

Singing bikers go for 10 out of 10

Six intrepid motorcyclists from Reading, including one from Caversham, are setting off this month to ride across 10 European countries in 10 days to raise money for charity.

The Caversham biker in the party is the Revd Keith Knee-Robinson, until recently a non-stipendiary member of the clergy team in the parish of Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham. For more than 10 years Keith was responsible for conducting services at St Margaret's church, Mapledurham.

The bikers, five of whom are members of Reading Male Voice Choir, will start at Portsmouth on 18th May taking the ferry to northern Spain. From there they will ride into France and Italy and on through seven more countries before reaching Calais, a distance of about 2400 miles. On the evening before they leave, the five choir members will be singing in an RMVC concert at St Andrew's church, Caversham (see page 11).

The aim of the ride, which they are calling their Tour de Force 2014, is to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society. Last year a similar group rode from Land's End to John O'Groats and raised more than £6000 for Parkinson's UK.

For this year's trip Keith did much of the planning and research including booking accommodation for their overnight stops. **Here he describes the background to the venture:**

Visiting countries and places in Europe seems popular but what about 10 countries in 10 days? This is what caught the imagination of five motorcyclists from the Reading Male Voice Choir.

I took up riding a motorcycle following retirement from my secular career as a chartered civil engineer. I had a motorcycle prior to marriage and so a gap of some 40 plus years was a challenge which was helped by meeting with other bikers in the choir and sharing experiences.

The RMVC, founded in 1971, consists of around 80 mostly retired men who perform a highly varied changing repertoire of songs focused on raising money for various charities. On May 17th we will be joined by children from Caversham Primary School in a concert at St Andrew's church, Caversham.

It was perhaps this focus on raising money for charities that moved our conversations three years ago as we discussed the merits and maintenance of our two-wheeled machines. We decided to do a challenging ride on our motorbikes to raise funds for a charity. This is now our third year of taking up this task.

The first year we rode from Lowestoft to St David's Head in one day when we raised over £2,200 for Prostate Cancer UK, and last year we rode from Land's End to John O'Groats raising over £6,300 for Parkinson's UK. Our challenge this year is to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society to help their fight against dementia.

On Sunday May 18th the team consisting of Gary Jones, Allan Crisp, Steve Richardson, Roy Mantel and myself, all members of RMVC, together with Gareth Jones, a friend of Gary, will board the ferry to Bilbao, northern Spain, from where an early pilgrim trail and roads in the foothills of the Pyrenees will take us through the tiny snow-capped mountain country of Andorra.

Southern France will offer ancient castles and forested mountain valleys where we hope to take a break at the Pont Saint-Benezet to sing Sur le Pont d'Avignon! Then it's over the Alps at a height of 1,850 metres and into Italy along the River Po to Verona.

Turning north towards home, we will travel through the Alps into Austria, briefly pass through Liechtenstein and Switzerland when the road will take us into the Black Forest area of Germany and to the Alsace region of France. Travelling north we cross over Les Balloons and into Germany again to the Roman fortress town of Trier. We take a route through Luxembourg and into Belgium before taking the ferry home from Calais.

Should you wish further information or to support us in our challenge please visit our JustGiving web page at <http://www.justgiving.com/Gary-Jones16> or telephone Revd Keith Knee-Robinson on 0118 947 7868.

Ellen Hughes, community fundraiser for the Alzheimer's Society, said: "The group are fund-raising as much as they can for the society, being aware of the benefits that our local services can bring to people living with dementia, in particular *Singing for the Brain*, which uses singing to bring people together in a friendly and stimulating social environment. Singing is not only an enjoyable activity, it can also provide a way for people with dementia, along with their carers, to express themselves and socialise with others in a fun and supportive group. Even when many memories are hard to retrieve, music is especially easy to recall.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



The team of bikers at John O'Groats at the end of their trip last year. Keith is on the extreme right



Julia proudly shows her medal
Photo: Jane Shaw

Surprise papal medal for Julia

In recognition of more than 40 years of continuous service to Catholic education, Julia Feeney, a parishioner at Our Lady and St Anne's in Caversham, has been awarded the Bene Merenti papal medal.

Julia started her teaching career at St Anne's Catholic Primary School and went on to spend many years teaching at St Martin's before being promoted to St Paul's Catholic School in Tilehurst where she has spent the past 25 years as head teacher.

She qualified as a diocesan inspector in 1994 and in 2006 was appointed a part-time primary consultant for the Diocese of Portsmouth where she took the lead on developing liturgy and worship in schools.

A joyous Mass of Thanksgiving to mark Julia's retirement from headship was concelebrated by nine priests, with choirs from three Reading parishes, and was attended by Julia's family and friends along with representatives from the diocese and local authority, past and present colleagues, pupils and their families. It was during this Mass that Canon John O'Shea made the surprise announcement that Julia was to receive this personal honour from Pope Francis.

Having now retired from headship, Julia has been appointed a regional director for Rainbows, training teachers and volunteers in supporting children and young people through death, divorce, separation and serious illness.

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www.saintbarnabas.org.uk

St Andrews

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

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Revd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
mike@c&mparish.org.uk

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

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

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

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

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RG4 8BG. Tel: 948 2530
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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, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Caversham and Mapledurham for the local community.

