

Your church
and community
newspaper
celebrates its
half century



Front page of the first edition

This edition of the *Caversham Bridge* is one of the most significant in its long history. It is the 50th anniversary of the first issue which appeared to much acclaim and some people's amazement in September, 1964.

This church and community newspaper for Caversham and Emmer Green was the idea and inspiration of the late Canon John Grimwade, who was then rector of Caversham. His concept was that, instead of each church having a traditional parish magazine, the churches should pool their resources and produce an ecumenical newspaper for the whole area.

He put together a team and set up Caversham Christian News in July, 1964, with that objective in mind. The concept

was that there should be a representative of each of the different denominations on the organising board and on the editorial team, who would handle the task of producing a monthly newspaper.

The first edition came out in a surprisingly short time and a distribution network was set up to get copies out to the readers.

Canon Grimwade wrote in September 2006 in an edition celebrating the 500th issue: "The *Bridge* was launched with the twofold purpose of being a bridge between the different churches of Caversham and a bridge between the Christian church and the local community."

After 50 years it still has the same broad objectives and is still managed, produced and distributed entirely by volunteers. One wonders if even John Grimwade thought it would last this long. However, he would be disappointed that some churches in the area are not willing to support it and be involved in running it.

As far as we know the only surviving copy of the first edition of the *Bridge* is in the Berkshire Record Office in Reading. An inspection of its flimsy pages reveals a mystery. The historical record states that the first issue came out in September but it carries an October dateline. We suspect that it appeared at the end of the month and the pioneering publishers didn't

want it to go out of date too soon or have to produce two issues close together.

Canon Grimwade penned an editorial in words as true today as they were then. He said: "The *Caversham Bridge* greets its readers and hopes that they will feel they have something unique in their new paper. Many people have given generously of their time to make the production and distribution of this paper possible. They are doing this because as Christians they believe that a paper such as this can play a vital part in the life of our community.

"We hope to tell each month of what is good and constructive in our common life in Caversham."

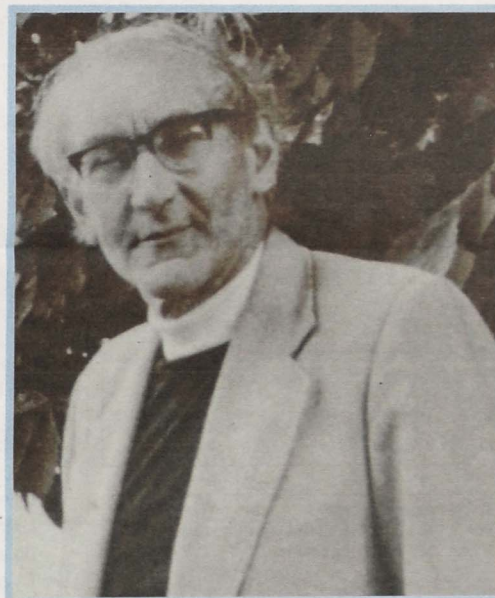
The second issue in November carries messages of congratulation from local

dignitaries such as the mayor and leading clergy. There is also a photograph of Canon Grimwade, distribution manager Bill Harrison and editorial advisor Mary Kift admiring the first edition. It reported a distribution team of 200 and a circulation of 7500 – many more than today. The third issue featured a letter of congratulations and best wishes from the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The newspaper then consisted of eight pages and incorporated a publication called National Christian News which filled several pages at the front of the paper. The amount of local news and articles was much less than now so obviously this took some time to get going.

Apart from the board officials and editing team, the newspaper is totally dependent on three very important groups of people. One group are the contributors, representing churches, scouts, women's institutes, clubs and other groups who provide the written material. We do not have a team of reporters to send out to gather news so we rely on you to tell us what is going on. We also have some regular columnists whose contributions are particularly valuable.

Another group are our bulk distributors and the 120 deliverers who go round their local street or road pushing copies through people's letterboxes and



Canon Grimwade – founder and inspiration

collecting subscriptions each year. The third group are our many advertisers, some of whom have been with us for a long time. They provide a vital service for local people as well as making the paper financially viable.

An important development in recent years has been the introduction of colour both in the editorial columns and the advertisements. This has been helped by the arrival of digital photography. Equipped with a modern digital camera or a mobile phone anyone can take good pictures and most of our contributors send in photos with their written reports.

The laborious process of taking your photos to the chemist's shop and waiting a week or more for them to be developed and printed is now just a distant memory. This is one example of how the latest technology has helped us to improve the quality of our product. If you are wondering where technology will take us in the next 50 years, see the Editorial on page 3.

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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas

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

St Andrews

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

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Rev'd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
rector@ctmparish.org.uk

Rev'd Jeremy Tear

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

Rev'd Marion Pyke

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

Rev'd John Dudley Tel: 9470265

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

Rev'd Margaret Dimmick, 12 Lowfield Road,
Caversham Park. Tel: 947 0258

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

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

BAPTIST

Secretary: Sue Cantwell
Church office tel 954 5353
Email: sue.cantwell@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

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, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Caversham and Mapledurham for the local community.

EDITORS: Mr Alan Bradbury, Mr Philip DeVille, Mrs Myra Emerson, Mrs Janet Offord,
Mrs Pat Williams, Rev'd Keith Knee-Robinson.
c/o Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham. RG4 8AX
Tel: 947 1703. Email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: Mr A Wright,
Tel: 947 6958.
Email: alanwright55@btinternet.com

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mrs Carol Moloney.
Tel: 947 1370.

COMPANY CHAIRMAN: Mrs Marjorie Tillman. Tel 947 5711.

COMPANY SECRETARY: Mr Tony Holland.

