

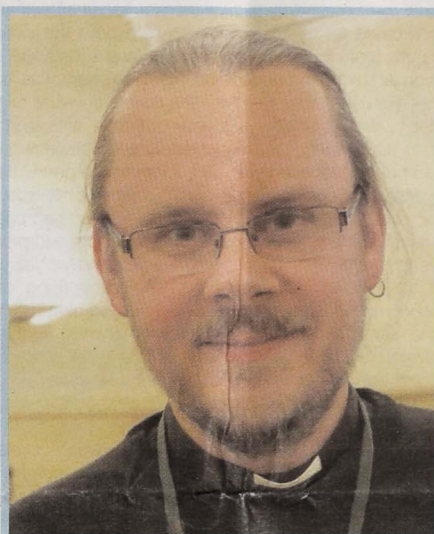
NEW RECTOR FOR CAVERSHAM

It is a real delight to be asked to write an article for *Caversham Bridge* so soon after the announcement of my appointment as the next Rector of the Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham parish.

At this early stage before we have moved or started work, I hope this article will give you a brief understanding of who I am and my journey until this point.

I am forty-seven and have been ordained for eighteen years. I grew up in a small village in west Northamptonshire, went to university in London and then worked for the Mission to Seafarers in Southampton before a brief career as a research computer scientist for BT in Suffolk. After the call to ordination, I studied theology in Lincoln and Nottingham and then served all my parochial ministry in the Diocese of Manchester, as a curate and incumbent working in urban and suburban settings. In Salford I worked in a team ministry setting looking after three churches and helping them grow their congregations and presence in the community.

For the last eight years I have had the privilege of being the Policy Adviser and Chaplain to the Bishop of Leicester. Essentially this role is one of assisting and preparing the Diocesan Bishop for all aspects of his ministry, and as such is a ministry of service and one that requires me to work in the background a great deal. I have particularly focussed in helping prepare the Bishop for his engagement with the world outside of the church, and in doing so I engage daily and weekly with politicians, leaders from business, the public and voluntary sectors, and particularly with the House of Lords where the Bishop convenes the Lords Spiritual. Outside of



The Revd Mike Smith

this role I have focused my ministry in helping run our diocesan inter-faith centre, and our diocesan retreat house.

I am married to Rachel, who is also ordained and is currently a vicar of a town centre church in Loughborough. We have two boys aged six and three who are very excited about moving to Caversham and have already picked their bedrooms in the new house and are imagining their new life amongst you.

I have already detected a real desire for the churches to work together, and for the parish I will lead to look further beyond their own congregations to discover what God is up to and to find way in which to proclaim and nurture the Christian faith in people. I hope my skills from my previous ministry will help provide a focus for some

of the ways the church might grow into new areas.

We will move into the Rectory at the end of February, and the licensing and welcome service has been set for March 16th at 3.30pm. As this is a Sunday afternoon, I do hope that as many people from the churches and wider community of Caversham will want to come and use this service as an opportunity where we can recommit ourselves to working together for the common good of all people.

In these intervening weeks please do remember Rachel, our boys and myself in your prayers and thoughts, as we will pray for you. After that please do make contact with us, as I really do want to be a priest with and for all the people of the parish, and your support at the start and throughout my time with you will be very important.

Yours, in Christ, Mike Smith

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS

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DEX1758/521

Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN St Barnabas

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

St Andrews

Revd Nigel Jones, St Andrews Vicarage,
Harrogate Road. Tel: 947 2788
www.standrewscaversham.org

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Revd Jeremy Tear
St John's Vicarage, St John's Road,
Caversham RG4 5AN Tel: 946 2884

Revd Marion Pyke

26 Priest Hill, Caversham RG4 7RZ
Tel: 947 5834

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

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

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

Rev Jenny Dowding, 72 Highmoor Road.
Tel: 947 2223

Deacon Becky Lovatt, 1 Forge Close, Caversham
RG4 8BG. Tel: 948 2530

email: beckybowden@hotmail.co.uk or
beckybowden@btinternet.com

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Revd Rob Beardsley.
Tel: 07515 260019
email rob.beardsley@sky.com

GRACE CHURCH

(formerly Caversham Hill Chapel)
Colin Gault. Tel: 948 4151

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Fr Paul Martin, The Presbytery,
2 South View Avenue.
Tel: 947 1787.
Deacon: Mike Walker, Hugh Anscombe

Fr Paul Rowan

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Rev H R Gayle Tel: 946 3009 (contact)

The newspaper produced by the members of the Anglican,
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Mapledurham for the local community.

