance to meet a completely new audience. "Usually we ask purchasers to leave the work they have bought in the exhibition, so there aren't blank spaces on the walls. But at Henley people came to the exhibition from a much wider area – including in one case from France – so they took items from the walls straight away. Luckily we had other works to replace those sold!"



photos L. Real; RGA



Nina was delighted with her award



# CRAFTY WAYS TO RAISE FUNDS

by Joy Gumbrell

HOW LOVELY to stroll up Donkin Hill on a sunny morning to visit Liz Real's Art in the Arbour event, and to meet



Bet Tickner

photo J Gumbrell

some friends of old. Bet Tickner had a lovely display of items made using hand blocked fabrics from Rajasthan in India. Bet was fortunate to travel to India and visit the factories where these beautiful fabrics are made. She recalled the accuracy of the printers, who use no machines. The blocks are applied by hand and built up to the final print. "Every home has a sewing machine," said Bet.

I found Fran sitting in the shade making some of her earrings. Fran makes these by salvaging beads from broken jewellery and transforming them into a unique item. "It's wonderful to give things a new life," said Fran, who has worked at the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Therapy Centre as a massage therapist for several years. The sales from her craft go to support this vital work, "Making life with Multiple Sclerosis easier." Her business is Frandangles, email [frances@arboretum.org.uk](mailto:frances@arboretum.org.uk)

Liz uses mixed media to produce lovely works. Some of her art is used for her printed and handmade cards which she sells to support Launchpad, a charity

working to prevent homelessness in Reading.

Liz is holding her next event on 8 September in her front garden at 12 Longhurst Close, just off Grosvenor Road. Come along and view her artwork, browse hand sewn items by Pam Chatfield (pamccrafts), and treat yourself to some preserves from the Caversham Jam Lady.



Frandangles Earrings photo J Gumbrell



A crafty selection

photo J Gumbrell

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## Showing this September



by Elestr Lee

CAVERSHAM'S talented artists have been keeping busy, and there will be several opportunities to see their work during the coming month. September always marks the launch of Heritage Open Days across England; among the activities taking place, the Turbine House is re-opening its doors from September 10 – 26 to host a special exhibition curated by Jenny Halstead and Linda Saul, called The Last Gasometer and Reading's Changing Skyline. The 25 artists invited to picture the town include Caversham's Martin Andrews –

who has vividly pictured the gasometer (left) – Janina Maher, and Liz Real, who has three works in the exhibition. Liz includes an image of the town from Caversham itself, which she entitles *The View From Donkin Hill* (below). The Turbine House is part of Reading's Riverside Museum, off Kenavon Drive at Blake's Lock. The exhibition is open from 10:00-18:00 daily and is free.

There will be plenty to view in Caversham itself during the month: keep an eye on the walls of the Caversham Picture Framer when you're passing. During September there will be prints by Grace Boyle, featuring

bold combinations of collage and photographs, and the vibrant abstract work of Melissa Topal. Take a peek into the new Caversham branch of Parkers Estate Agents – they will be exhibiting works by local artists directly inspired by Caversham. You can see Janina Maher's depiction of Caversham Library; Matt Emmett's night photograph of Reading Bridge, and a beautiful watercolour of roses seen in Caversham Court, by Sue Reeves. And anyone attending a course at the MADEbyTamalia studio, Southview Business Park, Marsack Street, is in for a treat as work by local artists is always a feature on the walls there.



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# Wild about trees

by Tricia Marcouse

THE CLIMATE Change Committee say that, to reach our national carbon net zero commitment by 2050, woodland cover in the UK needs to increase from the current 13% to 19%. At the last election, political parties were tripping over each other to announce larger targets for tree planting.

At the same time, rewilding projects, or natural regeneration, have received a lot of publicity. This includes the large-scale rewilding project at the Knepp Estate in Sussex.

Both approaches result in more tree cover which, unless they convert wet meadows or bogs to woodland, increases the carbon storage per hectare of land. However, natural regeneration has some extra benefits, as well as a few potential problems.

Growing trees take carbon dioxide from the air, but also need nutrients from the soil. In a symbiotic relationship, mycorrhizal fungi in the soil around roots exchange sugars from the tree for moisture and nutrients gathered from the surrounding soil. An army of micro-organisms and insects break down leaf litter, plant remains and each other to make the nutrients available. Some are generalists and some specific to a particular type of tree.

