

50 Years of the *Caversham Bridge* – a celebration

On October 3rd a reception was held at the Caversham Heath Golf Club to celebrate 50 years publishing of the *Caversham Bridge*. Among the guests were the Deputy Mayor of Reading Councillor, Sarah Hacker, and the Reading East MP, Rob Wilson. About 80 people who had supported the Bridge in a variety of ways over the years including present and former members of the board, columnists and also many of those unsung heroes, the distributors, also attended.

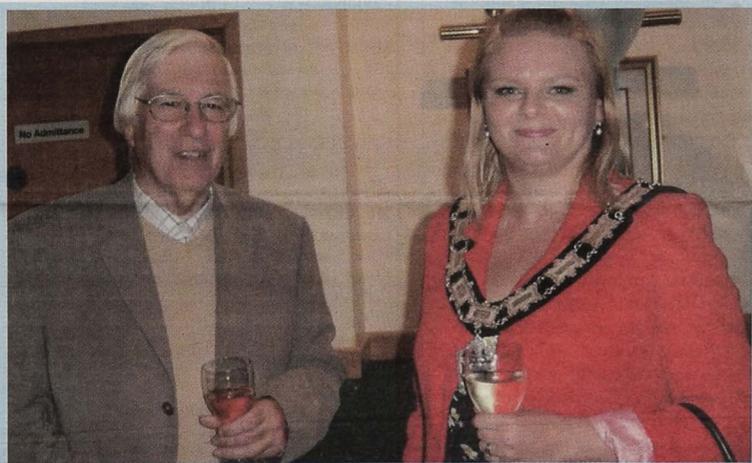
After refreshments had been served, the guests were welcomed by a former editor of the *Caversham Bridge*, John Mullaney, a well-known Caversham personality, who also wrote a column entitled *Ex Libris* for several years. John was performing this duty in the absence of Eric Chappell, an editor for 30 years, who was unable to attend due to an accident which had recently befallen his wife Chris. In his speech, John recalled the early days of the Bridge and its prime mover, the Rev'd Canon John Grimwade, then the Rector of Caversham. John said that to get people of the various denominations to work together to launch an ecumenical enterprise like this was quite unusual back in the 1960s. He also recalled the contributions made by a few prominent past columnists, in particular Molly Casey, Mary Kift and Winnie Darte, and thanked all the other contributors, too numerous to mention.



Jim Pilgrim cuts the cake.

distributed to the assembled company. This ended the formal part of the evening, and allowed those present to freely mingle and reminisce over their part in the *Caversham Bridge's* history. As they left, each person was handed a souvenir pen, containing a motif of the *Caversham Bridge's* masthead. This was a very pleasant occasion, and a fitting tribute to all who had worked so hard to ensure the success and continued existence of the paper.

To commemorate the anniversary more publicly, a banner had been hung on the railings outside Caversham library, and this was on display at the celebration, forming an attractive backdrop to the room's decor. Past copies of the *Bridge* were also available for perusal, recalling memories of some significant events in Caversham's history, and including a copy of the first issue of October 1964. Following the reception, the banner was rehung on the library railings, where it will remain for a few more weeks.



John Mullaney and her Deputy Mayor.

John introduced Jim Pilgrim to the assembled company. Jim had acted as the Company Secretary for over 40 years, combining the two roles of secretary and treasurer, performing a prodigious amount of work, and ensuring that the business was run to the highest standards. The two roles were separated after he retired, the joint position being considered too large a task for one person!

The Rev'd Colin Bass, representing the Caversham clergy, most of whom were unable to attend, gave a blessing, before the celebration cake was cut, which had been made by Carol Moloney, the Distribution Manager, Jim Pilgrim, supported by Carol, ceremonially cut the cake, which was then



The banner hanging from the library railings.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir

Reading the September 50th anniversary edition of *Caversham Bridge* set my memory going. I was an ex-officio member of the PCC as a lay reader and later as a church warden David Clift joined the team of Caversham clergy as a curate and his wife, Mary, who came with him, had been with the Birmingham National Christian News. It was she who brought forward the idea of a parish newspaper, instead of four parish magazines which, with the support of the PCC, became the first edition of

Caversham Bridge.

Also David Clift and his father, a lay reader in a different parish, introduced the concept of a parish holiday. It was his research that found Embley Park School as a venue for the parish holiday which is still running but no longer at Embley.

The Rev'd Canon John Grimwade did a wonderfully good job but I feel that David and Mary Clift should not be overlooked.

Bill Vincent, lay reader emeritus and past parish church warden.