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The Editors also would like to bring to readers' notice that the
inclusion of advertisements in this paper does not mean an
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TALKING POINT

by

Colin Ferguson

The death of the police court missionary

The police court missionary role started at a time of social reform, when the church was concerned for the fate of the poor and those whom society rejected, people trapped in a cycle of petty crime often as a result of alcohol abuse. Many of those concerned became magistrates but found they were not able to go beyond the confines of their role. Our missionary was a volunteer, who dared to step where nice people did not go. Society as a whole saw the depths of poverty as the fault of the poor themselves. Empowered by her faith, the missionary stepped where she knew her master would have been and worked alongside the poor trying to give them a sense of self-worth. In the courts they were called on by magistrates to help both the victims and the perpetrators of petty theft, aggression, prostitution and substance abuse. Later the first Probation Act was introduced and the missionary was now called a Probation Officer. Their task was to advise the courts on what might be done with the offender to protect society and prevent further offending. Their remit became known as supervising, advising, assisting and befriending the offender who having been put on probation was still subject to the courts if they did not work with the probation officer. They were now trained as specialist social workers to the courts. When I started in 1967 the service had begun to work in prisons and as a voluntary service to released prisoners and provided Court Welfare Officers to the divorce courts. I worked for twelve years in London before moving to Reading. Then we were also supervising offenders on Community Service and prisoners released early on parole. The ethos of the service was the same, to protect society and prevent further crime by supervising, advising, assisting and befriending. We worked a lot of the time with low level crime but this had a significant crime prevention element to it. We were unprepared for the sea change that swept over when the Home Secretary decided, without any negotiation or discussion to cancel the training of probation officers because in his opinion social work was not relevant to our work. He also believed that prison was a good thing. Although his tenure was short its effect was devastating not only to the probation service but to the whole Criminal Justice System. The concept of being tough on the causes of crime shifted to the myth that you could simply be tough on crime. A change of government gave us hope but this was soon dashed as punishment, not social reform, became the target, accountability became the watchword and probation officers suddenly became a problem and not the solution to the Criminal Justice system. The prison population has now more than doubled with little change to the crime rate or the numbers going to court and re-offending rates are frightening. The costs have multiplied enormously. With the cancellation of legal aid except for a few cases, the poor no longer have equal access to the law. The demonisation of the poor and the rendering of the courts to almost impotence, places us in a similar social position as the early 1900s. Our police court missionary is dead, her body is about to be sold to the highest bidder. And what has the church had to say about the death of my friend? Have we been so obsessed with our navel gazing that justice and compassion have been forgotten. Or has the tragedy of needing food banks at last roused us to awareness of the greater distortion of our new society?

Colin Ferguson is an accredited Lay Preacher in the United Reformed Church, a retired probation officer and an MA in Criminal Justice from the University of Reading.

SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's, St Peter's Hill

8.00am Holy Communion
9.45am Parish Communion
6.30pm Evensong

St John's, Gosbrook Road

8.30am Holy Communion (2nd Sunday)
10.00am Parish Communion (except 2nd Sunday)
10.00am All Age Worship (2nd Sunday)

St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

8.00am The Eucharist
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)
First Sunday, Family Eucharist
11.30am The Eucharist first and third Sundays
only, first Sunday BCP
6.30pm Evening Prayer (as announced)

St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

8.00am Holy Communion
9.30am Family Communion (apart
from 2nd Sunday)
9.30am Family Service (2nd Sunday only)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.00am Parish Communion

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP Meeting at Caversham Park School

11.00am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)
Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

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7.00pm Powerhouse Service - 1st Sunday
each month
3.45pm Messy Church - for all the family
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6.30pm Prayer Meeting

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6.30pm (second and fourth Sundays)
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Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm

Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

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Church Street, Caversham

9.30am Sunday School
11.00am Divine Worship
6.00pm Evening Service

Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the **February 2014** issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by **Monday 6th January**. The date for the March 2014 issue is **Monday 3rd February 2014**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Advertising copy for the **February 2014** issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twiggmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by **Friday 3rd January**. The date for the **March 2014** issue is **Friday 31st January 2014**.