If an area next to woodland or a thick hedgerow is left alone to regenerate, it isn't just seeds from all the different local trees, suited to local soils and climatic conditions, that are blown/carried into the new area. Soil organisms from the woodland migrate into the new area via the soil or air. Just how much this improves tree survival and growth in the first years is not clear, but a recently started large-scale research project aims to quantify the effect.

This patient approach is a lot cheaper and takes much less effort than planting trees. There is no need to purchase trees, mats, stakes, or rabbit guards; no need to dig the trees up from



Clayfield Copse, edge of regeneration area 2021

photo J Oliver

a nursery, pack them and transport them across the country; no need to dig holes, plant trees, mulch them and water them for the first years. Each of these produce carbon dioxide, negating some of the benefits of tree planting in the first years.

However, using local seed could be a potential problem. Climate change predictions mean we expect drier summers with hot periods and heavy rain in the future. If so, perhaps we need to introduce trees native to a warmer climate, perhaps from southern European or Yangtze Delta stock, rather than local ones which have adapted over the years to the 'a bit drizzly all year' English climate.



Clayfield Copse, regeneration area 2010

photo J Oliver

This isn't a 'good method' vs 'bad method' discussion. It's about 'what's going to work best on this site with the resources we have available'.

Is this yet another newfangled idea for local parks? Not a bit of it. Visit the Caversham Park Road car park at Clayfield Copse and take a walk across the flowering meadow there. You will see a mosaic of trees, shrubs, ground flora and grassy paths over the old pastures. These have been created by almost 20 years of natural regeneration with seed, mycorrhizal fungi, moulds and insects from Clayfield Copse and Blackhouse Wood, together with the odd apple core from passing people and nibbling by rabbits and deer. It's sad that ash dieback is taking out most of our taller trees, but the oaks, limes and hornbeams are growing fast. We have Reading Borough Council's Parks Department to thank for taking the long view in 2003. Friends of Clayfield Copse (FOCC) are setting up a self-guided tree trail through this area from 6 September so that you can appreciate it.

FOCC and the Parks Department are also starting a new regeneration area adjacent to Caversham Park Road. Annual cuts will stop and FOCC will monitor what happens – and so can you!

For more information and insight into the potential benefits on a larger scale, sign in for the Zoom talk by Jill Butler (Ancient Tree Forum and an advisor to development at the Knepp Estate) during the Reading Climate Festival at the end of the month. Booking will be on

<https://whatsonreading.com>

## ORGANIC FOOD – IT'S WHAT THE PLANET WOULD CHOOSE

by Angela Morris

THIS IS THE strapline of the Soil Association's Organic September campaign for 2021. Every year, they support organic businesses to raise awareness of the benefits of choosing organic food for people, wildlife and the planet.

True Food Co-op in Emmer Green is our local, wholly organic grocery shop. In mainstream supermarkets, organic products are often separate and need to be identified as 'organic'. At True Food, only the handful



Bee on lavender

photo La Toya Atkinson

of non-organic products are identified as such – everything else is organic!

True Food started in 1999 when a group of people clubbed together to buy organic food. Fast forward 22 years and the shop sells a range of organic food and ethical household products. It is still staffed by some of those original members, plus lots of local people who've joined over the years.

They feel choosing organic food is a positive step we can all take to increase the sustainability of food production, improve animal welfare and protect the environment. For example, did you know there are around 75% more wild bees on organic farms? And organic farming can even help to slow down climate change - if Europe's farmland all followed organic principles, agricultural emissions could drop by 40-50% by 2050, with plenty to feed the population with healthy diets.

True Food are celebrating Organic September with giveaways and information in-store. They are also excited to announce a new partnership with Tolhurst Organic, a local organic farm in Pangbourne. As well as selling Tolhurst fruit and vegetables, Tolhurst customers can now collect their weekly fruit and veg boxes at the store.

Kat Boulton, one of their busy Shop Managers said, "Supporting local businesses that put the focus on non-centralised food systems is at the heart of our ambitions. And anything we can do to make choosing organic as easy as possible for our customers is also fantastic."

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Organic facts/stats all from the Soil Association



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# Taking to the water

by Phil Chatfield

**L**AST OCTOBER we reported on the rising popularity of free swimming at Caversham Lakes. But I had not realised there was another water-based activity available on the opposite side of the lake. Through a gate into another former gravel pit and the world of water-skiing!