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The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board.

The Editors also would like to bring to readers' notice that the inclusion of advertisements in this paper does not mean an endorsement of the products or of the services offered.

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TALKING POINT

by

Jeremy Tear

Food and water. It's the stuff of our everyday lives, isn't it? We can't live without it. Yet, as we begin this year's Christian Aid Week (11-17 May), it's good to remind ourselves that for many in our world, it's not something that can be taken for granted.

Christian Aid estimate that 870 million people across our planet go to bed hungry each night. Water Aid estimate that 768 million people in the world do not have access to safe water. It's a scandal that in a world that has enough for everyone, not everyone has enough, and consequently millions die early needlessly, each year.

But according to the Bible, we don't only need physical food and water. When Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness to turn stones into bread to satisfy his hunger, he said, "One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." In other words, we also need to be fed spiritually, by the word of God, that is the Bible.

On another occasion, Jesus came to a well in Samaria and asked a woman for a drink of water and he ended up offering her the 'living' water, the very life of God, which sustains us for eternity. So as human beings, the Bible recognises that we not only have physical needs but also spiritual needs as well.

So, how do we respond to the hunger and thirst which is around us and indeed within us? Christian Aid Week gives us the opportunity to respond to the physical poverty and thirst of the world's millions by giving financially. So, if you receive a Christian Aid Week envelope through your door or are asked to contribute at a church service or by a collector on the street, why not send a note (a fiver!) to say that you care. Given the relative wealth of our country, it's small change that we would be giving away in reality (but do please give whatever you can afford, notes or coins).

And what about our spiritual hunger and thirst? Christian Aid used to have a great slogan that said, "We believe in life before death". Christians do not only believe in the life after, but life now, and according to Jesus, that is life in all its fullness. We may not be hungry and thirsty physically (but let's not forget that half a million people in this country rely on food banks, including here in Reading - another scandal, as the Archbishop of Westminster recently commented) but we all have spiritual needs, an inner hunger and thirst for meaning and love in our lives. It's there, even if we don't acknowledge it. And so this Christian Aid Week I invite you not only to feed and refresh others' bodies but to let God feed and refresh your spirit.

Jeremy Tear is the community priest for the Parish of Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham

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
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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Gosbrook Road

10.30am

Woodcote Parish Church

9.45am (second Sunday)

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Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm

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

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NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD

Church Street, Caversham

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

Caversham Bridge

Contributions for the **June 2014** issue should be sent to the Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham parish office by **Monday 28th April**. The date for the **July 2014** issue is **Monday 26th May**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

Advertising copy for the June issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twinnor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, by **Friday 25th April**. The date for the July issue is **Friday 23rd May**.

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The rock churches of Cappadocia

By Myra Emerson

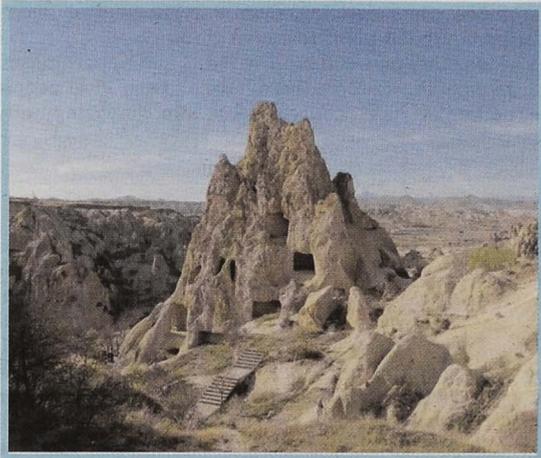
A few months before Christmas an envelope fell out of a magazine to which we regularly subscribe. Normally I throw these away without even looking but on this occasion I opened it. Inside was an offer of a holiday in Turkey for an unbelievably low price. We took a chance and booked it.

It was one of the best holidays we have ever had! It was called On the trail of the Apostles. We did not learn much about the apostles but we did learn a great deal about Turkey and its history. It was a very interesting experience.

The most important visit was to the rock churches of Cappadocia. Most of the churches were hewn out of the rock in the 10th, 11th and 12th centuries but some were in existence long before this.

This area was so remote and the terrain so difficult that early civilisations sought and found refuge in the myriad of underground caves and passages that had been formed in the volcanic rock. These were then enlarged by excavation and became towns as the communities grew. Small cities were established in prehistoric times and were extended in the following centuries. The entrances were well hidden and prevented attack by marauding invaders as they were very hard to see.

The first Christians, escaping from persecution by the Romans in the 2nd century, established themselves in these



One of the amazing rock churches

underground cities and made them more habitable by making rooms for storing provisions and living quarters and putting in wells and ventilation systems. They also carved primitive churches out of the rock.

These were improved and enlarged during the Byzantine period and many of the frescoes date from this period. These are now being restored although many of them still show the original colours. Many of these churches can now be visited in an area which has been made into the open-air museum of Goreme

One of the most interesting, built in the 11th century, is the Dark Church which is on two floors. The front of the church collapsed several years ago and its name is derived from the fact that it has only a small aperture through which light enters the church. Thus the frescoes have retained much of their original colour and are some of the finest in the area.