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Representatives of the Dunsden Owen Association visit Wilfred Owen Memorial in Ors, northern France

Three months ago the Dunsden Owen Association was formed to promote Wilfred Owen's connections with the area and to link Dunsden with the village of Ors, Département du Nord, northern France, where Owen died. From 1911-13, the Great War poet was lay assistant at Dunsden church; later his parents and sister lived locally and they are buried in Dunsden churchyard.

Five members of the Dunsden Owen Association, John Bodman, Jennifer Leach, Beth and John Timms and Linda Glithro visited Ors in November as guests of the mayor, Jacky Duminy. The visit was timed to coincide with the annual commemoration service, remembering Wilfred Owen's death in Ors on 4th November 1918 – sadly just a few days before the official end of the war.

The short, well-attended service took place at the village cemetery, with military standards and a local band playing the British and French national anthems. John Bodman laid a wreath on behalf of the association, and children from the village school placed decorated lanterns before his grave. Peter Owen, the late poet's great-nephew and Damian Grant from Lille University read some of Owen's poems. Beth Timms, chairman of trustees for Eye and Dunsden village hall, said, 'After the ceremony, we enjoyed a feast of local fare at the Salle de Fêtes and were entertained by a wonderful group of French musicians and the Inishmore ensemble, who played haunting traditional Irish music, interspersed by readings of Owen's poems. We were able to speak to the villagers and to other French and English people who are interested in Owen's work.'

During the visit, the group also visited the Forester's House where Owen spent his last days, in a small, smoky cellar with 11 other soldiers, awaiting orders. In 2011, the cottage was turned into a memorial that pays tribute both to the last moments of Owen and his men, and to the contemporary and universal nature of the poet's work. Recorded readings of Owen's poetry (read in English by Kenneth Branagh) are powerful and moving. Jennifer Leach said, 'The cottage, Maison Forestière, is entirely white and looks like a sculpture, standing out like a 'bleached bone' in the forest. The dark cellar, in contrast, remains untouched. It is a wonderful and fitting memorial.'

The Dunsden Owen Association is planning a series of events next year to include a late evening Concert Vigil on 4th August led by Choral Group A440; an audio-visual walking trail, to be launched in September with a film by Jennifer Leach of Outrider Anthems, and a new work by composer, David Breeze; a concert of music and poetry on the weekend of November 8th; and an exhibition of local war memorabilia. A fun-day and other community events, including a lunch at Dunsden Village Hall are also planned. We also hope to stage a play, 'One night in Ors' by the Belgian playwright, Xavier Hannotte, whom we met during the visit.

Jacky Duminy, the mayor of Ors and a number of villagers will join in the celebrations in 2014, establishing community links between Ors and Dunsden. If you are interested in learning more about these events or the Dunsden Owen Association, please visit the website, <http://www.dunsdenowenassociation.org.uk> or Dunsden Owen Association Facebook site.



Maison Forestière Wilfred Owen, Bois l'Eveque



Wilfred Owen's grave



Western Front Memorial at the canal



John Bodman at the War Memorial, from left, Jacky Duminy, Mayor of Ors, Damian Grant, John Bodman, Peter Owen (partly hidden), standard bearer unknown.

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
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CHURCHES

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH AND ST BARNABAS JOINT SERVICE

St Barnabas and Caversham Park churches have resolved to work more closely in the future and so the first of probably three joint services a year was held at Caversham Park Primary School in November.

The congregation is usually about 30, so it was marvellous to have had 80 adults and four children. Among the congregation were a small party of French people who had come to stay with family for a Christening, later on in St Barnabas. It all added to the ecumenical mix.

The Revd Derek Chandler welcomed everyone and reminded us of the purpose of worshipping together. It was my turn to celebrate the Communion service and Elizabeth Gash offered to preach at the All Age Communion. She had also organised a drama of the Gospel story: 'Jesus meets Zacchaeus.' There was a special song on the theme, which many of the adults knew and taught the children actions to the words.

Our prayers, also on the theme, contained actions, simple and meaningful. Our last hymn, 'We are marching in the light of God', took us out of the worship space and out of the door to go home, but mainly to the coffee table, where we could make new friends and renew acquaintances.

Next time it will be St Barnabas' turn to be the hosts.

Margaret Dimmick

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Induction of Father Paul as Parish Priest at Our Lady and St Anne's

Father Paul Martin came to Caversham in August from the parish of The Immaculate Conception in Bicester. On 15th November he was officially inducted as the Parish Priest of Our Lady and St Anne's. A full church witnessed the ceremony including some 80 parishioners from Bicester who had come by coach or by car. Father Paul's mother was among them. There were also ten visiting priests.