The ISIS Water ski & Wakeboard Club has been using the site for some years and has an established club house and facilities. However, this year they have hosted a water ski school which is run by husband and wife (and baby Leo) coaching team Chris and Ellie Mullins.

Chris started his life on the water at the age of 11, when his father bought a boat. By the time he was 18 he went to Greece to hone his water-skiing skills and stayed 7 years. He and Ellie, who is also a coach, started their coaching business in Burghfield in 2014. They came to the Club in Caversham this year in preparation for a move to a permanent base near Virginia Water next year.

They are on the water from 6:30 to 16:00, weather

permitting, and will be at the Club until the end of October, so there is still time to try it out. Chris loves introducing new people to the sport, and there are a lot of juniors coming through now. With the pandemic, as an outdoor sport, it has helped many people and can be beneficial for mental health. Starters are often surprised by the short lessons, which are normally 15 minutes. But this is a physically testing sport and this is equivalent to 90 minutes of weightlifting! So other types of training are essential to help prevent injury. Chris is particularly pleased with one girl he coaches, who has progressed from starter to potential team GB level in a year.

British Water Ski is the governing body for the sport and is linked to Sport England. Coaches must hold UK qualifications. Water-skiing is an accessible sport which can be enjoyed by all, so why not give it a try while the opportunity is on our doorstep, and experience Chris's infectious enthusiasm and the beautiful lake?

Contact Chris Mullins on 07894 153 395 or check their website at [cjmskiandwake.com](http://cjmskiandwake.com)



Chris, Ellie and Leo

photo P Chatfield

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## THE CANNIBALS OF VIEW ISLAND

by George Grubb

I WAS chatting to a neighbour the other day and she mentioned she had been taking photos of insects by the Thames. She had not been able to identify a particular caterpillar and showed me the photo on her phone. I recognised the distinctive Cinnabar Moth caterpillar immediately. I had seen the same sight on View Island in July last year, during one of our lockdown walks.

The caterpillar of the Cinnabar Moth is most unusual, because it can feed on Ragwort. This plant has yellow flowers and is well known for its potential to poison horses and other livestock if eaten, particularly via contaminated hay. The toxins in the plant make it bitter to most animals. These caterpillars have found a way to feed on Ragwort without

suffering side effects. Indeed, they accumulate the toxins from the plant in their body, making them unpalatable to birds. Their bright colouration acts as a warning of their poisonous nature and bad taste. After about a month, the caterpillars return to ground level to pupate, remaining there through the winter to emerge as the black and red adult moths in the spring.

Because of the lack of predators or competition for their food plant, they can sometimes be found in great numbers. They can decimate an entire patch of Ragwort and as competition for the remaining food increases, they become more aggressive and may even turn to cannibalism!



Cinnabar moth caterpillar

photo La Toya Atkinson



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# Making the most of it



by Les Cooper

WAY BACK in the past, did you ever fall in love with someone and then later realise they weren't quite as perfect as you'd originally imagined? Perhaps they looked absolutely wonderful, but it

dawned on you gradually that they had the brains of a peanut.

Isn't it a bit like that in the plant world? There are some lovely flowers that flash their beauty for a day or two and then become quite tedious. Over the years I have been tempted to grow some pretty flowers that sadly come and go before I have had time to really appreciate them. Sometimes the foliage that remains is quite nice but often it is boring, or at least it is in my opinion. My prime examples are Bearded Irises and Peonies. They can have gorgeous blooms, but these seem to last for only a few days, especially if the weather is unkind. There are many beautiful irises, but their passing beauty is over so quickly and we are left with a set of dull leaves to stare at for the remaining months. I realise I am being unfair, and I guess you might think I am a moron, but a bunch of leaves does nothing for me. It is much the same with Peonies. They have fantastic blooms, but only for a few days, and if it rains, as it usually does, they are a disaster.

Most of us have small gardens with limited space which we need to make the most of and we can't afford to have one-day wonders. Therefore, perhaps it might be better to lower our ambitions. Now how about growing Sedum? They are not that spectacular but for most of the year they have a lot going for them. One on its own doesn't come to much, but a group really shows up well. They have glossy, fleshy leaves and in Spring heads of buds appear, then pink flowers that attract butterflies, and finally come pleasant seed heads.

Two long flowering favourites of mine, which flower all summer, are Aster Frikartii and Argyranthemum 'Jamaica cream'. Oh dear, for here lies a writer's problem - I am repeating myself, as I have mentioned these before!