The biggest ancient rock church and possibly the most famous is the Tokali church. It consists of two churches that were built in different times. The frescoes depict the story from the Annunciation right up to the Ascension and are very clear to see.

Some of the churches are very difficult to access and are reached by rather rickety iron staircases. Many have been partially destroyed by earthquakes and attempts are being made to restore them. The ones in the museum at Goreme are only a small sample as there are as many as 43 more churches in the region and it is suspected that there are many as yet undiscovered.

The whole area of Cappadocia is riddled with abandoned rock dwellings and settlements and the landforms are truly amazing. One of the pillars has been carved into a six floor house in which someone still lives. The windows are just holes and the furniture consists of cushions but the temperature remains constant throughout the year and it is surprisingly light inside.

The dovecotes of Cappadocia are another amazing feature. Pigeons are very important and are considered sacred! Their droppings are essential for the growing of grapes and there are thousands of examples of dovecotes carved in to the rocks in the grape growing region. We suggested that they could come and collect some of our pigeons!

The trip was heavily financed by the Turkish government which is trying to extend the tourist season so make the most of this opportunity. This is an area which it is well worth visiting. Don't throw away that envelope that falls from your magazine!

Singing Bikers – continued from page 1

"They are also keen to support our research into the cause, cure, care and prevention of all types of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, to improve treatment for people today, and search for a cure for tomorrow.

"We are immensely grateful to Keith, Gary, Allan, Steve, Roy and Gareth for their dedication and hard work in planning this ambitious trip. We can't wait to hear all about it and see some photos on their return.

"Alzheimer's Society supports people affected by dementia in a number of ways; through one-to-one support, information provision, activity groups, dementia cafés and befriending. There are currently 800,000 people living with dementia in the UK, and thanks to the funds raised at local events like these we are able to continue to provide vital support services and invest more into research."



Keith – planning and research.

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From The Lookout Post



Planning the key subject

In view of the changes in central and local planning policy over the past few years, the Caversham and District Residents' Association (CADRA) decided to make local planning the key subject of their meeting in May.

Two speakers have been invited: Lynette Baker is the area planning officer heading up the team of planning officers handling applications in Caversham and elsewhere. This makes her ideally placed to explain how planning applications are decided locally.

Professor Gavin Parker, chair of planning studies at Reading University, will have just returned from a two-year secondment to the Royal Town Planning Institute as director of professional standards and director of Planning Aid England, a role that also includes responsibility for planning education. Professor Parker has a particular interest in neighbourhood planning and the application of the Localism Bill. Together, they will be able to take everyone through the principles and practicalities of local planning.

The meeting takes place at 7.30pm on Thursday 8 May at Thameside School, Harley Road. The brief AGM business and review of the past year will take place first, followed by the two guest speakers.

There is a range of opportunities where local people can have an input on planning decisions. But you need to know how! For individual applications, your interest may be triggered by a yellow notice in your street or a letter on your doormat about an application near you. Each of these applications is considered against local policies in the local plan, which must in turn fit with the national planning policy framework.

The council is beginning to review its

planning policies and will start to draw up a new local plan for the borough. This will replace existing development plan documents in the borough, including the core strategy, Reading central area action plan and sites and detailed policies document. One of the earliest steps is to start to draw up a list of potential sites for development to meet different needs and also for protection of open space, wildlife or landscape interest, or where other specific policies apply.

Nominations of potential sites have been invited which will then form the basis of a further consultation. Consultation is also underway on the implementation of the community infrastructure levy (CIL) and the clear limitations on the use of the section 106 payments. These are the means by which developers contribute towards the added infrastructure required. For the new CIL, communities have a right to receive a proportion of the levy for local facilities.

The introduction of the Localism Bill brings 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Alongside this, there are processes designed to give people more control over the development of their local area. Neighbourhood planning should allow communities to help set priorities for development in their area. Consultation by local planning authorities, as they draw up local plans, should allow reflection of local views on how the area should develop. See <http://planning.communityknowledgehub.org.uk/resource/neighbourhood-plans-roadmap-guide>

There are various other new community rights and opportunities. In some other parts of the country, these have allowed local people to resolve a particular local concern. See <http://mycommunityrights.org.uk/>



The Heights Primary School

There is now a much fuller picture of progress towards opening the school this September. Two key decisions have yet to be confirmed but announcements may be made before you read this column. The permanent location of the school will be announced once legal contracts have been exchanged. The sale has been agreed for the purchase of the site, which is within the catchment area. It has already been confirmed that the school will not be on Mapledurham Playing Fields. The second decision awaited concerns transfer classes for Year 1 and Year 3. There are not yet enough applications for children wanting to transfer in September 2014 but a small increase may well enable new classes to start. Again, there may be announcements before this issue appears.

The temporary location for the school has been announced as the old Caversham Nursery by the Westfield Triangle, just off Gosbrook Road. This is likely to be for up to two years. Although it is not within the catchment area, the former nursery can be easily adapted into a new primary school. It already has a large amount of open space to play and learn and is well placed to benefit from other outdoor space. The team will be working with the Friends of The Heights to understand what support parents will need to make the journey as easy as possible. This is likely to include consideration of the school's opening hours, breakfast and after school clubs to help working parents.