Mgr Anthony Wilcox, Dean for the South Oxfordshire deanery, officiated at the beginning of the Mass with the choir leading the Latin plain chant Kyrie and Gloria. The readings were from the ordinary mass of the day. After the gospel, Mgr Anthony preached a homily explaining what a parish priest must be. Then the Rite of Induction followed.

Father Philip Harrop read the letter of appointment from Archbishop Bernard. Father Paul made a Profession of Faith and, with his hand on the book of Gospels, took the Oath of Fidelity. Dean Wilcox then declared himself to be Delegate for the Archbishop of Birmingham, mandated to inaugurate Paul Martin as Parish priest of Caversham. Father Paul was presented with the keys of the church and the Bible, was taken to the baptismal font and to the confessional and finally received the keys of the tabernacle. He was asked at each stage to declare his willingness to carry out his appropriate duties and the congregation was asked to declare their willingness to support him and share in his ministry.

A document was signed by Mgr Anthony, witnessed by Damian Colehan and Nelly Langer representing the congregation, which certified that the induction had taken place and that Father Paul Martin was Parish Priest of Our Lady and St Anne. Mgr Wilcox presented Father Paul to the congregation to a resounding round of applause.

After Deacon Hugh had read the bidding prayers, a hymn was sung and Mgr Anthony took Fr Paul to one side and took off the chasuble he had been wearing and Father Paul put it on. They both returned to the altar and the liturgy of the Eucharist was concelebrated by Fr Paul, Mgr Wilcox and seven other priests.

After Mass, all retired to the Cenacle where a mouth-watering buffet was laid out and visiting clergy and parishioners from Bicester and Caversham mingled and chatted together, making a happy conclusion to a wonderful evening.



Fr Paul being presented to the congregation



Fr Paul wearing the chasuble

Photos by Jane Shaw

Bible Friends

Jesus is born

Mary and Joseph were very excited. It was nearly time for Mary to have her baby. But Mary could not have her baby at home. Mary and Joseph had to leave their house and travel a long way to a town called Bethlehem.

When they got there, Bethlehem was full of people. Joseph and Mary looked for a place to stay. But everywhere was already full of people. No room here. No room there.

What were they going to do?

A kind man said that Mary and Joseph could stay in the stable by his house. This was where the animals lived. Mary and Joseph were very pleased to have somewhere to stay at last.

Very soon, baby Jesus was born. Mary wrapped him up to keep him warm. Joseph made a soft bed for him in the hay. Mary and Joseph were very excited.

Jesus had been born!

Luke 2:1-7



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CHURCHES

Memorial Service for Richard Kingsbury



A large congregation of over 300 attended a service in memory of Canon Richard Kingsbury at St Peter's Church Caversham on Remembrance Sunday. Richard had been rector of Caversham for nearly 25 years, and was a much-loved servant of the church who touched the lives and hearts of a great many people. He died in June, and his funeral was held at Bedale in Yorkshire, where he had lived since his retirement in 2007. This service in Caversham therefore gave many people, who had been

unable to attend the funeral, the opportunity to participate in an inspiring and moving tribute to Richard. In attendance were Richard's wife Angela and many members of his family. Officiating at the service were Rev Christine Allsop and Rev Alveen Thoresen, both of whom had been curates in training at St Peter's under Richard's direction. The service took the form of a Requiem Mass with communion, the music having been requested by Angela. Faure's Requiem was sung by the St Peter's choir, augmented for the occasion by a number of former members, and thanks are due to the choir, soloists, musicians and organists for making this an unforgettable occasion.

NEWS FROM ST JOHN'S

Members of St John's congregation have filled 102 shoeboxes with gifts, matching last year's achievement. As well as toys, sweets, knitted hats, scarves and gloves, the shoeboxes also include items to help with education and hygiene. The boxes were brought into church on 'Shoebox Sunday' to be blessed by the Revd John Dudley before starting their journey to children in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. They are distributed through the Samaritan's Purse charity and their Operation Christmas Child.



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Sharing our Streets

Thameside School hall was busy on the evening of 12 November when over 100 people came to a joint meeting organised by CADRA and the Caversham Traders Association. After an introduction on the work of both organisations, Helen Lambert, CADRA Chairman explained that the main purpose of the meeting was to consider whether a vision for traffic measures through Caversham Centre was needed - particularly in the light of the expected redevelopment of St Martins' Precinct.