COMPANY TREASURER: Mrs J Belcher. Tel: 947 4772

POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER: Mrs D. Moore.
Tel: 947 3713

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 POINTS

For this special edition we asked four of our contributors to give us a thought for the occasion. What appears below is the result.

By Jeremy Tear

Many congratulations to *Caversham Bridge* for this 50th anniversary edition! The idea of having a newspaper which links together what is going on in the churches with what else is going on in our community is an inspired one. I do hope that *Caversham Bridge* can continue to find appropriate ways of engaging with people in our community as it looks to the future.

The Rev'd Jeremy Tear is community priest at Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham

By Henry Stroud

Looking forward 50 years perhaps I could suggest some headlines for the paperless edition of the *Caversham Bridge* in 2064:

- King George VII opens new third Thames crossing
- Route 22 sees first driverless bus in Reading
- Archbishop's husband opens new church extension
- Caversham votes to join Oxfordshire
- New Caversham walking club solely for centenarians oversubscribed.
- New block at Highdown School as school leaving age increased to 23.
- Council demand demolition of five houses in Chazey Road to make way for new free school.
- Churches report largest congregations ever following the latest national revival.

Henry is a member of Caversham Heights Methodist Church. He was a director of several technology companies and has been a lay preacher for nearly 40 years.

By Colin Ferguson

In September 1964 I was chairing a conference run by the London Ecumenical Youth Fellowship. We had representation from the full range of the main denominations. Everyone was full of good intentions, challenging the concepts that caused us to be divided and recognising our mutual need to be recognised by each other as having a valid membership and ministry. Our vision was for a united church in England serving in our diversity but united by the Spirit.

Change has taken place but is the vision still just a dream of old men and women?
Colin is a lay preacher in the United Reformed and Methodist churches.

By Colin Bass

GOLDEN anniversaries foster meeting neighbours — and the Others we are commanded to love, although we scarcely know them. Loving them, we pray that they may Do unto others as they would have others do unto them. Encouraging justice and peace with this RULE, we Now give God thanks for our JUBILEE.

The Rev'd Colin Bass is a third order Franciscan who has ministered frequently in Caversham, most recently at St Andrew's

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

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Meeting at Caversham Park School

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Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

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8.0pm Powerhouse (praise and prayer) – 2nd Sunday each month
3.45pm Messy Church – for all the family
First Sunday of the month

GRACE CHURCH Old Peppard Road

10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church
6.30pm Prayer Meeting

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road

9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am
6.30pm (second and fourth Sundays)

Gosbrook Road

10.30am

Woodcote Parish Church

9.45am (second Sunday)

ROMAN CATHOLIC

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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, Reading

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

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 October 2014 issue should be sent to the Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham parish office by **Monday 1st September**. The date for the November 2014 issue is **Monday 29th September**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk Advertising copy for the October issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham, by **Friday 29th August**. The date for the November issue is **Friday 26th September**.

PARISH OFFICES

PARISH OF CAVERSHAM THAMESIDE AND MAPLEDURHAM

St Peter, St Margaret, St John
Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham RG4 8AX
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.30am to 12.00noon
Tel: 947 1703 email: secretary@ctmparish.org.uk

ST BARNABAS

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

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

EDITORIAL



Where do we go from here?

At this important milestone in the history of *Caversham Bridge* it is a good time to ask the question: What of the future?

If you read the article on page 4 describing how the newspaper is produced, you will realise that it is a lengthy, complicated and labour-intensive process. It takes more than three weeks and sometimes longer from the time reports are submitted to when the first reader gets to see them. In an age of instant digital communication this seems excessive.

We cannot imagine that in another 50 years *Caversham Bridge* will still be communicating with its readers by means of words printed on sheets of paper and delivered to homes by people trudging round the streets.

Yet many of us cling to the printed word despite smart phones, tablets and laptops linking up with online newspapers and books. Many of our readers are not computer literate and it would not be fair to them or us to cut them off.

There are signs that digital media will not sweep away the printed word in quite the way some people expected and there are similar examples from previous technological revolutions. At one time it was thought that television would wipe out the cinema but films are still popular and there is even a plan to build a new cinema in Caversham. In the 1980s there were widespread predictions of a cashless society but coins and notes still make up half the transactions alongside many forms of cards.

You may be reassured to know that there are no immediate plans to convert *Caversham Bridge* into an online newspaper. But surely we, or those who come after us, will find a more immediate and efficient means of production and distribution before the next 50 years have elapsed

Letter to the Editor

As an elderly person I must say how much I enjoyed *Recollections of Old Caversham* in the July issue.

I well remember all the items the writer had written about -- from the hundreds of potholes in South View Avenue to Mrs Reeves' shop at the bottom corner of Cromwell Road. It was a very handy little shop and one day a week Mrs Reeves would make delicious faggots accompanied with peas. My mother would send me running along the alleyway with a basin to buy some of these tasty morsels.

I also remember the detached house in South View Avenue which should have been semi-detached, one could see where the fireplaces should have been. As a young schoolgirl my mother pointed this out to me as we walked by and I believe it was the home of a family named Gardner which, according to an old Kelly's Street Directory, was 47 South View Avenue. I believe the senior Mr Gardner worked at Samuel Elliotts which would link up with the cartloads of firewood from Elliotts.

Approximately in the 1930s one of his sons, Gerald Gardner, also worked at Elliotts and into the war years because he was in the platoon of Samuel Elliotts Homeguard. This I know to be correct because I worked there myself, having left my peace-time job to go to Elliotts on war-work where many wartime items were produced including D-Day landing barges and components for the Horsa gliders.