The council have confirmed that the school will be included in their admissions process for reception places for September 2014. Letters will be sent out by the council offering children places in reception at The Heights on 16th April, National Offer Day. The new head teacher, Karen Edwards, has been working with the team since her appointment in November and takes up the post full time in April. Offers have been made to two reception year teachers. A shortlist for Year 1 and Year 3 teachers is ready and interviews will follow, if these classes are confirmed. Appointment of teaching assistants, a school secretary and business manager will follow. Mark Richards, deputy head at Queen Anne's School has been appointed as chair of the board of governors.

The next steps include the pre-Ofsted inspection and the Readiness to Open Meeting with the Department of Education, both scheduled for May or June. A planning application for the facilities on the permanent site is expected before any construction work starts. As part of this process, the announcement of the school's permanent home will be followed by further public consultation on the detailed design proposals.

The creation of the school is a complicated process raising different concerns at different stages. We should congratulate the team on working so hard to keep everyone informed throughout the process. Those new school places north of the river are sorely needed.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Continued opposition to a third bridge

This letter is from Councillor Tony Page, deputy leader of Reading Borough Council and lead member for strategic environment, planning and transport

I would like to offer readers an update on discussions about a third Thames Bridge, following my earlier letter about this issue.

For at least 30 years RBC has supported a third Thames bridge, to the east of Reading outside the borough, with the south side being in Wokingham District and the north side in Oxfordshire. Since RBC became the Highway Authority in 1998 (following the abolition of Berkshire County Council), we have put renewed efforts into trying to persuade Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), South Oxford District Council (SODC) and its parishes to enter into a dialogue about

options for promoting a third bridge. Such a bridge would not only be of considerable benefit to the communities in South Oxfordshire and to the thousands of their residents who travel into and through Reading every week, but would also benefit many people in Wokingham and Reading boroughs.

Following a recent meeting at Westminster the respective councils agreed to share information about traffic flows but I am afraid the position taken by OCC and SODC remains unchanged and they continue to oppose a third bridge in principle.

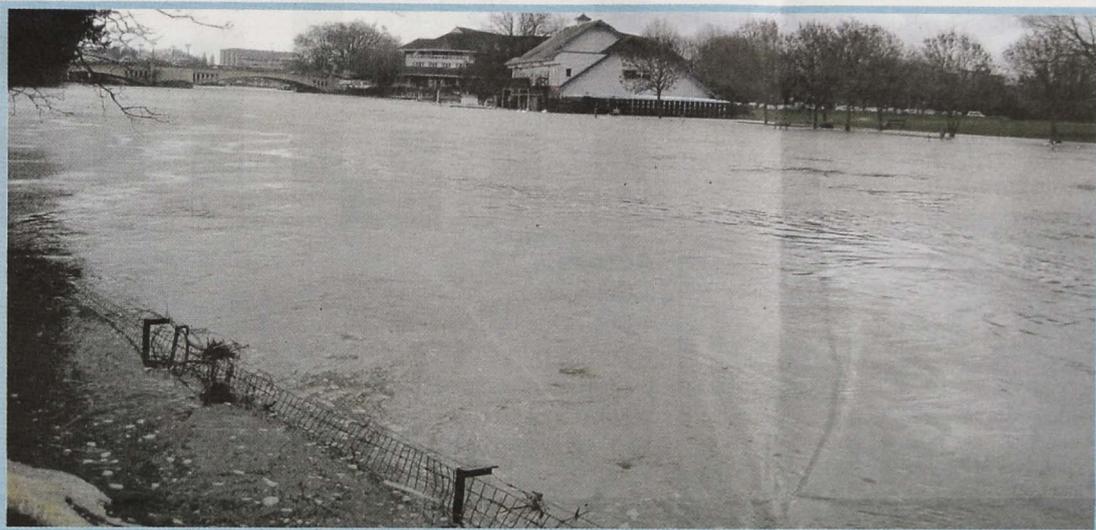
I moved a resolution at the full Reading council in January which urges OCC and SODC to come to the table without any pre-conditions and discuss options for a third bridge.

RBC has consistently proposed an all-traffic modes bridge, which would be designed and managed alongside Reading and Caversham bridges so as to serve as a local distributor and by-pass and not part of the larger strategic highway network.

RBC is confident that we would be in a position to allay most of the rational concerns raised over many years by communities in South Oxfordshire. For example, there are no longer any plans nationally, regionally or locally to continue the motorway network across Oxfordshire from the A329 to the M40.

Furthermore, it is important to stress the context within which RBC has always promoted the third Thames bridge, namely as part of a wider package of measures which include park and ride sites, a mass rapid transit link from Reading Station, via Thames Valley Park and on to Bracknell, and all underpinned by continuing investment in already good local public transport networks and enhanced cycling opportunities.

The reality is that people north of the river stand to benefit as much from a properly designed and managed third bridge as those who live south of the Thames. We recognise there are some genuine environmental and traffic concerns amongst communities in South Oxfordshire, and we therefore wish to work with SODC and OCC in designing a scheme that will be in the interests of all our communities. A jointly designed and promoted scheme could then form the basis of a bid for either Government funding or a local authority/private sector venture.