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Caversham Clergy

ANGLICAN

St Barnabas

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

St Andrews

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

St Peter, St Margaret, St John

Revd Mike Smith, The Rectory, 20 Church Road,
Caversham RG4 7AD Tel: 9479505
rector@ctmparish.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

Revd John Dudley Tel: 9470265

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (READING)

Revd. Rob Beardsley Tel: 07736 353233
Email: robg.beardsley@sky.com
www.riversidechurchreading.co.uk

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

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Tel: 0118 947 5152

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY

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

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

Transitional Ministers Revd Jonathan Edwards
Church office tel 954 5353
Email Secretary: sue.cantwell@cavershambaptist
church.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: 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 Colin Ferguson

I am writing this at the end of September having just returned from a tour of Australia which also allowed me to catch up with friends and family who live there. Even there it was impossible to get away from the fearful activity in the Middle East or the Scottish referendum.

As a Scot I was deeply concerned that the Braveheart syndrome might prevail and create a country deeply divided and also quite unrepresentative of those who are Scottish. Thankfully the vote allowed things to remain stable. At the same time there was a bit of me that was delighted that so many turned out for the vote and that the yes vote was as strong as it was. Why? It is totally irrational but my heritage is important to me and I could relate to a cry that said we don't want to belong to a nation that has food banks while the rich get richer. The sense that this nation has become unjust has led to division and anger not just in Scotland but widely across the whole nation. The sense of government by an English elite did nothing to prevent ideas of being better off on their own.

The sad thing is that this sense of wanting to be separated pervades the newspapers in particular and far from being a united kingdom I have never known us to be so divided. In the church we have a special responsibility to show that even though we are divided by opinion we are still one in the Spirit and we no longer reject each other because of our diversity but work together for a better understanding of what good community should be.

We should be speaking out more about the erosion of human rights, the abandoning of equality before the law with the loss of legal aid, the demonization of the poor as being scroungers and layabouts. I feel especially for teachers at this time. I grew up in a society where they were respected and supported in the hard work that is involved. My daughter became a teacher three years ago, she loves the job and by all accounts is doing well but she is not happy at the pressure of the negative approach by the inspectorate and the apparent determination of the government to say that schools are failing so that they can then be put into special measures or turned into academies, which is really another way of saying private schools.

The same tactics are now being seen in the health service. My uncle, who was a founding member of the BMA and the National Health Service, would be turning in his grave at what is being done. To get good value we need to cherish our health workers and teachers and all those who try to serve our community. We should be proud of the culture of care and resist the efforts to minimize it or to sell it off.

The next assault is going to be on the European Union, on immigration, and on the Human Rights Act. It is already rife in the UKIP. It is a sad reflection on us that one more charismatic politician can so readily attract a following. Politics cannot be about blaming others. It is merely the extension of the rifts building in society now. The truth is that without immigration we would be much worse off. I belong to a church which has several nationalities working together and we welcome them. In Melbourne I attended a church where half the congregation were of Chinese and other Asian descent, and it was good.

Sadly this is not a political rant as I personally feel disenfranchised by the present system. It is an effort some times to keep supporting it. Perhaps if I had been living in Scotland I could have sympathised even more with the desire to break away, but I believe we are better together and our role now is to try and make that togetherness return. It is what so many died for a hundred years ago and if our remembrance is to mean anything it should be to create the type of society in which they would all find a welcome place.

Colin Ferguson is an accredited Lay Preacher in the United Reform Church

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
Evening Prayer (as announced)
6.30pm

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

RIVERSIDE CHURCH (READING)

Meeting at Hemdean House School, Hemdean Road, Caversham
10.00am Morning Worship & Teaching

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)

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH South Street

10.30am Morning Worship each Sunday
8.00pm House of Prayer (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

Our Lady and St Anne's, Southview Avenue

Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm

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

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers)

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 December 2014 issue should be sent to Caversham Thameside and Mapledurham Parish Office by **Monday 3rd November**. The date for the January 2015 issue is **Monday 24th November**. Email address is secretary@ctmparish.org.uk
Advertising copy for the **December** issue should be sent to Mr A Wright, Twigmoor, Upper Warren Avenue, Caversham by **Friday 31st October**. The date for the January 2015 issue is **Friday 21st November**.

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
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ST BARNABAS

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

CAVERSHAM GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Are you a people person?

Caversham Good Neighbours is a group formed to offer essential transport to the elderly and disabled in our neighbourhood and visits to the sick or housebound. If you would like to give to the community by joining us as a volunteer driver or as a visitor, then do get in touch with us.

www.cavershamgoodneighbours.org.uk
0118 948 3466

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

The Peace Light – What is it?