Name supplied

Forty years on the board

Jim Pilgrim, who is now in his eighties, served as secretary and treasurer to the board of the *Caversham Bridge* for 40 years -- no mean achievement. He joined the board shortly after the paper started in 1964.

The combination of the two roles involved a great deal of work -- it is now done by two people and it is hard work for them. He was helped in his work by his wife, Margaret, who used to testify to the many hours Jim put into the job. He carried out both roles with great efficiency tempered by a lovely sense of humor.

He always insisted that it was a community paper for the inhabitants of Caversham, informing them of what was going on and what had been happening in the area. He was a stickler for keeping up the high standard that had been set but did it quietly and unobtrusively.

Jim still maintains a keen interest in the *Bridge*.



Jim pictured at a presentation marking his retirement

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Step by step – how the paper reaches you

Have you ever wondered how your Caversham Bridge is produced and how it reaches your front door every month? Here is a breakdown of the whole production process.

It all starts with our army of correspondents who write about what is happening in their churches, women's institutes, scout groups or any other organisation to which they belong. Without their input the whole operation would be impossible. We also have regular contributors such as Happy Wanderer and the writers of From the Lookout Post. A different member of the clergy is asked to contribute the Talking Point column each month.

Nowadays virtually all of them send in their articles by email which means their words can go into print without being typed in again.

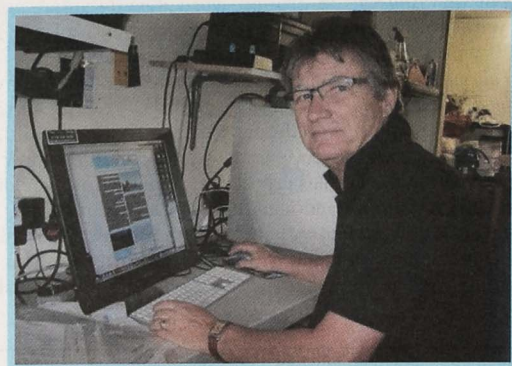
All this material is sent to the parish office in Church House, Caversham, where the secretary, Alex Humphreys, collates it on her computer and prints out a copy of each item. Photographs accompany many of the articles and are much appreciated by both the editors and the readers.

On a given day one of the six-strong editorial team calls at the parish office where Alex transfers all the material in the form of electronic files on to a memory stick and hands over the printed copies.

The editors meet at the home

for that issue. They also discuss in broad terms where various articles will be placed in the paper's 12 pages.

The lead editor takes all the material away, transfers the digital files onto a home computer and sets to work making all the editing changes on the digital files. He or she makes final decisions as to which item, with or without photographs, is going on each page and allots the items accordingly. This is a lot of detailed and time-consuming work and usually takes two or three days.



Roger lays out the pages at the print works

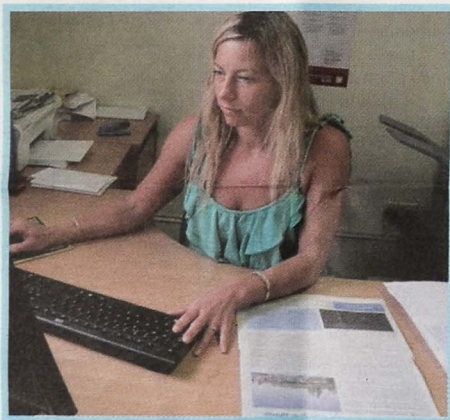
When all is complete the edited material is copied back onto the memory stick and taken to the typesetters, RP Character Graphics of Caversham. There Roger Ford first places all the advertisements, organised by the advertisement manager Alan Wright, onto their designated pages. Then he lays out each page with headlines, text and photographs, making sure everything fits and nothing is left out. Sometimes articles have to be cut or extra items provided to fill the pages.

Roger takes a full-sized proof of each page and delivers them to the lead editor. The editors meet again and carefully check the proofs to make sure everything is correct. The proofs are returned to the typesetters where corrections are made and final proofs taken. Once again these are checked before the pages are approved for print.

The completed issue is sent by email to the Newbury Weekly News where a plate is made of each page and the whole issue is put on the rotary press. Once the press is started it only takes a few minutes to print the 3000 copies we require.

These are delivered to distribution manager Carol Moloney who takes them to the main distributors. They parcel them up in the required amount for each of our 120 distributors who in turn walk or cycle round the streets pushing a copy through the letter box of each of our subscribers. One of this gallant band is Rodney Pinchen who has a round of 40 customers in the St Peter's Avenue area. He also keeps an eye out for people moving in so that he can offer them a free copy and hopes to persuade them to become subscribers.

The whole process takes at least three weeks and sometimes nearer four which explains why the news in the Caversham Bridge sometimes seems a little out of date. The result of all this effort is available for the modest subscription of £3 a year or 25p a copy.



Alex compiles the material in the parish office

of one of their number and edit the printed copies making cuts, alterations and corrections and hopefully improving the readability of the articles. Headlines and captions also have to be written. One of the team is appointed lead editor

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The editors meet to check and polish the material



Rodney delivers to one of his 40 customers

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Five decades of change, growth and controversy

From the 1961 census to the most recent in 2011, the population of Caversham has grown from 16,800 to 31,700. So what has happened in those 50 years? In this article Helen Lambert, chairman of Caversham and District Residents Association, looks back at some of the major changes

The Caversham Park estate was sold off in the 1920s following the death of William Thomson Crawshay but the Oratory School and then the BBC retained the house and parkland. In the 1960s, the BBC sold much of the park and, in 1964, David Estates Ltd presented their plans for 1500 new homes to be called Caversham Park Village.