A reminder of the floods in the winter which threw the need for a third bridge into sharp focus. At the time of going to press the road to Sonning was still under repair because of flood damage



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New social club for older people

The latest social club for older people in North Reading was launched on Thursday 10th April at The Milestone Centre in Caversham Park Village. Running from 10.30am to 2.30pm, the club is being funded and supported by Reading Borough Council but is led by volunteers from the Caversham Older People's Steering Group with support from Age UK Berkshire Active Living.

Weekly get-togethers will offer fun and accessible activities for the over 50s. The launch event included a seated exercise demonstration, a free hot lunch and tea, coffee and cake.

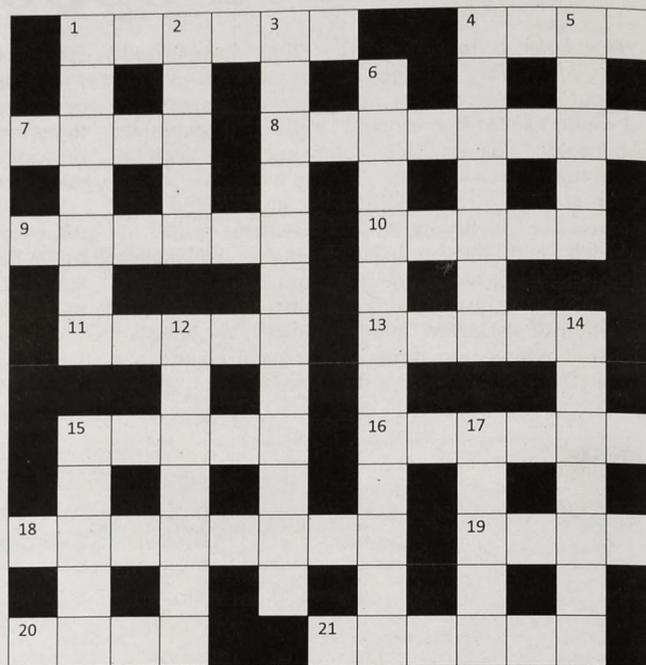
Councillor Rachel Eden, lead member for adult social care, said: "I'm very happy to see that following the success of the older people's social club at Amersham Road, we are extending into Caversham Park Village. We've listened to our older residents in Caversham and are providing the services they have asked for in their local area and I hope this club will be as successful as the Friday club that has recently been launched."

The recently launched Friday club at Amersham Road Community Centre is continuing to go from strength to strength.

If you would like to come along to either club or if you need assistance with transport, please call Michelle on 07834 335103 or email michelle.brown@reading.gov.uk

Caversham Bridge Crossword No 4

We invite you to solve the crossword.
Answers next month



Across

- 1 Get away (6)
- 4 One of the Gospel writers (4)
- 7 Destroy by fire (4)
- 8 Intelligent person (slang) (8)
- 9 Spicy cooked meat (6)
- 10 Twist or turn with a sudden movement (5)
- 11 Distinctive character (5)
- 13 Limits within which some action can occur (5)
- 15 Shrub with purple coloured flower (5)
- 16 Not outside (6)
- 18 Wandering beggar or thief (8)
- 19 South American country (4)
- 20 Musical group (4)
- 21 Loved deeply (6)

Down

- 1 Teach, school (7)
- 2 Tropical plant with red or yellow showy flowers (5)
- 3 Part of the economy managed by the state (6,6)
- 4 Light with a transparent protective cover (7)
- 5 A rap or sharp tap (5)
- 6 Organised an event (12)
- 12 Afghan province, area protected by British forces (7)
- 14 Withstood hardship (7)
- 15 South American animal of camel family (5)
- 17 Very good (5)

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Click Here !

Computer advice by Francis Brown

No one should still be using XP: it is far too risky. Now that Microsoft has withdrawn support for XP, it has become a malware honey pot. The bad guys are queuing up to feast on the unwary. If you cannot face getting used to Windows 7 or 8, what can you do to reduce the risk?

Install the last Microsoft XP update issued 8 April 14. Update your Internet security suite (McAfee, AVG etc) and run the associated scan. Complete both steps. Uninstall Java; there may be more than one version present. (A few games may not work anymore, a small price to pay). Uninstall Adobe Flash ActiveX (Adobe Flash Plugin is not the same thing, leave if present). Java and Adobe Flash ActiveX continue to be magnets for malware. STOP using Internet Explorer because it is not being updated. Instead, install another web browser (Chrome, FireFox etc).

These are easy changes but if assistance is needed, there is a good chance that a neighbour or relation will be able to help. See my website www.fbrown.org for links to illustrated instructions and other information. A further more complex step is also described on my website.

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Runners support family charity

Thirteen runners from Caversham and Reading raised almost £8,000 for Parents and Children Together (PACT), a local adoption and fostering charity, when they completed this year's Mizuno Reading Half Marathon.

Their sponsorship money will help the charity to provide therapeutic support services for locally adopted and fostered

children. PACT was founded in 1911 by the then Bishop of Oxford and has close links to the Oxford Diocese. Its Reading offices are in Southern Court, South Street, near the town centre.

PACT provides community projects to assist local disadvantaged people, such as Alana House, a centre for vulnerable women at times of crisis, and Bounce Back 4 Kids, a programme to support children who have been affected by



Laura Senior, PACT's fundraising manager, with runners (left to right) Andrew Line, Dominic Fryer, Matt Rodda, Paul Ryan, Martin Hall.

you may be able to make a difference to a vulnerable child's life please visit PACT's website www.pactcharity.org/info.