Moving rapidly on to another plant that pleased and surprised me



Leucojum (Snowflake) 'Gravetye Giant' photo E Cooper

this year. It was Leucojum (Snowflake) 'Gravetye Giant', which flowered for a surprisingly lengthy period. Was this because I have an established mature group or maybe it was due to the cold, wet weather? Anyway, now is a good time of year to plant the bulbs.

Of course, it's all very much a question of time, space and energy. If I had plenty of these merits I would have Irises, Peonies and even my potential nemesis, Ivy, all flourishing in my garden.



## House plant of the month Spotlight on: Monstera minima by Jacqueline Winston-Silk

THE MONSTERA minima, as its colloquially called, is often seen as the miniature cousin of the Monstera deliciosa - as the two plants share several of the same traits. Many don't know that the minima is a separate species entirely, it's botanical name is *Rhaphidophora tetrasperma*. I'm reminded of the old adage about the rose still swelling sweet... despite the frequent miss-identification, Monstera minima is a much sought after kooky, climbing plant.

Its popularity no doubt stems from the shape of the leaf. It has the classic fenestrations (from the French, *fenêtre* meaning window) of its larger relative, Monstera deliciosa. Fenestrations are large splits and openings in the leaf, which often means the foliage is more empty space than it is leaf!

Minima is native to Thailand and parts of South-East Asia. They are vine plants, making them wonderful, relatively

quick-growing climbers. They will snake their way up a moss pole or bamboo cane and look brilliant pinned to a wall and allowed to take over.

Minima are easy going. Prospective plant parents won't be deterred by their simple care routine. Ensure bright, indirect sunlight and water the soil when the top layer has dried out. As with most tropical plants found indoors, they will appreciate a misting but don't demand it like others do. Just make sure to support the stem as it grows, for optimum height.

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# Community Connections

by Caroline Gratrix

This month, we learn something about local resident Fazilet Secgin



Fazilet Secgin photo C Gratrix

I MET Fazilet when she came on our first guided WALK WORKS walk in April. It didn't take long to learn she is a warm and generous person, and I've really enjoyed getting to know her better on walks since.

Fazilet is a media and art consultant, with a degree from Greenwich University and an MA in Global Media and Communications from SOAS. She started her career working in media companies in London and Istanbul.

She came to Caversham from London when her husband's role at BP moved to Pangbourne. As she continued commuting to Kensington, it took her a while to connect with Caversham.

She started her own media agency when children arrived. She delivered projects from publishing children's books to cartoon animation for a kids' TV channel, as well as health awareness projects for Health Ministries.

Increasingly, she rediscovered her passion for art, one of her early dreams. During her art business dealings, she realised she also had an eye for interior design when customers requested her advice on redesigning their homes. Her work is inspired by her native Turkey, with stunning fabrics, lighting, marble, and unique furnishings, all with a high-quality finish.

Starting a family helped her to meet people locally and she began to explore and fall in love with the heritage, history and culture of Caversham and Reading. She is now very proud to call Caversham her home.

She is passionate about art, community, kindness, and people. Let's find out a little bit more about her...

## What do you want to achieve with your work?

I always wanted to create collaborations with well-known artists and enable art to reach everyone in their daily lives. For example, art prints have become popular and are affordable. They can be used to decorate people's homes for short periods and are ideal for people who want to enjoy art on their walls and like frequent changes. This also supports the work of emerging artists.

In the future I would like to contribute more to the local community in Caversham by preparing art workshops.

## Tell us a bit about you.

### How long have you lived in Caversham?

For 12 years now. We lived at Regents Riverside overlooking the River Thames for 10 years. From our flat we could see both bridges and observed the construction of Christchurch Bridge.



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The sound of the ducks, geese and swans in the morning was wonderful. It was always busy, with rowers, walkers, joggers, people arriving to rent a boat, classy yachts passing by or kids feeding the ducks. The most memorable moments were at weekends, waking to the humming wing sounds of the swans flying past our bedroom. In 2019 we bought a house in Fairfax Close. We love the neighbourhood but miss the bustling Thames. Our two girls go to Caversham Primary. My husband left BP 7 years ago and co-founded an online travel agency and I have finally had the chance to focus on my passion, which is art!

## What's your favourite thing about Caversham?

Caversham Court is my favourite place. It is wonderful to take the kids there for a picnic, read a book or meet friends over a coffee - if the British weather permits of course! Unlike other places, one feels as if you are in your own backyard by the river.