It followed the Radburn system, segregating through traffic from residential access roads and providing a network of footpaths. The old park, with its fine trees and many variations in level, provided both challenges and opportunities. William Crawshay had opposed the 1911 boundary change and it was not until 1977, that boundaries were redrawn so that Rosehill, Highdown Hill Road and Caversham Park became part of Caversham and Reading.

The 1960s also saw major change in Caversham centre. The Georgian Caversham House in Church Street, which had housed Francis Knighton's Academy for Boys, had decayed over the years. It was pulled down when St Martin's precinct was built.

More changes came in the 1980s with the plans by Higgs and Hill to build 500 houses in the Hemdean Valley, known locally as Bugs Bottom. The last remaining piece of open farmland in Emmer Green, it was actively defended through the Bugs Bottom Campaign. After years of dedicated pro-active campaigning and taking things to the highest level, the Reading council was eventually forced to withdraw from the Court of Appeal. Building began in the mid-1990s, though the number of houses was reduced to 340 and consideration was given to preserving hedgerows and accommodating wildlife.

In 1978, as part of the St Peter's Festival led by the Rector, Canon John Grimwade, a team chaired by Mary Kift mounted an exhibition called 'Life in Old Caversham'. There were 4000 visitors over four days. This extraordinary collection of photographs formed the basis of two books by Mary Kift and a series of articles in *Caversham Bridge*.

As the Millennium approached, CADRA developed a plan for a carved village sign in Caversham, also focusing on local history. Negotiating a position proved a protracted process but the sign was finally installed in 2001 to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

In the months following Molly Casey's death in November 2006, CADRA mounted an exhibition and celebration called Caversham Past, Present and Future to mark 40 years since Molly and others started the association in 1967. As a memorial to Molly, CADRA worked with Reading Civic Society to produce a replica of the 1663 wind vane at St Peter's Church. This was installed on the newly refurbished Caversham Court gazebo, ready for the reopening of Caversham Court Gardens in 2009. Since then, the gardens have become a focus for community and cultural activities and a favourite spot for Caversham families and visitors alike.

As 2011 approached, thoughts turned back 100 years to 1911 and the boundary change which brought Caversham within the Reading Borough. Was this a cause for celebration? Whatever your point of view, it was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Caversham's rich heritage. It was a chance to build on the work done by Mary Kift, Molly Casey and many others, to draw in more sources of information and to make our local history more accessible to successive generations. From the very many groups and individuals involved, it brought people together with a common purpose. As the project was introduced:

"In July 1911 the Confirmation Bill was passed to transfer Caversham within the border of Reading Borough. The bill was enacted in November 1911. Caversham gained a wider Caversham Bridge and the new Reading Bridge but, with the abolition of the Caversham Urban District Council, lost a clear voice for Caversham. Despite this, Caversham remains a clearly identified community between the river and the Oxfordshire border."

Is there still a clear voice for Caversham? There are certainly many groups working to that purpose. There are the residents' associations for Caversham and District, Emmer Green, the Warren and District and Caversham Park Village. There are environmental groups such as GLOBE, the Friends groups of our lovely open spaces and the re-formed and re-invigorated Caversham Traders Association. And there is a strong informal network between these groups and with the ward councillors.

Caversham continues to change and to meet controversy. This autumn will see work start on a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Thames. A planning application for a revamped and enlarged St Martin's centre is being examined as well as the very difficult decision on where to site a much needed new school for Caversham Heights.

CADRA congratulates the *Caversham Bridge* on 50 successful years bringing news and views to the people of Caversham. CADRA members have written columns over the years including Watchdog, Nomad and more recently From the Lookout Post. It has been a very positive collaboration and we hope you will celebrate with us in three years' time, when we too reach 50 years.



Work in progress on the construction of the precinct



Gruesome demonstration by Bugs Bottom campaigners protesting about the ecological damage



Caversham Park Village in its early days when Caversham Place (just left of centre) had not yet been demolished



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Vote goes two to one against school site

Caversham residents have voted by a margin of two to one against the
siting of a new free school in Upper Warren Avenue.

Reading East MP, Rob Wilson, conducted the survey after the
Education Funding Agency (EFA) had selected a site at High Ridge, a
former house on the road.

The action group, Caversham Residents Against Inappropriate
Development (CRAID), have launched a major campaign against the
plan. Its chairman, Julia Branson, said: "We want a new primary school
in Caversham, but one that will be safe for children and parents.

"This is a ridiculous place for a large school. It is on a narrow road,
which is effectively a cul-de-sac. It is half-a-mile from the nearest bus
stop. This will mean that each child will most likely be transported by
car."

In a Freedom of Information request by CRAID, the EFA has refused
to reveal details of how it selected High Ridge over other sites. It is
understood that Reading Borough Council had only one meeting with
the EFA.

Julia added: "The walk to and from the school will be unacceptably
dangerous to children due to the narrow tree-lined roads with little or
no pavements. The site is too small and provides almost no outside play
or exercise area, and it is too steep

"We are being rail-roaded into a decision in a secretive and
undemocratic way. The technical details have not been shared with us
and the EFA are hiding behind bureaucracy. The agency conducted no
consultation with residents and has not had meaningful discussions
with the council. This is not open government."

Mr Wilson's study identified more than 20 other sites which residents

Loyalty scheme shortlisted for retail award

A group of local business people has been shortlisted for a prestigious
Reading Retail Award. The Caversham Traders Association (CTA) is
through to the final round in the category of Best Promotional Initiative
for their Caversham Rewards loyalty card scheme.

The Reading Retail Awards have been running for five years, and this
is the first time that a group entry has been put forward. A panel of
independent judges will be assessing the shortlisted entries, and the
winner will be announced in September.