PACT runner and local councillor, Matt Rodda, commented: "PACT does some very valuable work and has a long connection with the local churches and the wider community in Reading and Caversham; the team of runners was delighted to be able to help raise funds for the charity."

domestic abuse in the home. PACT also provides a range of services including outstanding (as rated by Ofsted) adoption, fostering and award winning therapeutic support services.

PACT is actively recruiting local families to consider adopting or fostering the 6,000 children in care in the UK today. For more information on adoption and fostering and how

Bowl up for open evenings

Caversham Bowling Club is a mixed club, which offers the opportunity to take part in a sport which can be enjoyed by both men and women of all ages. The club has members of all standards, from beginners to county players. There are vacancies for both men and women, and this summer, as in previous years, the club is offering the opportunity to anyone who is interested to come along and try the game.

The sport provides gentle exercise and the opportunity to make new friends. You do not need to have played competitive sport in the past; the game does not require great

physical fitness or athleticism, but relies rather on attributes of control, accuracy and consistency, which in some ways can be more demanding.

Throughout the summer, starting on 2nd May, each Friday evening from 6.00pm, the club will be open to anyone who would like to try the game. The only requirements are flat-soled shoes and enthusiasm: bowls and other equipment will be provided. Members look forward to welcoming you and will be on hand to offer advice and instruction. It does not take long to learn the basics of the game, and you could soon be taking part in club matches.

The club has a friendly atmosphere with a licensed bar, and organises social events throughout the year. Why not come along on a Friday evening and try it, you may be pleasantly surprised? Light refreshments will be available for a nominal sum. You do not need to book, just turn up on the night.

Experienced bowlers are also welcome to join the club, and should contact the secretary as below.

The club is located in the park in Albert Road, Caversham, and free parking is available next to the green. The number 22 bus stops outside the park at the St Andrew's church bus stop.

Further information can be obtained from the club secretary on 0118 947 5672.

New community café

The Lower Caversham Community Partnership, a partnership between St John's church, New Bridge Nursery and Caversham Hall, will be opening the Caversham Community Café at St John's church in Gosbrook Road on Tuesday 6th May at 10am.

The Mayor of Reading, Councillor Marian Livingston, will officially open the café, which initially will be open each Tuesday from 9.30am and 2.0pm selling tea, coffee, hot chocolate, cakes, scones, teacakes and biscuits. Do pop in!

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ENVIRONMENT

THE GUELDER ROSE

The guelder rose will be in flower in the hedgerows this month. It's a shrub which looks attractive in May when it flowers, and again in the autumn, with its red berries and leaves.

The distinctive thing about the flower-heads is the ring of large white flowers around the circle of smaller, more pinkish flowers, in the middle. The large flowers are sterile – it's the smaller flowers in the middle which give rise to the berries. Some varieties of hydrangea have flower-heads arranged in the same way.

One of the good things about writing these articles, from my point of view, is that I am motivated to reach down the reference books and check facts. I had thought that the name guelder rose may be connected with the name of a small tree which is related to it – the elder. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, this is not so. Guelders is a province in Holland which was formerly a Germany duchy, and the capital of that duchy was a town called Guelders. The name of the guelder rose originally belonged to a cultivated variety of that shrub which was first produced in this area. It's



what we usually call the snowball tree these days. You sometimes see it in parks and gardens. The "snowballs" are composed entirely of ball-like masses of the larger, sterile flowers.

When John Gerard described the rose elder or gelderland rose in the late 16th century, he was referring to the snowball tree. Mary Russell Mitford, the local authoress, wrote of wild guelder roses flowering in the hedges around Three Mile Cross in her classic book, *Our Village*, published in 1824.

The question now arises as to what people called the wild guelder rose before it was the guelder rose. The creamy-white flower-heads do, of course, resemble those of the elder, which flowers about the same time, and so we have names like water elder, marrish elder, white eller, and dog eller. ("Eller" is a local pronunciation of the word "elder", and "marrish" is an old form of the word "marsh".)

Another batch of plants usually signifies something of little worth, and fit only for dogs – they don't smell pleasant and you can't eat them. Other old names for guelder rose are dogberry, dogwood, and dog tree, as well as dog eller.

In fact, the berries are supposed to taste pleasant when made into jelly. In the United States, they have been used as a substitute for cranberries – but they mustn't be eaten raw. Richard Mabey, in his book, *Food for Free*, offers this warning: "The sticky fruits of the guelder rose will make you sick if you eat them, but they are quite safe cooked, and have often been made into jellies." I wonder what the nasty chemicals might be which are destroyed in the cooking process.

As for the smell of the flowers, I wasn't aware that they had a scent until I started reading. Other members of the botanical family caprifoliaceae, including elder, viburnum and honeysuckle, are noted for their perfume, though that of elder does tend to remind some people of tom-cats! Geoffrey Grigson, in *The Englishman's Flora*, describes the scent of the guelder rose thus, "crisply fried, well-peppered trout, if you can imagine that trouty, peppery smell with a touch of sweetness." At the moment, I find it hard to imagine any flower smelling of fried fish, but when I'm out and about in May, I'll give it a try!