The peace light is a living flame which travels from the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem across the whole of Europe as a symbol of Peace.

It belongs to anyone who receives it. It travels in a variety of lanterns. It is for anyone who believes in the message it carries - public offices, places of cultural or political importance, prisons, hospitals, hospices and private homes, churches and mosques, Christingle, crib and carol services. It costs nothing, any costs are borne by the couriers, there is no cost to receive it. Two lights are carried in safe canisters to safeguard against the lights going out.

Now in its 28th year, the 'Peace Light from Bethlehem' campaign was originally organised by the Austrian Broadcasting Company - ORF (Linz) - and was part of a large charitable relief mission 'Light into Darkness' for children in need in Austria and abroad. As a symbol of Peace, it took on a new significance with a desire to spread this vital message, the Scout and Guide movements were approached to act as couriers and Scouts from many European countries now meet at an ecumenical service in Vienna to share the flame and carry to their own country. An Austrian child fetches the light by passenger flight to the service from the city of Bethlehem, a city which holds special significance for Moslems, Hebrews and Christians of all denominations.

We in the UK pick up the Light at a service in the Pas de Calais area of France. This followed a challenge from my late husband to the Regional Commissioners at Scoutes de France HQ, where they had never previously participated in the sharing of the Peace Light.

P&O Ferries allow us to carry this naked flame on their ships in Club Class after which it travels to Bedford where it is collected for distribution to all points north and east, by train or road. For the south and west the light is taken from Dover in a specially constructed carrier installed in the boot of the car, ensuring that it is in a fixed position with enough ventilation but no draughts. It then journeys around the M25 to Reading often with one local delivery or pick-up the same evening. The next morning off to all points West; Wiltshire Dorset and parts of Hampshire and Gloucestershire from where it travels on to South Wales, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. This year there will be additional drops, to the Rev'd Becky Lovatt in Seaton and the Rev'd Dan Tyndall in Bristol. From this area of Berkshire there will be deliveries to venues in Surrey, Hampshire and West Sussex as well as to local venues, a number of Caversham churches and notably to the Civic Carol

service of nine lessons at St. Mary the Virgin (St. Mary Butts)

We expect the Light to be here on the evening of the 14th. December and the Peace Light is here for you, but after 800 miles by road in just a few days, it would be appreciated if you want the light please make suitable arrangements with Margaret Ellison. ellisonm@waitrose.com or www.peacelight.org.uk

We are told that for many people Christmas starts with the arrival of the Peace Light and its message from the Prince of Peace.

Margaret Ellison

Church House Lift

The new lift in Church House is now available for public use! There has been a long standing need for improved access to the first floor hall and it has finally happened. Building and installation work took place over the summer and the result is a very neat addition to the building.

We are delighted that the whole building - including the Caversham Good Neighbours office, as well as the hall - is at last accessible to people in wheelchairs, those with walking frames and mothers with pushchairs.

When he came to visit, Bill Vincent, a veteran of the Church House team whose connections to the building dates back to the 1950s, was impressed not only with the new lift but with all the many other improvements which have taken place over recent years.



Nigel Smith, Chairman,
Church House
Leadership Team

Mary Tucker, CHLT
secretary, and Bill
Vincent, at the controls
of the new lift

Gill Madeley NAHort.
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Dunsden Owen Association

The Dunsden Owen Association, in partnership with arts company Outrider Anthems, has been awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant, to support a WWI exhibition in Dunsden on 7-9th November.

In September 1911, a young Wilfred Owen came to Dunsden, near Reading, as assistant to the Vicar of All Saints'

Church. It was an important period in his life and he wrote many vivid letters describing his days here.

The Association created a WWI exhibition which was held at Dunsden Village Hall in November this year.

This exhibition used local archives, letters from Wilfred Owen and oral histories of residents who had family in the village at the time Wilfred Owen was in Dunsden from 1911-1913, before he left for the France and then the war. There was a creative poetry corner where visitors can create their own poems, a 'room setting' depicting life in rural Dunsden in the WW1 period, and a children's trail.

Emma Banks, Curator of the WWI Exhibition, says "The Dunsden Owen Association welcomes individuals or organisations who can loan artefacts or stories about WWI that can be used as part of the exhibition. We had great success with our 13 July Mementos and Memories Day at Dunsden Village Hall, with visitors sharing their stories and material items such as medals relating to WWI. We encourage anyone interested in WWI, Wilfred Owen and his poetry, or who has physical materials that can be used as part of this exhibition to get in touch and learn more about our vision and how to get involved."