Jude Chapman, vice chairman of the CTA and a member of the sub-
committee that launched the scheme, said "The CTA is all about doing
everything possible to keep trade local. We launched the Caversham
Rewards card last November, with 20 businesses immediately joining to
offer discounts to cardholders. That number is now nearing 40. We
have almost 1,000 card holders too. That means 1,000 people with even
more of an incentive to shop, dine and use professional services
locally!"

For a full list of participating businesses or to register for a card, go to
www.cavershamrewards.co.uk.

Reading Düsseldorf barbecue

The Reading Düsseldorf Association held its annual barbecue in July
in the garden of Mrs Regula Adams. There were no visiting groups from
Düsseldorf in Reading at the time so attendance was a little down on
previous years.

A special guest was the Mayor of Reading, Councillor Tony Jones,
who is president of the association. All enjoyed the plentiful barbecue
food and the lovely warm weather.

It was agreed to send to Düsseldorf a donation of £100 which
included £50 given by an individual member. Düsseldorf suffered a
great amount of damage in a severe storm in June and the city and
surrounding forests were devastated with at least three people being
killed. The work of clearing up is still going on.



Members at the barbecue with the mayor in the centre

Photo: Jane Shaw

thought would be more appropriate for the
school. The survey also identified safety and
transport as being the main reason for
objection.

Julia added: "These sites should be properly
investigated. There is widespread opposition
to this plan and we now invite Mr Wilson to
join our campaign given the results of his own
survey."

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CHURCHES

Caversham Church Fete

All was set, the hard work of preparation was over, the bells of St Peter's rang out and the counters began to click as the crowds poured in to Caversham Court for the Caversham Church Fete.

About 2000 people enjoyed a sunny afternoon and raised more than £10,000 towards the work of St Peter's, Caversham, and St Margaret's, Mapledurham.

The bric-a-brac and book stalls did a roaring trade. Cakes, jams and chutneys sold out. As the sideshows and tombolas attracted constant queues, adults and children alike enjoyed some great entertainment, whether it was the Hurst Morris People and their traditional dances or the children of the Wright School of Dance.

The Morris dancers entertain the crowds

Just as entertaining were the young musicians of the Berkshire Maestros Arnold Band. The arrival of Fred in the Shed and the children's races was the only opportunity for the face painters and mask makers to take a break.

Many thanks to joint sponsors Walmsley Estate Agents and A B Walker Funeral Directors who contributed to the success of the day by hosting respectively the balloon race and – a new departure – the Pimms tent. For Rector Mike Smith, it was not only a first opportunity to open the fete and draw the raffle, but also "a wonderful opportunity to serve the community".
Steve Jenkins

Mega Makers holiday club

During the first week of the summer holidays, Churches Together in Caversham ran its annual holiday club, Mega Makers. There were 150 primary-age children at Caversham Primary School having a 'mega' time. The theme was inventions. Boffin and Brainwave introduced the children to the mega machine which had the ability to make things bigger and more powerful. Using Matthew's gospel, we aimed to teach the children how big and wide God's love is.

Each day was packed with activities such as singing, bible stories, challenges, craft, drama and puppets. In the afternoon the children were given a choice including science laboratory, sports, community craft, drama, games and circus skills. One of the highlights was the water afternoon when everyone got very wet.

The club was staffed by dedicated volunteers from many of the churches in Caversham. Thank you to them all for helping to make Mega Makers another great week. If you are interested in finding out more, contact Megan: megan.temple@cavershambaptistchurch.org.uk

Perfect day for a party

The Social Side group at Our Lady and St Anne's had arranged with Father Paul for the use of the presbytery garden for the garden party in July.

It was a perfect sunny day and, after the 10.00 Mass, a large number of parishioners took their picnics into the garden. Picnic blankets and garden chairs were placed on the grass and food and drink were spread out.

Tea and cold drinks were on sale while Pimms and fruit and marshmallow kebabs were available. A selection of home-made cakes and preserves quickly sold out.

Some gentle music provided a relaxing background sound as people chatted, children played and a good time was had by all. Although not intended to be a fund-raising event, the proceeds of a raffle and from the stalls raised £280 for parish funds.



Anyone for Pimms at the garden party?

Photo: Jane Shaw

Christian Aid

The 2014 Christian Aid collection in Caversham, Emmer Green and Mapledurham raised the sum of £8895.00. The Christian Aid service collection at St Peter's of £218.30 is included in this figure. A sum of £3531.29 was declared for Gift Aid will add a further £882.82 to the total.

The street collection was down on 2013 by less than 1% which is an excellent result in these difficult times for door-to-door charity collections. It was also not possible to cover all allotted roads through a shortage of collectors.

Many thanks to church representatives and all those who valiantly walked the streets – not forgetting those who did the counting and helped in any other way

Becky moves on

Deacon Becky Lovatt, who has worked as a deacon in both Methodist churches in Caversham for seven years, has moved with her family to Devon.

She has achieved a great deal in that time. Arriving as Becky Bawden, she has changed her name – by getting married to Tim – she has a two-year-old son, Theo, and has written a book, *In the Shadows of Victory*, which is now available on Kindle. It is a compilation of meditations for Lent and it was the sale of this book that enabled her to present a cheque for £2100 to Buscot ward at Royal Berkshire Hospital in July.

Becky has had a long association with Buscot ward as she lost their daughter when she was 20 weeks pregnant and also Theo was born there. Ever since she has been anxious to support the work of the ward especially now as they are trying to raise £29,000 for another premature baby incubator.