Happy Wanderer



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Members have a say in how the CSL is run and become eligible for a loan. Should you be intending to borrow elsewhere CSL will match other lenders' interest rates, as long as the offer is in writing. CSL are keen to attract borrowers from Reading churches because they are hoping to have more borrowers with a very low chance of defaulting. If more savers and borrowers use the credit union, better dividends can result, and more help given to the community.

Contact: 0118 958 5803 (10 - 4 weekdays) or www.cslberks.org.

May Smith and Mark Burton,
St Barnabas Deanery Synod representatives

Bible Friends

On the way to Emmaus

Two people were walking home from Jerusalem to a village called Emmaus. As they walked, a man joined them.

"What are you two talking about?" asked the man.

"Haven't you heard what's happened?" they said. "Jesus has died. We're feeling very sad. He was our friend."

The man listened carefully to everything the two people said. He talked to them about Jesus and what the Bible says about him.

By the time they got to Emmaus, it was nearly night-time.

"Come and stay at our house tonight," the two friends said.

Before they ate supper, the man said a prayer. Then he picked up the loaf of bread and broke it into two pieces. The two friends looked at each other, amazed. That was what Jesus always did! Suddenly they knew - he was Jesus! But he had gone!

The two friends left their meal, ran out of the door, and rushed all the way back to Jerusalem. "It's true!" they told Jesus' friends.

"Jesus is alive. We've met him!"

Luke 24:13-35



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CLUBS

Caversham Heights Society

The Caversham Heights Society held two meetings during March, both enthralling in different ways.

The first speaker was unable to attend due to unexpected circumstances. Instead, at very short notice, Hugh Grainger, a former chief examiner of English for the South East region, stepped in to talk on the development of the English language over the centuries. With a mixture of the serious and the light-hearted he showed how there was one basic language spoken throughout what is now Europe; how about 4000 years ago this divided into what are now the basic languages of Europe; and how words, grammar and punctuation have all changed over the centuries.

For example, it was only in the 17th century that punctuation first began in English and until the mid-18th century nouns had capital letters rather like the German language. Because of the influence of Norman French after 1066, English had masculine, feminine and neutral words though by the late 12th century these genders had become obsolete.

Since Shakespeare's time at least 250,000 words have been added to English which, unlike French, has absorbed words from almost every language. Today English is spoken as a first or second language by nearly two billion people. Its major problems, however, are that certain words can have multiple meanings and many of these words are not phonetic, making it very difficult for a non-native speaker to pick up the language easily.

For the second meeting, held on 19th March, Alastair Lack, a former director of the BBC World Service, shared his insights into the impact of the service on revealing news as it unfolded; how it was, and still is, highly regarded around the world because of its impartiality; how for many people, for example behind the Iron Curtain, it was seen as a lifeline of information on what was going on; and how many world leaders even now listen in. Because of its influence some countries, such as North Korea, Burma and China, do their utmost to block the BBC broadcasts. Members were regaled with some fascinating insights into how the BBC has covered key events in world history and with stories arising from the speaker's first hand experiences and interviews.

The society is always looking out new members, preferably younger than the current age profile. Further information can be found at www.cav-hts-socfsnet.co.uk or by telephoning 959 5307.

Caversham WI

Members met for the annual meeting giving them a chance to hear about the previous year's activities and adopt the financial report. Happily the committee have agreed to stay on for another year and the president, Miss Margaret Cameron, was re-elected. After a cup of tea there was a bring and buy auction. A variety of goods produced some hectic bidding to raise funds. There was also a raffle.

Meetings are at Church House in Caversham centre on the third Thursday of the month.

Rosehill WI

President Margaret Pyle welcomed members and guests to the March meeting. She said the report of the previous meeting was available for anyone who wished to read it. Unfortunately, due to the wet weather the planned walks had not taken place.

March is the time for the AGM followed by the official yearly meeting when reports are given of the past year including the financial accounts. The reports were all approved. Treasurer Doris Goddard reported that we have 41 full and two dual members. Margaret also thanked everyone who had knitted items for Buscot Ward at RBH (24 blankets, 92 hats and 51 cardigans). She then told us of the speakers we will be having for the following 12 months, but that there would be no summer outing this year.

Margaret thanked the committee and helpers for their hard work during the year. One committee member, Marjorie Weaver, is standing down after many years of service including presidency. We were then introduced to all the committee including two new members (Yvonne Wright and Barbara Wood). Margaret Pyle was then unanimously elected to serve as president for another year.

We then had a short talk by Duncan Knight of the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service. Duncan is a volunteer and talked about fire hazards in the home. The Fire Service will send officers to the homes of people over 70 and the registered disabled to do safety checks and to advise on what to do if a fire were to break out. Several members took up his offer and will be visited in the future.

During the afternoon we had a bring and buy stall which made a profit of £48.50. The meeting ended with tea and biscuits, followed by a raffle.

We meet at St Barnabas church hall, Emmer Green on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.00 pm, and visitors are always welcome.

Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

The April meeting marked the start of a new era for the branch as they settled into a new venue at the Methodist church hall. Paul Joyce gave an interesting talk about the Thames and Severn canals.