Jennifer Leach, joint Chairman of the Dunsden

Owen Association and Director of Outrider Anthems, says of the Heritage Lottery Fund award, "The generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund enables us to celebrate this unique connection with one of England's greatest war poets through various mediums including the WWI Exhibition."

Stuart McLeod, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund South East, said: "Through his poetry and letters, Wilfred Owen painted a vivid picture of the atrocities of the First World War. He put pen to paper to express his feelings of anger at the cruelty he'd witnessed, giving us a rare glimpse at the changing conditions for local people in the run-up to the conflict. We are proud to be supporting this project that will enable local people to learn about, remember and record this part of Owen's tragically short life and explore the moving work he created."

The Dunsden Owen Association hopes that visitors to Dunsden will be spurred on to read Wilfred Owen's poetry, which includes some of the most honest and compelling war poems ever written.

For further information please visit our website www.owenindunsden.org or contact Emma Banks, Curator, at emmabanks100@hotmail.com.

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A diamond jubilee of church singing

Michael Rose celebrated 60 years of singing in church choirs with a diamond jubilee Choral Evensong at St Peter's Church, Caversham, at 6.30pm on Sunday, 21st September, bringing together past and present members of the choir, plus members of the Erleigh Cantors.

Introit anthem *Glorious and Powerful God* – Wood
Responses **Rose**
Mag and Nunc Stanford in C
Anthem *Te Deum* in B flat – Stanford
Final anthem Hallelujah Chorus – Handel

Mike has been singing in church choirs since Stravinsky's In Memoriam Dylan Thomas premiered in Los Angeles, the National People's Congress adopted China's first communist constitution and the world's first nuclear submarine was commissioned in the United States.

Mike said "Music, particularly Church Music, has been a permanent inspiration to my structured and disciplined way of life. Singing hymns to the Glory of God, the wonderful tunes constantly rolling round in my head and the years of Christian unity of choir membership has given me enormous fulfilment. At times, in a troubled mind, there has been no greater means of shelter than through my church and its music."

St John the Evangelist Church in Friern Barnett, North London, was the first to benefit from Mike's singing. He joined the choir in September 1954, at the age of ten. At his first choir practice, he was introduced to the Psalms, which have remained a singing passion ever since, along with the symphonies and concertos of Johannes Brahms.

A residential course at the Royal School of Church Music soon followed, under the tutorship of Martin How and John Dykes Bowyer, after which Mike was appointed head chorister at St John's.

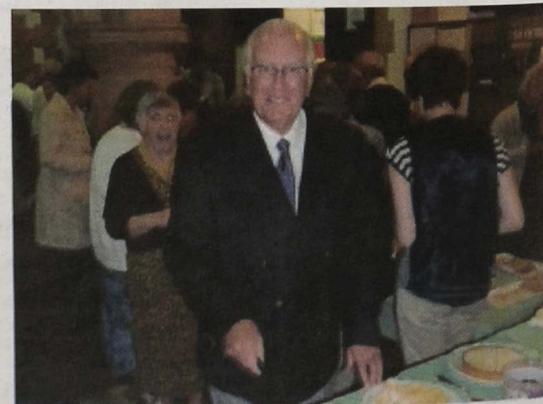
Llandaff Cathedral was Mike's next choir, when he moved to work in Cardiff after leaving school. In 1964, he successfully auditioned as an alto. Cape Town Cathedral and the local Gilbert and

Sullivan society joined Mike's CV when work took him briefly to South Africa, before he settled, in 1967, at St Stephen's, Ealing, still as an alto. It was in Ealing that Mike met and married his wife Margaret.

At the end of the '70s, moving to Caversham, in Reading, Mike began singing with the St Peter's Church choir and has sung with them for the 35 years since. Such is his love of the Psalms that, in 1985, Mike convinced the Rector the Rev'd Richard Kingsbury and choirmaster Andrew Boseley to let him organise a charity Psalmathon. With the help of four organists and four back-up choirs, all 150 Psalms were sung, non-stop, in 12 hours. It remains a highlight of Mike's life of church singing.

There was of course, a Psalm during Mike's celebration Choral Evensong: Psalm 65, 'Thou O God, are praised in Sion'. Mike had chosen all the music, including the first hymn 'Crown Him with many Crowns' and Handel's Hallelujah Chorus as one of the anthems, and his "very favourite", the Stanford Te Deum.

Mike has no intention of hanging up his choir robes. In fact, he is now assisting the librarian in looking after the choir music.