Apart from her work as deacon at both Gosbrook Road and Caversham Heights, Becky has undertaken much ecumenical work through CTIC. Among other things she has been instrumental through Re-Inspire in taking the Christian message into several local schools. She inaugurated the Amersham Road Cookery Club for children after persuading many people to donate cooking utensils to enable it to run at a low cost.

She started a summer holiday club at Gosbrook Road to keep children occupied in the holiday. When this idea was taken up by CTIC and its scope was widened to accommodate 150 children during the first week of the holidays Becky remained a prime mover and worked extremely hard to ensure its success. She still ran the Gosbrook Road club as well but at Easter.

Becky also put an enormous amount of her energy into the Holiday at Home run by the Caversham Methodist churches in May. This was for people who otherwise would not have a holiday. Becky has made a significant impact in Caversham and will be sorely missed.



Becky hands over the cheque to hospital staff

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Caversham Horticultural Society

Following the society's autumn show at Emmer Green Primary School on Saturday 30th August, the autumn season opens with a talk on Wednesday 24th September by Michael Keith-Lewis on *Gardens and Climate Change*. This will be held at the usual venue, Caversham Primary School, starting at 7.45pm. Admission for non-members is £3.00 including refreshments.

If you missed the opportunity to buy bulbs at the show there will be a plant sale on Saturday 6th October at the Oakley Road allotments, starting at 10.00am.

Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club

The club presents a floral demonstration by Keri Harvey entitled *Back To School* on Wednesday 10th September at 7.30pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. Entrance fee £5.00 for visitors. We offer a warm welcome to new members. Contact Shirley Sexton 9412329

Caversham Allotment Association

The association is holding its 113th annual show on Saturday 6th September at Caversham Hall, St John's Road, starting at 2.15pm. Come and see prize exhibits of flowers, vegetables and fruit.

There will be a raffle and you can buy some of the produce at the end. Entrance is free. Enquires to Carol Wheeler on 9475802.

Rosehill WI

President Margaret Pyle reported that a cheque for £23.77 had been sent to Jacqui Bloomfield (last month's speaker) for the David Sheldrick Trust, wildlife conservation. This money was donated by members after the talk.

The speaker was Jacky Biddle from Playhatch Garden Centre who gave an interesting talk about the history of how garden centres had started, as early as the 14th century. It meant that many of the plants that we now have in our

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gardens were brought from the Continent and further afield and are now well established.

Jacky then went on to talk about roses, her favourite flower. She sent round a leaflet with 12 different roses named, and then explained the different types: shrub roses, ramblers and climbers, container roses and flower carpet. There were also tips on how to look after the plants.

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 2.00 pm in St Barnabas Church Hall, Emmer Green.

Caversham WI

Members found themselves transported all over the world. Miss Rowland showed her collection of beads made from different materials and suggested ways of repairing and re-using old beads. Two visitors and members enjoyed handling all the beads.

The competition *My Favourite Necklace* produced ten entries and Sylvia Myszor was declared the winner with Claire Elliot and Ann Hall as runners up. A certificate was received to acknowledge the £81 raised for Breast Cancer care on a boat trip.

Chazey WI

We've all heard of corn dollies but few of us know anything about them. Robert Longstaff, speaker at our July meeting, came with some typical examples and some materials for us to have a go. The history of corn dolly making goes back to pagan times when it was believed that the spirit of the corn lived within the soil. After harvesting it was customary for corn shapes, or idols, to be hung indoors over the winter months and then planted out to encourage growth of the next year's crop.

Chazey WI meet on the first Tuesday of every month (except August), 7.30 for 7.45pm at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church Hall.

Probus

The speaker at the July meeting of the club was Dr Robert Cruthers, whose subject was *Doctor at Sea*. Dr Cruthers was a GP in Croydon when, in the late 1970s, he applied to become a ship's doctor. He joined the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, a merchant navy organisation responsible for refuelling and replenishing Royal Naval vessels at sea. Apparently, as a civilian body, the RFA is more welcome in many ports abroad than the Royal Navy.

He had the rank of surgeon commander and was the fourth most senior person on the ship, after the captain, first mate and chief engineer, so would be in charge if they were out of action. His medical duties were not onerous, and any serious emergencies could always be transferred to hospital as there were helicopters stationed on the RFA ships, so he spent much time being the ship's entertainment officer.

He showed snippets of film of re-stocking several vessels at once, and told many stories of life at sea and on land in the ports that he visited, mostly in the Mediterranean, but also further afield.

Probus is a club for retired men, who fancy a meal once a month in the congenial company of like-minded men, followed by a talk. The club meets at the Caversham Heath golf course. Contact the secretary David Laird on 9470709.

Caversham Heights Society

The first meeting of the new season for the Caversham Heights Society will be on 17th September at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. It will begin with the AGM at 7.30pm, followed by a talk from Cory Starling on *Life at the Mill [Mapledurham]*. Contact Jill Hodges on 959 5307 for further information.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Heritage Open Days

Come to Caversham Court Gardens every afternoon from 11th to 14th September for the Heritage Open Days. You can see works of art and poetry by Caversham artists inspired by the heritage site, which re-opened after a Heritage Lottery funded refurbishment in 2009. Take a tour of the historic gardens and its fine trees and learn about Caversham's history, enjoy tea by the river at the tea kiosk run by local charities. St Peter's church will also be open for tours on Thursday and Friday afternoon.

On Saturday and Sunday afternoon, learn about the history of brick and tile-making in Caversham with local potters Debbie Page and Rosemary Muirhead. Listen to tales of wonder from storyteller Anne Latto, and look out for music-making and strolling players from Progress Theatre. The tea kiosk will also be open.