## Caversham's best coffee shop?

My favourite is The Collective. Since its opening, it has helped to change Caversham's atmosphere and, in my mind, suits the village perfectly.

I also love the Caversham Coffee Exchange. I'm impressed by Tim and Helen's entrepreneurial

enthusiasm and spirit. It brings coffee and service to another level.

## Where to eat in Caversham?

Thames Lido, with its Spanish - Mediterranean feel, has a relaxed and unique atmosphere. A real highlight of Caversham in my mind. Where else can one eat in such a historical environment, a Grade-II listed Edwardian building, and observe swimmers at the same time?!

Pizzas at Papa Gee resemble those at Bonci's Pizzarium in Rome, and it's close to our home. We like the taste of little Italy and there is always a warm welcome.

Another favourite is Vegivores, pioneers of a healthy, sustainable, 100% plant-based menu.

## Where to shop in Caversham?

I'm so glad we have a bookshop. Fourbears Books is a favourite to visit on the way home from school.

I like the organic produce and homemade bread at Geo-Café. Their croissants and pastries are exquisite.

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

An art gallery would suit Caversham and complement the existing offering.



## Poets' Corner

## What is Cafferty's Truck?

MORE POETRY! Following on from my article in April, 'A Distant Hum', I have another new book ready to launch, 'Cafferty's Truck', published by Dempsey and Windle.

Some years ago, we were having a few days in Dartmouth, a village perched on a hill above the river Dart where it meets the sea, home of top fish and chips, with Agatha Christie's house and a steam railway on the opposite bank. None of this survives in the poems, although the wonderfully noisy seagulls feature.

One day, and for no apparent reason, the word 'Cafferty' came to me out of the blue, closely followed by the near rhyme 'rackety' and the idea for the first poem was born. Every few months over the following years an idea for a new Cafferty poem popped into my head.

I'm really not sure what made them Cafferty poems, but the key thing was that he wasn't there. So who is Cafferty? Nobody knows, certainly I don't. After a while Byrne turned up. "Oi," he seemed to say, "What about me?" So I had to let him in. Byrne is just as not there as Cafferty, but their vehicles seem to say something about their different personalities. Somewhere on the periphery is O'Brien; well, he's absent too, but his horse pops up from time to time.

Cafferty's Truck will be launched at Fourbears Books in Prospect Street on Sunday 19 September at 16:00. Also fellow poet, Susan Utting, will be reading some of her poems. Hope to see you there!

Here's the opening poem:

## Cafferty's Truck

*Cafferty's truck brings the sad news*

*as gulls wheel and screech*

*over the small grey town.*

*The truck stops at each house.*

*The birds shriek their senseless fugue.*

*The town gets smaller and greyer.*

*Cafferty's done. The gulls' eyes glitter;*

*they criss-cross the sky, bickering, snatching.*

*The town sighs and settles.*

*Byrne, in his trim red van,*

*respectfully following, follows*

*Cafferty's yesterdays with his tomorrows.*

Robin Thomas



# In celebration of Gwyn Arch, MBE

GWYN ARCH, who enjoyed a long association with several local choirs, including the South Chiltern Choral Society (see below), died peacefully at home on 6 June. His funeral was held at Caversham Heights Methodist Church on 24 June.

He was born on 5 April, 1931 in Southampton to father Tom, an ordained missionary to the deaf and dumb, and mother Laura, a poet. In 1939, the family moved to Suffolk and Gwyn attended Ipswich School, where he learned to play the piano and began to compose music.

Having studied English at Cambridge, he went to Wadham College in Oxford to train as an English teacher. Here he met Jane, whom he married in 1957.

Gwyn's first teaching job was at Rickmansworth Grammar School. He ran choirs, orchestras and bands, gave piano lessons and took pupils on trips

across Europe. He also wrote plays and musicals and achieving national recognition.

Despite being an English teacher, when the new teacher training college at Bulmershe in Reading, advertised for a director of music, Gwyn was the successful applicant. So the family moved to Sonning Common. At the college, he formed the internationally successful Bulmershe Girls' Choir and developed most of his musical output, more than 800 musical arrangements for choirs.

Gwyn took very early retirement in 1985 and continued musical ventures begun at Bulmershe, including Reading Male Voice Choir and South Chiltern Choral Society.