Michael Rose

From the Lookout Post

Changes proposed for St Martin's Centre Caversham

The formal planning application for the regeneration of the precinct was submitted in June and is still available to view at www.stmartinscentre-caversham.co.uk. This coincided with many of the community events around Caversham and CADRA was able to display the details and talk to several hundred local people. Drawing from comments received and local professional expertise, CADRA sent an initial response on a wide range of issues. The primary concern was that the Church Street frontage must be appropriate to local character and a rare opportunity must be taken to achieve a better balance between old and new. Council officers also raised a number of concerns.

Revised plans have now been submitted. At www.cadra.org.uk/planning.php you can view some of

the summary plans direct and also link to the full set on the Council website. Changes include:

- No service access on to Church Street by the Telephone Exchange
- 14 more parking spaces than current provision (50 more spaces were shown in earlier plans)
- Increase from 20 to 46 cycle parking spaces with better locations
- Some improvements to the new Market Square
- Revised planting scheme
- Changes in materials used for the extension above Boots and Costa and the new building adjacent to the Telephone Exchange. Some brick panels are to be introduced to match the colour of Caversham Library. These will be interspersed with metal coated panels in a zinc finish and some stone cladding.

A number of these changes are welcome but this is a large and

complex scheme with a whole range of issues. It is currently expected that a decision will be made at the Planning Committee on 12 November. The easiest way to view the revised plans is through the links at www.cadra.org.uk. Comments can be made up to the date of the committee hearing.



Road Watch

Albert Road / Highmoor Road junction

In order to reduce the accident rate at this junction, Reading Borough Council has examined several possible options, and has voted to solve the problem by closing off part of the junction.

Traffic proceeding along Highmoor Road from Woodcote Road will be diverted along Matlock Road or Buxton Avenue to Harrogate Road and thence onto Albert Road. Only public transport vehicles will be allowed to use the existing route through the junction.

If you wish to comment on this proposal, then email Simon Beasley, the officer responsible for this proposal, copying Rob Wilson, MP for Reading East and Ed Hopper, the local councillor who also sits on the Transport Sub Committee. Their email addresses are: Simon.Beasley@Reading.gov.uk ed.hopper47@gmail.com robwilsonmp@parliament.uk. The formal consultation starts on October 15th, and will end on November 4th.

Reading Bridge

Essential works to strengthen Reading Bridge are due to begin in November.

Reading Bridge is almost 100 years old and is a major strategic route, both through Reading and the wider region. The structure is now in need of

essential strengthening and waterproofing to ensure it will continue to carry traffic for many years to come.

The vast majority of the bridge strengthening work will take place through lane closures, meaning the bridge can remain open to traffic. There will however be some periods when the bridge will need to be closed so that some essential work can be safely carried out. The majority of these closures will be short term and will take place overnight. The closures will be publicised in advance.

At some point during the latter part of the project there will be a need for the bridge to be fully closed for a period of time. This element of the work is being discussed with the contractor. When details are finalised, they will again be widely publicised in advance.

Preparations for the project were due to begin in October, with physical work on the bridge starting in November. The strengthening works are due for completion in summer 2015.

The statutory notice advising of the work allows for an 18 month closure but – as outlined above – the vast majority of the work will take place under local traffic management arrangements and lane closures. The statutory notice allows for unforeseen circumstances or if an emergency closure becomes necessary at any point for public safety reasons, it can be put in place without delay.

Gosbrook Road traffic lights

Work to upgrade the traffic lights at this key junction in Caversham started at the end of September. The works in Gosbrook Road and George Street were scheduled to last for three to four weeks but Councillor Tony Page, Reading's lead councillor for transport, said it was clear the works needed to take place outside peak hours. He blamed contractors for traffic chaos on the first morning and evening, when traffic was at a standstill through the town after contractors started the work early and continued during the evening peak.

The council made that point to the contractor and they stopped carriageway work at 3.30pm and did not begin until 9.30am the next morning. After that, traffic was flowing normally through the junction during peak hours. That off peak pattern of working, 9.30am to 3.30pm, was due to continue for the remainder of the improvement work. The council apologised to road users caught up in the heavy traffic for the obvious inconvenience caused.

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ENVIRONMENT

The Dreaded Honey Fungus

Perhaps I should apologise, in case some of my readers find this photograph below upsetting! It shows the most spectacular infestation of Honey Fungus that I have ever come

across, with the poor old birch tree looking like some crazy gigantic candelabra. But this was in a wood, a long way from human habitation.

It is when you encounter it in your garden, sucking the life out of your trees and shrubs, that it is particularly unwelcome. There is no effective cure, and your prized specimens inevitably die.