Simon Beasley, Network Manager, Reading Borough Council explained that councils are entrusted by Government to manage the public highway within national policies, strategy and legal regulation. Funding is from the national government central exchequer and in some cases from the EU. There are also contributions from local development - previously Section 106 payments and now the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Reading Borough Council manages the central computerised traffic management

Whereas the 1960s Buchanan Report separated pedestrians and cars, the concept of shared spaces is a different way of managing highway use. By de-cluttering and removing kerbs and markings,



uncertainty is introduced which reduces speeds and requires drivers to move through with caution. Major schemes include Exhibition Road, London and the Poynton town centre regeneration.

To seize opportunities for funding, it is important that plans are ready 'on the shelf'. Mr Beasley urged Caversham to look ahead to the future and to work with councillors to develop a vision for Caversham. Five local councillors were present and there was encouragement for local people to engage with their elected representatives.

Some heavy vehicles are essential to Caversham so a ban is not practical. Measures to alleviate pressures may include the Reading-London motorway scheme with use of the hard shoulder, a levy under consideration on foreign heavy goods vehicles to offset environmental damage and agreements under discussion with Oxfordshire County Council to reduce heavy traffic on the A4074. Completion of the bridges at Cow Lane will allow lorries onto the IDR although the changes on Portman Road may bring additional traffic to Caversham.

Caversham Traders have raised concerns about the very large vehicles through Caversham which regularly cause damage. Simon Beasley agreed to review the signs for heavy goods vehicles as part of a wider review of signs.

With growth and the development of Reading Station, traffic is set to increase further. The number of cars with only one occupant has a major impact on congestion in peak periods and there is a need for a cultural shift towards walking, cycling and public transport. This makes provision for pedestrians and cyclists ever more important.



system across Reading and for surrounding areas. It was one of the first authorities to introduce 20mph zones.

Current plans for Caversham include:

- **Prospect Street mini-roundabout** - a double mini roundabout is proposed on safety grounds
- **Church Street pedestrian crossing** - to be moved nearer to the petrol station
- **Church Street cycle facilities** - a dock for the cycle hire scheme
- **De-cluttering** - too many signs and markings may reduce drivers' focus. This is a central government initiative.
- **Parking** - particularly on residential roads
- **Peppard Road pedestrian facilities** - plans for 3 new crossings including 1 zebra crossing
- **Church Road/Church Street Junction** - MOVA, a new adaptive control system will be introduced here and on all traffic lights in Caversham

Reading is fortunate in the management of its bus services though many people present expressed concern about the level of service to Caversham.

Paul Matthews, a member of the CADRA committee gave a brief presentation comparing Caversham with other local centres. He gave examples of what had been achieved elsewhere to make roads more 'friendly' to non motorists. Although the major schemes costing several million pounds may not be attainable in Caversham there are many smaller changes which would have an impact. Ideas which might be relevant to Caversham included:

- 20mph limit
- Better pedestrian crossing points on raised tables
- Contrasting road surfaces
- Minimalist road markings
- Better cycle facilities.

Those present at the meeting were asked to record their views on whether a vision is needed for Caversham, the current problems and possible solutions. These will be summarised by CADRA and will be used in discussion with councillors and officers. Both CADRA and the Caversham Traders Association will be updating their members.

At www.cadra.org.uk you will find a report of the meeting, a copy of the presentation by Paul Matthews and on-line survey. If you prefer, there is also a version which you can print, complete and hand in to Walton's Jewellers. If you would like to add your comments, CADRA would be very glad to include them in an updated summary of views.

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Some Gleanings from the History of Maple Durham by a parishioner



Just prior to Christmas each year the trustees of the Lyster's Charity meet to decide how they can distribute the annual proceeds as Christmas gifts to usually about 25 recipients within the parish of Mapledurham. This Charity originated from the will dated 23 October 1613, of Sir Charles Lyster who was the Grandson of Sir Richard Lister, Lord Chief Justice 1546 to 1552. 'He gave unto his kinswomen for their preferment in marriage 1000£, for the foundation of an hospitall here in this Towne and for the maintenance thereof 600£.' The alms houses (hospitall) were thus built for the poor of the parish who received a sum of 1s. 6d each week and two loads of firewood each year. An extract for the parish records gives some indication of the occupants - '1679 Ann Alder widow being one of ye Almspeople of Charles Lister's Hospitell in this parish and Reputed to be above an hundred years old was buried the 3 February 1679'. Into the 20th century the Almshouses fell into disrepair, were condemned as unfit for habitation and due to the cost of restoration and improvements the Charity Commissioners permitted the sale to the Blount Estate (Mapledurham Estate). The proceeds of this sale formed the basis of the Lyster's Charity capital fund which generates the annual gifts. Originally the gifts were in the form of fuel such as coal but as the use of coal fires declined a more

useful gift of a sum of money in the form of a cheque is presented.