Jazz concert

The Kings of Jazz invite you to an evening of music and song at St Barnabas church, Emmer Green on Saturday 27th September at 7.00pm. The concert is being held to raise funds to send Peter Drew, a member of the 89th Reading Scout Group, to the World Scout Jamboree in Japan in 2015.

Tickets, costing £10, £8.50 OAPs, £6 under 16s can be obtained from Nic Drew on 07768 944914 or email nic@drews.uk.com. Refreshments will be available in the interval.

Apple Day

The open day at Cross Lanes Fruit Farm, Mapledurham, will be on Sunday 12th October, 10am to 5pm. You are invited to sample some of the 50 varieties of apple grown there as well as juicy pears. Stalls will be selling apple pies, muffins, cakes and jellies plus local cider.

There will be guided walks round the farm at intervals during the day. Refreshments will be



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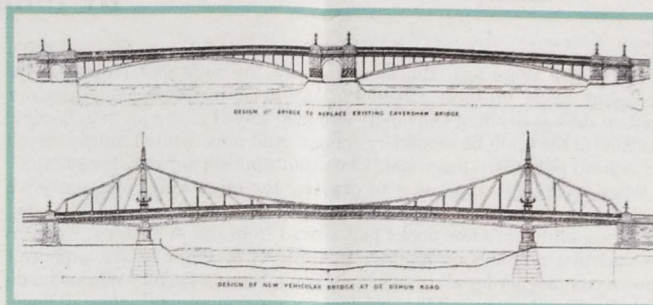
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ENVIRONMENT

A PAIR OF BRIDGES



For the 50th anniversary edition, I thought I might write
something about the two road bridges across the Thames
between Caversham and Reading.

I'm intrigued by these drawings of the bridges, which
appeared in the Reading Standard newspaper in 1913. At the
top is the proposed replacement for Caversham Bridge, and
below is the design for a bridge, to be built between De Bohun
Road, Reading, and an extended George Street in Caversham.
This latter is a suspension bridge – and is Reading Bridge as it
might have been, before the name had been applied to it.

Under the Reading Extension Order of 1911, under which
Caversham and most of Tilehurst became part of the Borough of
Reading, the borough's plan was to build a footbridge, where
Reading Bridge stands today, to build a completely new road
bridge within three years, and to replace the old worn-out
Caversham Bridge. The local paper described it thus: 'To
substitute for the dangerous and narrow structure that at
present links Reading to the new territory of Caversham, a
graceful, elegant and broad bridge which will not require to rest
on patched-up and obstructive columns and which will be
equal to all the demands of modern traffic.'

Local government didn't work quite as fast as that in 1911. A
Reading Corporation Bill was drawn up, but before it could go
before Parliament, it had to be voted on by the electors. And it
wasn't just a simple 'yes' or 'no' vote: there were six resolutions
to be decided. These included the building of the bridges, the
road works in connection with them, and varying the Reading
Extension Order so that the town would no longer have to build
a footbridge. I pity those having to count the votes, and wonder
how the town would have coped if the electors had decided to
save money, and just rebuild the old bridge.

The election was held on Monday, January 27th, 1913, along
the lines of Parliamentary elections with the polling stations in
the usual places. The turn-out was disappointingly small –
4,891 out of a total electorate of 18,500. Of those who voted, the
great majority were in favour of all the resolutions. It was
reckoned that, until the necessary loans were paid off, it would
put an additional 2d on the rates. This was, of course, when
there were 240 pennies in a pound, so it's just less than one new
penny.

It would have cost a little more, had it not been for the
munificence of Charles Marten Powell, M.A., a retired medical
man, of Eastfield, Derby Road, Caversham. He had promised the
corporation £5,000 towards the work out of his own pocket. The
money was invested, and the delays caused by the First World
War meant that in the end the corporation would receive over
£6,000. The total cost of the whole project was £70,000.

There seems to have been no Parliamentary opposition to the
Bill. It is apparent that the plans for the two bridges dating from
1913 were changed. The advantages of using ferro-concrete for
bridges were becoming apparent. Reading Bridge was built first,
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An editor remembers

By John Mullaney

Thirty five years ago, almost to the day, my wife and I opened our bookshop at 35 Prospect Street. We had lived in Caversham from our student days at Reading University and then stayed in the town to become teachers at the Catholic secondary school. And now, while Lindsay stayed on as head of modern languages, I set about running our new bookshop.

What we didn't expect was to discover the close knit community we were joining. I don't think the paint had dried on the newly decorated walls, certainly very few books had arrived from the publishers, when in breezed that redoubtable reporter from the *Caversham Bridge*, and well known campaigner for all things Caversham, Winnie Darter. Winnie made it her business to know all the shopkeepers and consequently they all knew about the newspaper.

Winnie bombarded me with questions about myself and my family. She then went on to give me advice: "Have you talked to Ray Bunting? He has the organic fruit and vegetable shop right opposite you. Have you seen Ray at Caversham Homecrafts or Jill and Jerry from the pet shop? I was left in no doubt that here was a community interested in our new business, in Caversham and most of all the people of the village. At its core was the *Caversham Bridge*."

Then there was Molly Casey! If Winnie kept the people of Caversham informed about what was going on then Molly, writing as Watchdog, ensured no unwarranted plans by private individuals or the council would slip under the radar. It should be remembered that Molly and the Civic Society had helped save Reading's historic Alfred Waterhouse Old Town Hall from being demolished by Reading Council. And once again it was the *Caversham Bridge* that coordinated the information north of the river.