To make matters worse, it can spread in two ways. The spores can get into damaged wood and old stumps, and in addition, Honey Fungus produces 'rhizomorphs'. These appear like tangled black boot-laces, and you can see them just under the bark of infested trees. These boot-laces can spread from one tree, under the ground, to find another, and they can extend for up to 20 yards and penetrate the roots of healthy trees.

Having said all that, it is a rather handsome fungus - very common - and can appear in large clumps. It is variable in appearance, which tends to change as it gets older. When it is young, you can often see a rather wispy ring round the stem and there is a faint pattern of scales on the cap. When the cap has expanded, there is often an attractive concentric pattern of darker-coloured scales round it.

Opinion is divided as to whether it is worth eating - though in parts of Germany, Italy and Poland it is sold on street markets and relished. The author of 'A Treatise on the Esculent Funguses of England' - published in 1847 - called it 'a nauseous and disagreeable fungus'. Roger Phillips, in his 1988 book simply called 'Mushrooms', advised caution: "Edible when cooked, but should only be eaten in small amounts, as some forms are known to cause stomach upsets." For Michael Jordan, the author of 'Mushroom Magic' (1989), the appearance of Honey Fungus was one of the highlights of the fungus-eating year, providing a feast that was not to be missed. Although he admitted that it smelt unpleasant, "the moment the caps hit the pan, all will be well, and a mouth-watering aroma will elbow out the original odour." I wonder!

Another curious property of this fungus is that the wood it infests becomes luminescent. Doubtless this has given rise to

various superstitious beliefs in the past, and during the Second World War there are stories of timber-yards near London being covered with tarpaulins to prevent the glow attracting enemy aircraft on moonless nights. Apparently if you damage or break the infested wood it will glow in the dark. It still works if you bring the timber indoors, so long as you keep it damp. I feel that I really should give this a try!

Happy Wanderer

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Heritage Open Days in Caversham Court 11-14th September 2014

'Courting our Heritage' was the witty title of the 2014 Heritage Open Days offerings in Caversham Court Gardens from artists, musicians, actors, potters, volunteer guides, a poet and a storyteller. Inspired by the history of the houses that were once on the site of Caversham Court, by the stories of the families who lived there, and the gardens they created, they brought the gardens to life and opened our eyes to the wonders around us.

In the run-up to the Heritage Open Days, mysterious lines of poetry had begun to appear on walls and tree trunks in the gardens, every day another line, teasing regular visitors to the gardens who would come in to see how the poems

progressed. Caversham poet Robin Thomas believes that poems should be everywhere; indeed, where better to reflect on the big questions of life than in a beautiful garden?

It is strange that seeing a frame around something makes you look harder. Local artist Mary Phelan directed our gaze to features in Caversham Court that may have escaped our notice, an unaccustomed view of Caversham through a lancet window, a section of wall built of a jumble of flint, brick and stone, an ancient corbel from who knows where. For botanical artist Nina Krauzewicz, the ancient 'family' yew tree evoked bygone ages when magical plants were associated with mysterious Druidic symbols. Her Japanese paper hangings moved gently in the breeze, strange yet beckoning us to go back with them in time.

Inspired by the beauty of the walls surrounding Caversham Court, potters Rosemary Muirhead and Debbie Page explored the history of clay in Caversham and Reading with maps, displays and demonstrations. Tiles and bricks have been made in the area since medieval times: local place names such as Clayfield Copse, Kiln Lane, and Tilehurst

point to some of the many clay pits and kilns which produced the materials to build Reading and Caversham.

A hooded monk walking in contemplation, a maid dusting, the lady of the house promenading along the Long Walk, a 1940s housewife distributing wartime recipes – these and other ghosts from the past delighted young and old

alike by engaging in conversation and answering questions about their life and times. Well done, Progress Theatre players!

Visitors enjoying the sunshine and tea from the Tea Kiosk (ably staffed over the weekend by the League of Friends of the Royal Berkshire Hospital) were serenaded by musicians Janet Sherbourne, Jan Steele, Heather Ryall and Becci Spelling. For the children, there were tales of wonder from storyteller Anne Latto.

The Friends of Caversham Court Gardens, who sponsored the events, were on hand to welcome visitors and give tours to those new to the gardens. St Peter's Church also opened its doors to visitors for the Heritage Open Days, with Mike Eggleton as guide. Thanks to all who took part and gave so much of their time to celebrate Caversham's rich and fascinating heritage.



Potter Rosemary Muirhead talks about the use of clay

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Reading Family Aid, Toy Project 2014

The Annual Toy Appeal, run by Reading Family Aid, with the sponsorship of the Reading Chronicle was launched on Oct 23rd.