As in many villages and towns there was no shortage of the poor and destitute particularly following the upheaval of the civil war. It is no surprise that there is an old 'Poores book of Mapledurham' commenced by the Churchwardens in 1693. A rate of 2s per yard-lande (a Virgate or 30 Acres) was levied within the parish and the accounts balanced each year prior to Easter. These accounts were signed by the Curate before being inspected, signed and sealed by two magistrates of the county who appointed overseers of the collection and distribution of the 'Poores Monies' for the following year. It seems that human nature was the same then as now. There are regular entries such as the following in the 'Poores book' for all to see! A week's wage for a farm labourer at that time was about 1s.

1805 - Dinner &c, Easter Monday	£4 12s 8d.
1806 - Dinner and Liquor at Easter	£4 4s 9d
1811 - Easter Meeting	£5 18s 6d
1812 - ditto	£6 4s 6d
1819 - Dinner-and C.	£5 18s 7d

'C' no doubt being the liquid refreshment.

These were not for the poor but for the expenses claimed jointly by the Curate, churchwardens and two Justices of the Peace.

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CORRESPONDENCE

From Mrs Lin Godfrey

Re: Christchurch Meadows

Reading Borough Council no doubt prides itself on its 'We need to talk' consultations. Unfortunately RBC seems to have forgotten to listen or at best pays lip service to what the public is saying.

Christchurch Meadows are the jewel in Reading's riverside parks and have been for over a 100 years. They should be saved to allow future generations to enjoy them not decimated so that RBC can make money out of a public open space by flogging it to the highest bidder.

RBC recently received a well thought out plan to site the proposed High Ropes and Adventure Golf on the land between Rivermead and Thames Side Promenade. This would allow all pay to participate activities to be grouped together. The facilities at Rivermead are excellent. There is a very large car park. RBC should commission a report into the viability of this alternative site thus proving they are receptive to other ideas.

If RBC still isn't listening perhaps Caversham should declare UDI and thus rid ourselves of this troublesome neighbour.

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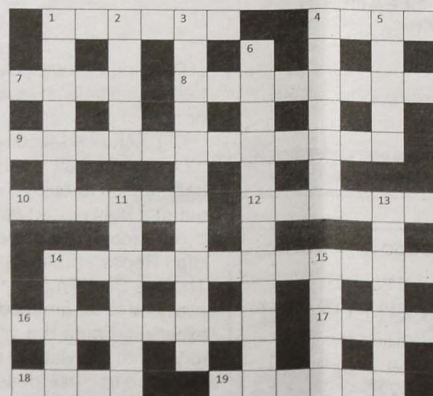
CHRISTMAS COMES TO CAVERSHAM AND CHILTERN FLOWER CLUB

On November 13th the club members, guests and visitors had the pleasure of seeing a demonstration by florist Ian Lloyd at Caversham Heights Methodist Church (the usual venue for the club). The fabulous designs and fascinating talk about his life and work had the audience enthralled. At the end of the evening all the designs were prizes in the raffle so several people were able to take home a tangible reminder of the evening as well as the memories of a platform full of flowers for the Christmas season.

If you have been inspired by these pictures the club would be pleased to welcome you. The AGM is on February 12th and the first demonstration for the new year is on March 12th.

2014 is the Ruby anniversary of the club and many special events are planned.

In June members of the club will join the St Peter's church flowers arrangers to stage a Flower Festival, 'Flora Musica' proceeds of which will go to the St Peter's Organ appeal fund. The festival will run from June 27th to 29th.