Gwyn changed the way singing was taught in schools. It had often consisted of practising hymns and tunes from the National Songbook. He inspired his student teachers to share their love of music, composing and arranging music



Gwyn receiving his MBE family photo

children loved to sing. He knew making music collectively is one of life's great pleasures.

Gwyn's choirs have raised thousands of pounds for charity and introduced local audiences to music of all styles and formats. His music and influence will live on for many years. In 2006, he was made an MBE for services to music.

Gwyn once said he was grateful, when talents were handed out, to have been given a talent for sharing music with others. And that is exactly what he did.

## IT'S ZOOMIN' WONDERFUL

South Chiltern  
Choral Society

by Jane Pares

**A**S THE sound of Puccini's *Messa di Gloria* echoes through our screens, we realise the importance of technology and how it has helped a long-standing choir to continue their practice throughout a pandemic. However, Zoom rehearsals have been going a short time compared to the long history of the choir. South Chiltern Choral Society (SCCS) celebrates its 70th anniversary this year.

It started in September 1951 with the amalgamation of the village choirs of Peppard and Kidmore End, when the new choir became South Chiltern Choral Society. Then, in 1957, with the building of Chiltern Edge School, it moved there for rehearsals and concerts.

**'....it can help reduce stress....'**

The choir was first conducted by Michael Pelloe who was succeeded by Eric Taylor and then Bernard Williams. In 1965, Gwyn

Arch, who had moved to Sonning Common was invited to fill the vacancy of conductor.

During Gwyn's leadership the choir membership grew and the style changed, due to his particular passion and ability. As well as putting on all major choral works, he liked to produce works by contemporary composers, often only having been written in the preceding year.

In September 2014 Paul Burke took over as musical director.

Apparently singing has many advantages, as it can help reduce stress, boost immunity and enhance memory. And of course, it means coming together as a community. Although the pandemic has altered the way we have come together, SCCS have continued weekly Monday evening singing (via Zoom), with the enthusiasm of the members and Paul's leadership.

The choir always welcomes new members. It is a mixed choir of 100 voices singing all kinds of music from classic choral works to jazz arrangements and songs from West End musicals.

The choir also has a history of going on

tour! The most recent trip was to Albi, in the South of France, performing in Albi Cathedral and singing with a local choir.

Our new term starts on Monday 6 September, when we will resume proper, in-house, rehearsals at Maiden Erleigh, Chiltern Edge School, Reades Lane, Sonning Common, RG4 9LN.

Rehearsals will continue each Monday evening, starting at 19:30.

If you are interested, please contact Anne our membership Secretary on 07817 544532 or look on our website to see more about us: [www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk)



The choir performing in happier times

photo South Chiltern Choral Society

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# LET'S PULL IN SOME STRINGS!



LANGTREE SINFONIA gives two performances per year, often at St Mary's Church, Wallingford, which is where its 50th anniversary concert takes place on 13 November, featuring Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Mozart's Magic Flute Overture, Elgar's Serenade for Strings, and Windbag, by Dodgson.

The orchestra currently numbers 30 players with a full complement of wind and brass. Where have all the string players gone? If you

currently play, or feel like dusting off an old violin, viola, cello or bass, please get in touch! No audition required.

For more details: [www.langtreesinfonia.co.uk](http://www.langtreesinfonia.co.uk) or contact Sally Hamilton,

[sallyham@ntlworld.com](mailto:sallyham@ntlworld.com)

Rehearsals start on Wednesday 8 September.

by Sally Hamilton

## Weller walk to Wembley



by Hazel Bingham

'WELL DIDN'T the summer break fly by?' said no parent ever! If you're reading this, then well done on surviving! We've had an amazing summer here at the Weller Centre, with lots of young people in the centre. They have been fed and watered – as always – and have taken part in plenty of activities. Breakfast club had arts and craft activities, as well as some special guests. Young people were entertained by an illusionist who also taught them some illusions, had the chance to handle exotic animals and tried their hands at glass fusing.

On top of all that excitement, they learnt basketball skills, and every young person who attended took part in our walking challenge. We awarded certificates and medals to them for walking from Paddington to Park Royal, Paddington to Wembley, Paddington to Watford and a full 26.2 mile London Marathon. (Obviously this only took place around the field, we didn't send them off to London each day!)