As always we appeal to the public to donate toys and gifts to children, aged 0 – 16 years, whose families do not have the means to give their children the Happy Christmas which more fortunate children enjoy.

There will be donation points around the Reading area, where gifts, both good secondhand and new, can be taken. Details of these will be available on posters in the town, the Reading Chronicle and on their website.

We are looking forward to another bumper year. In 2013 we were able to provide gifts for around 1600 children.

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CHURCHES

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST CHURCH

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING On Monday 29th September a coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support was held at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. It was very well attended and as a result the grand total of £710 was raised. The organisers would like to thank all who came for coffee, those who gave donations, raffle prizes and cakes and to those who worked so hard to make the event such a success.

HARVEST FESTIVAL The theme of this year's Harvest Festival at Caversham Heights Methodist Church was taken from one of John Wesley's statements. 'Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can'. Our theme was 'All you can' and we aimed to do this by donating food to 'Readifood' and raising money for what used to be called the Methodist Relief and Development Fund and now is just called 'All You Can'.

The church window sills were ingeniously decorated by the various sections of the church community and other organisations that use the church premises. Elizabeth Peirce, with the help of the children and the 'young at heart' demonstrated how we obtain different foods from all over the world. Much geography was learnt as she showed us on a large map of the world where these countries were. The Rev'd Jenny Dowding then showed a short video of the work being done by 'All You Can' in Burundi and it brought home to the congregation how much help was needed and how we could make a big difference in some of the poorer countries in the world. After the service coffee and biscuits were served and a quiz occupied

the congregation until lunch was ready. This was a 'Bring and Share' lunch and was much enjoyed by nearly 50 members from both of the Methodist churches in Caversham. Perhaps a more progressive style of celebrating harvest but very much appreciated.

AUTUMN FAIR An autumn fair will be held at the Caversham Heights Methodist Church on Saturday 1st November 11.30am to 3pm in aid of the Wyford Riding for the Disabled and the Alexander Devine Children's Hospice Service. Come along and stock up on Christmas decorations and presents.

OUR LADY and ST ANNE'S CHURCH

DEACON MIKE WALKER'S FAREWELL On September 29th, Deacon Mike assisted at his last mass at the church of Our Lady and St Anne. After nine years of ministry as Deacon in the parish, he has moved on to a parish in Guildford.

On Sunday 28th following mass, Julia Feeney spoke of him with



Deacon Mike Walker with a parishioner.

these words: 'He brought comfort to the sick and dying and took Holy Communion to those in need. To many families and individuals he was a source of great comfort and healing in their sorrow. He had a particular rapport with the young, from those who attended the Children's Liturgy during mass to the older adolescents. The Christmas parties for the young ones always saw him in amongst the children, joining in all the fun. He encouraged the parish altar servers and regularly took them to the St Stephen's Guild Mass at St Chad's Cathedral. He arranged many activities for young parishioners including residential weekends at Alton Castle, the Diocesan Youth Centre, always adding a spiritual element to the physical activities. One thing he himself mentioned was the time he spent as a representative of St Anne's on the Churches Together in Caversham. He found this a wonderfully enlightening experience which enabled him to meet and communicate with members of the other local churches.'

Having finished speaking, Julia presented a cheque to Deacon Mike as a gift from the parish and a somewhat tearful Mike expressed his thanks to everyone.

After Mass, all retired to the Cenacle for a splendid buffet. Deacon Mike talked to as many of the parishioners as he possibly could before he finally had to leave.

CONCERT On November 22nd the world famous FRON MALE VOICE CHOIR will be coming to sing at Our Lady and St Anne's church. They will be singing a variety of pieces from their far ranging repertoire. Bar opens 7.00pm, performance will start at 7.30pm. For tickets, at £15 each, call 0118 958 4498 or visit wegottickets.com proceeds to church building fund.

ST JOHNS CHURCH

CHRISTMAS FAIR St John's Church Christmas Fair will be held on Saturday 15 November at 2pm with stalls including super tombola, cakes, books, toys, handicrafts plus a raffle.

SALVATION ARMY CAROL CONCERT

Plans are well in place at the Reading Central Corps of the Salvation Army for our annual Carol Concert at the Hexagon in Reading. The concert will take place on Saturday 29 November at 6.30pm.