Across:

- 1 Like better (6)
- 4 Eg Lent (4)
- 7 Coleridge's fictional river (4)
- 8 None excluded (8)
- 9 Medical advice to overcome an
ague (6,1,5)
- 10 Appearance (6)
- 12 Continent (6)
- 14 Reliability (12)
- 16 Greek actress (surname) (8)
- 17 see 14 down
- 18 Enounced (4)
- 19 French painter (6)

Down:

- 1 A proprietary exercise regime (7)
- 2 A colourless liquid used as an
anaesthetic (5)
- 3 The last moment (8,4)
- 4 An overhead crossing (7)
- 5 A method for detecting
underwater objects (5)
- 6 Kidding oneself (4-8)
- 11 Exhibited clearly (7)
- 13 Utensils used with mortars (7)
- 14 17across Medical advice for a
common illness (4,1,4)
- 15 Finer (5)

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ENVIRONMENT**Old Mother Shipton**

New Year is a time for looking backwards, and for looking forwards – a time for prophecy and fortune-telling. In the 1950s, towards the end of the year, I can remember copies of *Old Moore's Almanac* appearing in the newsagent's shop, with mystical symbols on the cover. When the travelling fair came to town, in May and again in October for the Wakes, there was always a fortune-teller's tent there with astrological signs. I should think that most people don't set much store by such things these days – even horoscopes in newspapers and magazines seem to be on the decline. People are probably having their DNA tested instead!

Old Mother Shipton was a prophetess who lived in a cave above the River Nidd at Knaresborough in Yorkshire, from 1488 to 1561. Her mother, Agatha Sontheil, had the gift of prophecy before her. Mother Shipton was born Ursula Sontheil, and she married Toby Shipton. Printed copies of her prophecies, in rhyming couplets, went through many editions in the years after her death. She foretells the downfall of Cardinal Wolsey, the accession of James I to the English throne, the Civil War, iron ships, the electric telegraph, aeroplanes . . . and so on. She seems to have got the date of the end of the world wrong, though. In the edition I bought, almost 50 years ago, it said that:

'The world then to an end shall come

In Nineteen Hundred and Ninety One.'

However, on checking a few facts on the Internet, I learn that in previous editions, the year had been given as 1881 – and that many alterations and additions to the text had been made over time.

Before ever I visited Knaresborough in my student days, I had heard of Mother Shipton, and I knew

what she looked like because as a small boy I'd seen an advertisement for Mother Shipton Soap painted on the wall of a corner shop. There was a face with a hooked nose, pointed chin and steeple hat, with the words "No Boiling" underneath. I was thrilled to be told by my mother that Mother Shipton was a witch, because at the time I rather liked witches, and wanted to grow up to be one. They seemed to have a much more interesting time than the other people in the stories.

I mention Mother Shipton's appearance, because last year, a Mother Shipton moth was pointed out to me. The markings on the wings are supposed to resemble the face of a witch. See what you think.



It was an occasion when I had strayed over the county boundary, into Buckinghamshire, in search of wild orchids, and there it was, rather distinctive and fairly common, but I'd never noticed it before. The wingspan is about an inch, it flies by day, the caterpillars eat grass and clover, and the moth emerges in May. This is when I saw and photographed it, just as the weather was beginning to warm up. (After that, we had the best summer for butterflies and moths for many years.)

I hadn't given Old Mother Shipton much thought for a very long time, and I was glad to be reminded of her. A riffle* through one of my Yorkshire box-files brought to light the little book of prophecies, and now I hope to see that moth again in years to come.

Happy Wanderer

*Editors note, it really is riffle.

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Caversham Conservation Volunteers

A dozen people joined a guided walk in November around Clayfield Woodlands, enjoying the sunshine and autumn colours, with a coffee stop with the Friends of Clayfield Copse who were having their annual bonfire. The guide is available on line at www.econetreading.org.uk for those who missed the communal walk.

Next month the 'Friends of' will start their annual bramble clearance from the bluebell areas in Blackhouse wood, all welcome.

Friends of Mapledurham Playing Fields are in action next month, clearing around some of the young trees planted in the last few years by Brownies and others.

Details of conservation volunteers in the area are on line as above.

READING GARDENERS

We start the New Year with a talk by one of our vice-presidents. On the 15th January 2014 Richard Bisgrove will speak on Gertrude Jekyll.

29th January will be our Members' Evening when several members will give a brief talk on a topic of their choice.

12th February we will have a special ticketed meeting when Chris Beardshaw will talk on '100 plants that (almost) changed the world.'

Subscriptions are due in January. £12 single or £20 double (ie two people living at the same address.) Visitors are welcome to attend for £2 a session.

Meetings are in Caversham Primary School hall, Hemdean Road, on Wednesday evenings at 7.30pm.

Please consult our website:- www.readinggardenersclub.org.uk for more information.