We also continued to host other classes at the centre during the school break, including diabetic eye screening and Happy Feet. You can keep up to date with what's happening at the centre on Facebook – just search for Weller Centre. We look forward to welcoming back our term time hirers over the next few weeks – not everyone is starting on the first week back so, if you're a regular, please check with the provider for session dates.

Looking forward, in September the Centre hosts the HITZ programme, which is a national initiative by Premiership Rugby delivered by its clubs, including London Irish, and funded by partners Land Rover, CVC, and Wooden Spoon.

London Irish Head of Community, Andy Keast explains more. "HITZ uses sport, mainly rugby, and focuses on its core values to help improve the personal lives and employability skills of disadvantaged young people aged

16-24. While working with the Premiership Rugby clubs around the country, and London Irish in particular, the professional players are role models for the programme. The collective aim is to motivate and build a brighter future for individuals involved in HITZ."

The programme will include the BTEC Level 1 Diploma in Sport course and the City and Guilds Level 2 Employability course. The BTEC course involves practical and theory lessons around sports, the history of sports, sports coaching and community development, healthy living, and nutrition as well as the anatomy of the body. The City and Guilds course will allow pupils to enhance their CVs, provide pathways into employment, and manage their personal finances.

The courses will start in the first week of September 2021, so please email our Education/HITZ Officer at:

[vicky.tzanetis@london-irish.com](mailto:vicky.tzanetis@london-irish.com)

For more on the HITZ programme, see

[www.premiershiprugby.com/community/hitz](http://www.premiershiprugby.com/community/hitz)



Deaglan gives Adam his certificates and medal for the full London marathon *photo H Bingham*



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## Together again – with cake

ROSEHILL WI finally met in person for our first get together since Lockdown, and all seemed remarkably normal. We didn't have a formal meeting, just a gathering of members for a chat over tea, which came with a selection of home make cakes.

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at St Barnabas Village Hall, Emmer Green, at 14:00. Our next meeting will be 1 September.

by Jean Hewitt





## First Impressions matter –



# Why and how should you tailor your CV?

by Laura Harmsworth

YOUR CV MUST be tailored to every role you apply to. Writing a generic CV and using it for numerous applications without changing the content is unlikely to land you an interview.

In many cases, your CV will be passed through applicant tracking software (ATS), scored against the key words/skills of the job advert, and ranked. If it ranks highly, your CV will be sent to the recruiter. If you don't tailor your CV, it's less likely to match the key words/skills, so more likely to go to the reject pile.

If your CV makes it through, the recruiter will see how well you match to the job. You're making their life easier by highlighting what you can offer them. If you submit a generic CV, they'll have to assume certain things, read between the lines, or think you're a poor match.

How to tailor each section:

### CV Profile

The 'Key Responsibilities' section of the job advert will help.

Highlight all the parts of it you can do and add to the profile, in your own words but using as much of their terminology as possible.

### Key Skills

Match your identified skills (see my article in the July edition) against the skills in the job ad. Include the top 6-8 in this section.

### Career History

Only include relevant responsibilities and achievements. If you led a small team a few

years ago but this isn't a requirement for the job you're applying to, leave it out. If you apply for a role where team leadership is an essential or desirable skill, keep it in.

### Top Tip

Recruiters typically spend 6-20 seconds scanning a CV, so yours needs to showcase how you fit the advertised role. Spend time tailoring every application - believe me, it will be worth it!

Next month I'll talk more about the ATS mentioned above.

You can follow Laura on:

[contact@cavershamcvwriting.co.uk](mailto:contact@cavershamcvwriting.co.uk)

[www.facebook.com/CavershamCVWriting](https://www.facebook.com/CavershamCVWriting)

or on LinkedIn where she posts tips and articles:

[www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lauraharmsworth)

Her website is:

[www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk](http://www.cavershamcvwriting.co.uk)

## HELP YOURSELF



by Steve Hendry, RVA Volunteering Development Manager

WE ALL know volunteering is an excellent way to help others, but did you know it can also have a positive impact on the volunteers themselves?

Numerous studies have demonstrated that volunteers can benefit from a boost to their own wellbeing. This can result in an increased sense of happiness and life satisfaction, and a reduction in feelings of depression and anxiety. Moreover, other studies have shown volunteering may even be related to better physical health.

The right volunteering role(s) can provide you with a unique gateway to accessing the five paths to wellbeing:

**GIVE:** Share your time, energy and skills for the benefit of others. There are lots of different skills local groups are looking for from finance and digital to catering and customer service.