A visit to the Mill at Sonning for a meal and a play was enjoyed by all who attended. The social studies group learnt about *The Changing Face of Reading* from Alan Copeland.

The chairman's house was the venue for a coffee morning which included a video of a programme about the Townswomen's Guild made for a satellite TV channel as part of a programme about approaching retirement. But it is pointed out that guilds are for ladies of ALL ages.

On the latest amble one of the members got into a misunderstanding with a public toilet which washed her down as well as the facilities, but her spirit was not dampened and the lovely walk continued to the end.

The May meeting is on 15th at 7.30pm at Caversham Heights Methodist church hall, Highmoor Road, and there will be a talk by a magistrate.

Any ladies wishing to join will be most welcome.

St Peter's Wives

At our April meeting Mary Bryant talked about the second leg of her trip around the world, this time covering Australia and Tasmania.

Mary and her husband saw many wonderful sights and amazing wildlife. They cycled hundreds of miles on bicycles laden with camping equipment and all the necessities of life. This looked like hard work on flat roads, but to negotiate some of the hills they encountered must have tested their endurance to the limit.

Members enjoyed her talk and also the colourful slides showing various places they had visited, including Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney and the Great Barrier Reef. The wildlife was interesting and included black swans, pelicans, multi-coloured parakeets and kookaburras, as well as the ubiquitous kangaroos.

Our 50th anniversary party is being held on 17 June at Church House, starting at 7.30pm. We hope as many members as possible will be able to attend and we would particularly welcome past members. As previously mentioned, the group will then officially close, but we will continue to meet occasionally on an informal basis.

Any past members wishing to attend the party should contact either Jean Pugh on 0118 9472949 or Kathleen Hardy on 0118 9474365. This will help us with the catering. Many thanks.

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CLUBS**Caversham Allotment Association**

The next meeting of the association is on Tuesday 13th May at Church House, Caversham, next to Waitrose. The speaker will be Linsey Evans who will talk about *Painting with Plant*, an interesting way of designing your borders. The talk starts at 7.30pm and there will be refreshments and a raffle. Entrance is free. Please come along for an entertaining evening. Contact Carol Wheeler on 01189 475802 for further details.

Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club

The club are holding a practical session on leaf manipulation at 7.30pm on 14th May at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road. This is a basic lesson and among other techniques you can learn how to plait phormium leaves. Please bring a small bunch of flowers. Phormium leaves will be charged at £1 for two. Visitors are welcome and will be charged £4.50 on the door. For more information, contact Shirley Sexton 0118 9412329.

Caversham Horticultural Society

The society will hold two events in May. The spring plant sale will be on Saturday 3rd May at the Oakley Road allotments, Caversham, between 10 and 11.30am. Stock up with interesting plants at keen prices.

The second talk of the year on *The Ancient Garden* will be by Rodney Bowers at Caversham Primary School, Hemdean Road, on Wednesday 14th May at 7.45pm. The talk is free for members but visitors will be charged £3.00. Refreshments will be available.

The talk looks back at gardens of two important civilizations: ancient Egypt and the Roman Empire. Design, layout, horticultural techniques and the plants to be found there are discussed, using paintings from tombs and palaces, evidence from archaeological sites and modern resources.

Chazey WI

Chocolate truffle making was the subject for the February meeting, when Pat Williams came to give a demonstration. With a tempting display of truffles, she enthused about the techniques essential to making the perfect truffle. The proper equipment was brought along and members were also given a guide to different flavour combinations.

Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall, in Highmoor Road, Caversham. Visitors and new members are always welcome.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS**Two choirs in concert**

A lively and varied concert of songs will be performed by the Reading Male Voice Choir at St Andrew's church, Caversham, on Saturday 17th May.

The choir, returning to St Andrew's after an absence of two years, will again have a group of children from Caversham Primary School, as its guests.

Conducted on this occasion by its deputy musical director Clive Waterman, the choir will sing a selection of songs from its extensive repertoire including the haunting *Prayer of the Children*, which highlights the plight of children caught up in war, the boisterous *Little Brown Jug* and *The Silver Birch*, a lyrical but rapidly accelerating Russian folk song once made famous by the Red Army Choir.

The concert, which starts at 7.30pm, will be in aid of St. Andrew's outreach projects and Launchpad, a charity for the homeless. Tickets are available from Waltons the Jewellers in Prospect Street, Caversham (not open Mondays, cash only), or by phoning 01189 474166.

Prices, including a glass of wine or fruit juice at the interval, are £12 on the door, £10 for concessions or if purchased in advance. There is a special price of £5 for children under 16.

Fair at St John's

The May Fair at St John's church, Caversham, will be held on Saturday 10 May at 1pm in the church. Stalls will include tombola, cakes, jewellery and books. There will also be a raffle with many prizes. Refreshments will be available.

A very handy sale

The annual household and handyman sale will take place at St. Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green, on Saturday 3rd May from 10 am until noon. Books, plants, furniture and gardening equipment - all manner of household items and much more will be on sale. A tool sharpening service will once again be available.

Any large items purchased can be delivered for a small additional fee. For further details or to offer items, please contact Richard on 947 5744 or Wendy on 946 1365. All proceeds will go to the church's overseas charities.

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