CORRECTION

Owing to a production error, the date of the Caversham Court Carol evening was incorrectly stated on the back page of the December edition as Monday 17th December, instead of **Monday 16 December** as reported separately in the article on the event on Page 7.

This event is being kindly sponsored again by Philip Baker & Co, independent estate agents.

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CLUBS**Caversham Heights Society**

During November the Society members enjoyed three very different events. On the 4th they were entertained and enthralled by local speaker Mary Bryant, whose illustrated talk, *Four Cheeks to the Wind - Indo China*, described part of a cycle journey that she and her partner [now husband] set off to do in 2002. They had planned to cycle round the world in two years but after 9000 miles, and enduring bitter cold in Turkey and searing heat in India and South East Asia, they had to return to the UK because of a family tragedy. Society members were regaled with pictures and stories from Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Thailand: dirt roads, overloaded taxis and buses, bicycles, motor bikes, street markets, paddy fields and water buffalo. We all felt as if we had been there with her.

On the 20th Mike Cooper took us back to the dark days of Reading in World War 2 in a talk entitled *Early Closing Day - Air Raids on Reading in WW2*. Using archive material from Reading Library and the Berkshire Records Office he described how Reading's authorities prepared for bombs, invasion and starvation. From 1940 to 1944 there were over 18 indiscriminate bombing raids on different parts of Reading, the majority, surprisingly, landing on Caversham's Church Street. The worst day was 4th February 1943 when four 1000lb bombs landed on Wellsteeds department store, the Town Hall and one of the six People's Pantries set up to provide a cheap meal to enhance people's meagre rations. The reason that so few were killed was because it was an early closing day! Why Reading was bombed is probably because of the railway into London but we shall never know.

The final event was a trip to the Albert Hall to hear a Classical Spectacular Concert.

Further details about the society can be found at www.cav-hts-soc.fsnet.co.uk or by ringing 934 5004.

Rosehill WI

President Margaret Pyle welcomed all members and guests on a miserable late autumn afternoon. She said the report from the October meeting had been prepared and was available if anyone wished to read it. Secretary Margaret Seal then gave a list of correspondence and notified us of trips being organised by BFWI - one to the Salisbury Christmas market in November and then to the Snowdrops at Welford Park in February 2014.

Two lists were sent round, one asking for members to make mince pies for the next meeting, and the second for suggestions for future speakers. An appeal was also made for contributions (money or items) for the hospital packs being assembled by Doris Goddard. President Margaret announced that £69.70 had been received from the Inland Revenue for Gift Aid.

Our speaker Judi Rowlands gave a very interesting (sometimes amusing) talk about beading, explaining how she made various necklaces and earrings; where the beads had originated and how she cared for them. Many of them were passed around for members to have a closer look. Judi said that all the money she makes from talks and tuition goes to Breakthrough Breast Cancer.

The afternoon ended with a cup of tea, biscuits and the raffle.

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month in St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green at 2.00 pm and would be very pleased to welcome visitors.

Reading & District Probus Club

It was interesting to watch the faces and reactions of members as Alan Copeland brought back memories with his illustrated presentation of *'The changing face of Reading'*. Comments such as 'I bought my first suit there' and 'I knew that well' were heard as pictures of shops long gone appeared. One member said "I had a

car like that with a starting handle " when seeing a picture of a Vauxhall.

Then the mood changed as the 1960's appeared. The IDR traffic would skirt the busy centre. So began the 'demolition of Reading' or as it was later called the 'Recondition' and 'planning for the future'. The historical centre was soon to be replaced by a new Police station, Magistrates courts, the Hexagon and there was a competition to name it. Photographs of the old rows of houses for the workers which were demolished to make way for the wider roads, office blocks, Civic Centre and the Mall (with an underground pub, the 'Target') were shown. Some developments were changed before completion, ie the 'ski slope' end of the IDR.

So the art of shopping changed to out of town super shops and with it the plastic bags. 'All under one roof' was the motto. What happened to the arcades and covered markets? The streets and roads were soon full of traffic and rubbish - 'The changing face of Reading' for better or for worse? Without the foresight of Mr Doug Moyes who took photographs of Reading and its history as it was in the 1960s - names of shops were names of people not PLC.

Thankfully Probus will not change its name and will be known by retired men with many interests who will enjoy its monthly meetings. The secretary Colin Hatcher will give details (0118 9482653) or probusclub-reading.org.uk.

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