**KEEP LEARNING:** Gain new skills and experiences. Some roles will not expect you to have the skills they are looking for already, just the time and enthusiasm to learn. They may also provide you with the opportunity to use your existing skills in a new context, for example your leadership skills as a charity trustee.

**BE ACTIVE:** There are opportunities to be both physically and mentally active through volunteering, supporting a sports session or helping a young person to learn to read.

**CONNECT:** Meet new people and feel like part of a team. Volunteering can help you to build up new contacts and is an excellent way to find out about what's going on in our town. It can also help you to connect with people who you may otherwise never have the opportunity to meet.

**TAKE NOTICE:** Find out what's going on in your community. All sorts of activities take place in the different neighbourhoods across the town. Volunteering can be an excellent way of finding out about what's happening in yours.

Whether it's getting your hands dirty with a local conservation project, helping out behind the scenes at a local charity's office, or having a chat with someone as a befriender, there are a host of ways you can help out in your local community whilst reaping the positive wellbeing rewards of volunteering for yourself.

Ready to get going? Take a look at the opportunities on offer by visiting the [www.rgneeds.me](http://www.rgneeds.me) website, the place to find out about volunteering in Reading.



Volunteers get stuck in photo TCV



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# Get Jamming with Sarah Roy – The Jam Lady



## Blackberry and Apple Jam

*I OFTEN GET asked what my favourite flavour jam is and I always reply Blackberry and Apple. It reminds me so much of my childhood, walking across local fields and footpaths, and gathering blackberries with my mum. Of course I'd end up with purple fingers and lips – I couldn't resist the juicy fruits along the way! Blackberries are very low in pectin but, fortunately, the addition of apple always ensures a firm set.*

### Ingredients:

500g blackberries – fresh or frozen

500g chopped apple

1kg sugar

### Method

1. Wash the jars and lids in hot water. Put into a warm oven (175°C) for 15 min to sterilise them, and put a saucer into the freezer.
2. Mix the blackberries and chopped apples in a large, heavy based pan.
3. Stew down the fruit, using a masher to break down to a pulp.

4. Stir in the sugar until it dissolves, and bring to a rolling boil.
5. When the mixture thickens, test the setting point by spooning a teaspoon of the hot jam onto the cold saucer. If you push your finger along the plate and the jam wrinkles on the top then it is ready. If not, keep on boiling and test again in a few minutes.
6. Once ready, ladle into the hot jars right to the top and firmly seal the lids. As the jam cools, a vacuum is created and the jam is preserved.



*The taste of Autumn in a jar - perfect on just about everything!*



## Wellbeing with Ami Roy

## This thing called sleep

THE WORD 'circadian' is taken from the Latin words 'circa', meaning about and 'diem' meaning around. Circadian rhythm is a natural process that controls the sleep-wake cycle. The sleep-wake cycle is determined by complex interactions between the central nervous system, the endocrine system, and the immune system.

Sleep and the circadian system exert a strong regulatory influence on our immune functions.

Sleep recalibrates our emotional functions, our memory, and our metabolic state, and even influences our gut biome. Dreaming acts like a nourishing bath for the brain. We also need sleep to forget some traumas and tensions. If we don't sleep enough, we tend to overeat and get stressed about

little things, lose concentration and co-ordination. The long-term use of sleeping pills and of alcohol, as well as caffeine-induced sleep deprivation are very detrimental to our health.

There is much research being done now on the benefits of short naps and of completely unwinding before getting into bed for a good night's sleep.

Mindfulness, yoga, diet and keeping off screens have all been shown to help regulate sleep. And lavender as well, which is a favourite of mine!

Natural tools to promote better sleep and relaxation will be key to keeping our immune system thriving.

Lack of sleep in the long term may increase the risk of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases.

During sleep, our immune system releases proteins called cytokines, some of which help promote sleep. Certain cytokines need to increase when you have an infection or inflammation, or when you're under stress. Sleep deprivation may decrease production of these protective cytokines.

In his book, 'Why We Sleep', Matthew Walker says that a lack of sleep is akin to self-euthanasia and that we need individual, educational, societal and organisational efforts to allow us to sleep better! That definitely woke me up to the importance of sleep!

### CHALLENGE ANSWERS:

(From left to right) bile, finger, heap, widget, pile, digit, pine, **nine**, number, yearn, lumber, burn, limber, crave, logs.

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