Pride in the village was expressed through the wish of many residents to find out more about the history of the area. There were many newcomers to Caversham as it expanded rapidly in the 1970s and '80s. These people also wanted to discover more about their new home. So every month Mary Kift wrote a fascinating piece about Caversham's past.

Just as we opened the shop the first edition of her book, *Life in Old Caversham*, was published and we were proud to be associated with its distribution. As time went on we became friends with Mary whose knowledge of local history was second to none and who was also a first rate gardener and naturalist. She lived all her life in and around Caversham, having served in the Land Army during the war and eventually becoming headteacher at Mapledurham School. The value of her contribution to making a success of the *Bridge* over the years cannot be overestimated.

The *Bridge* itself was the brainchild of Canon John Grimwade, Rector of Caversham. His vision of an ecumenical local newspaper which supported and promoted local consciousness drove the ethos of the paper. He was always a forward thinking man. So when it came clear that he was soon to retire he moved on yet again with another ground-breaking idea.

I first met him John Grimwade a day or so after Winnie's whirlwind entry. His enthusiasm was catching and I found myself being volunteered for all sorts of activities. Very soon one of these was to join the *Bridge* and get the hang of producing the next month's issue with a view to becoming an editor. His great idea was to make it a truly ecumenical paper by having representatives of the four major Christian communities on the editorial board. One proposal was that each of the four editors would be in charge of one month's issue. This we decided would make the paper too bitty and so we came upon the arrangement which, I believe, persists to this day where the whole team works together. Here was true, practical, Christian ecumenism at work.

So what have been some of the major issues faced by Caversham and so by the *Bridge* as a community paper?

In the days before Waitrose came to Caversham the village was an agglomeration of small businesses with at least three independent fruit and vegetable shops. These were also the days before the relaxation of Sunday trading regulations. So a few years later there was horror expressed when it became known that Waitrose intended to trade on Sundays and Good Friday. There was a deal of soul searching over the status of the Lord's Day which was reflected in the *Bridge*.

The paper was supportive of the annual ecumenical carol service which was held in support of the Save the Children Fund. The first was held at St Peter's, continuing for several years, being hosted at different churches.

Then there was the less harmonious issue of the proposed one-way system around Caversham which would have routed traffic and buses away from the centre. In this case the paper was active in reporting the joint campaign by the Traders' Association and Triangle group of residents to prevent this.

Another threat to the integrity of Caversham was the development of the Elliot's site for a Safeway supermarket. At first the council supported the proposal, which most traders considered would have killed Caversham as a shopping centre and destroyed its unique characteristics. The great majority of Caversham residents also appeared to oppose the scheme and at a meeting at the Baptist Church in Prospect Street the council

representatives said they had been convinced by the arguments of the public.

On a far happier note the *Bridge* helped in the creation of a special festival to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee in 2004. This was such a success that it was repeated as Caversham Festival for some years after and, though much changed in character, continues to this day.

Over the years that I have been associated with the *Bridge* I have seen both Caversham and the paper change in many ways and yet it has retained its core values as envisaged by Canon Grimwade. Editors have come and gone, Caversham has grown into a major shopping centre with a national supermarket at its core and other national chains represented. Yet it retains many independent shops.

But most important of all Caversham is still a community. One has only to go to the summer fairs in Caversham Court to see the truth of this. The *Caversham Bridge* is involved in all these events and will continue to be a hub of information and support not just for the Christian community but for the whole village.



Parslow's shop in Prospect Street which became the bookshop

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TRIBUTE

MARGARET AGRAWAL 1944-2014

It was a great shock to everyone who knew her to learn of Margaret's sudden and unexpected death in June. She was born in Selby, Yorkshire on 13th July 1944,

In 1957 the family moved to Ashton, and Margaret went to Ashton Grammar School where she was a high achiever, gifted in languages and a good athlete. She played in school sports teams and was in the Guides.

She went on to Bangor University to study French and German, did teacher training at college in Bristol, and started a successful teaching career in primary schools. She came to Reading to teach at Crosfields School and joined the Inter-Varsity Club where she met Padam Agrawal. They were married in 1975 at Brayton Chapel, Selby. Padam and Margaret had two children, Sheila and David, and two grand-daughters.

Margaret's teaching career took her to a number of primary schools in Reading, including Birch Copse, St Anne's, St Martin's, and St Mary and All Saints.

When her own children were very young, she also taught adult literacy.

Margaret made friends wherever she went and would go out of her way to be helpful to anyone, even strangers. She loved to travel and visited many countries including Australia, New Zealand, India, Dubai and Turkey. She loved walking, covering the full length of the River Thames, Kennet and Avon, and (last year) the Oxford to Coventry Canal. She also enjoyed athletics, badminton and played in a steel band for 15 years.

Christianity was an important part of her life and Margaret was a member of Caversham Heights Methodist church for many years and became a steward. She was a driving force in many church activities and her enthusiasm and cheerfulness as she undertook many jobs in the church will be sorely missed.

Bible Friends

Esther saves God's people

Esther knew that God's people were in danger. Haman was telling lies that made the king hate God's people, the Jews.

They would all be hurt unless she went to the king and told him the truth.

But, although she was the queen, she could not go to the king whenever she wanted. She had to wait for him to ask her to come. What could she do? She thought of a clever plan.

Bravely, she went to the king. He was not angry, so she said, "Come to a party I'm having. It's just for you and Haman."

The king was very pleased. At the party, he told Esther she could have anything she wanted.

"Then please save my people, the Jews," she said. "Our enemy Haman wants to get rid of us."

The king was angry with Haman. "I will stop Haman hurting your people," he said. And he sent Haman away. Esther had saved God's people.

Esther 5-10



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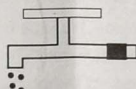
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