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CHURCHES

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

BEATING THE BOUNDS On Sunday 7th September 2014, several members of the parish church of St Andrew's, ranging in age from three weeks to 81 years, set out from St Andrew's Hall in Albert Road led by the vicar, the Revd Nigel Jones. We walked for about three miles at a moderate pace with our sticks and completed the walk in about two and half hours. The route was along Albert Road, Blenheim Road, Hemdean Road and Bugs Bottom to Gravel Hill; then for some inexplicable reason, the boundary cuts across the gardens of properties in Silverthorne Drive and Carlton Road so we had to make a detour to reach Woodcote Road, returning via Highmoor Road past the Methodist Church and back to St Andrews Hall. We were greeted by Regula Adams who had prepared for us a delicious tea with cakes and scones.

The custom of beating the bounds has taken place in a variety of forms in Britain for over 2,000 years. It has roots in many different cultures from across Europe and beyond but in essence involves local inhabitants perambulating their farm, manorial, church or civic boundaries pausing as they pass certain trees, walls and hedges that denote the extent of the boundary to exclaim, pray and ritually beat particular landmarks (or even young boys!) with sticks. The ceremony might also involve the blessing of crops and animals and the inspection of fences.

We have resolved to make this a regular annual event and invite those who attend our monthly Messy Church and other family users of the hall. For this and other events you can visit the parish website - standrewscaversham.org

AUTUMN FAIR St Andrew's Church and St Andrew's Pre-school are hosting an Autumn Fair on Saturday 15 November 2-4pm. It will be a family extravaganza with refreshments, cakes, books, bric a brac, face painting, cakes, games, a raffle, music and more... Come and enjoy the Fair!

ST BARNABAS CHURCH

CHRISTMAS FAIR St Barnabas Church Christmas Fair will be held on Saturday 6th December from 2pm to 4pm. Father Christmas will be in attendance and there will be a chance to buy quality gifts and handicrafts, sample homemade cakes and refreshments or try your luck on our tombola and raffle. Plus other stalls. Entry free with proceeds to our African Charities.

FAMILY TOY SERVICE On Sunday 7th December our Family Toy Service commences at 9.30am and will support the work of Reading Family Aid and Reading Chronicle's Toy & Teens Appeal giving you a chance to donate a gift and 'Put a Smile on the Face of a Child' RFA's motto.

ALPHA AT ST BARNABAS The next Alpha Course at St Barnabas Church will begin in the week commencing 19 January 2015 in the Parish Centre. We will run either on a Wednesday evening or a Thursday morning depending on demand. Each week the session will start with food followed by a DVD on a specific topic and then time for discussion.

Alpha is a practical introduction to the Christian faith for all those interested in finding out more about it. Alpha is for everyone, especially those wanting to investigate Christianity, new Christians, newcomers to the church and those wanting to brush up on the basics. If you are interested in attending, or know of someone who may like to attend, please contact us on 0118 9475744 or 0118 9479708 or at alpha@saintbarnabas.org.uk.

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Jesus' prayer
 Jesus' friends wanted to know more about praying.
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 Jesus answered, "Say: 'Praise you, God. You are very great in every way!'"
 "What else should we say?" asked his friends.
 "Say: 'Please give us the things we need for today.' God will give us what we need," Jesus answered.
 Jesus' friends said, "Is that all we can say to God?"
 "No," smiled Jesus. "We can say all sorts of thing to God. You might want to say, 'We're sorry that we do wrong things and disobey.'"
 "Yes," sighed Jesus' friends. "Do you think God will forgive us when we say sorry?"
 "Always!" agreed Jesus. "And he will help us in everything we do. Ask God, 'Please help us to live for you all through each day.'"
 "Can we pray these things now?" wondered Jesus' friends.
 "Yes, right now," Jesus said.
 "God always listens when we talk to him."
 Luke 11:2-4


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St Andrew's Mother's Union



Bagged up for Food Bank.

In April 2014, we decided to use the Mothers' Union booklet entitled 'Home' to stimulate our Lent reflections. The sessions were well attended and lively with our vicar, Nigel, coming along to the last one to clarify some of the more obscure Biblical texts. During our discussions we became aware that more and more families locally were struggling to find enough money to feed their families and so we decided to collect tins of food to donate to Reading Readifood (a Christian food bank). We also saved coins to raise funds for the M.U. Britain and Ireland Development Fund.

At the end of Lent we had raised £203 for the fund and in July we took over 40 bagged-up meals to the Food Bank. We used the MU recipe cards to help us collect the ingredients for such meals as corned beef hash, vegetable balti, and tuna surprise. There were collections for desserts as well. A laminated recipe card was included with each collection and the coordinator from the Food Bank complimented the Mothers' Union on their excellent initiative which had been very well received by the families to whom they were given.

Reading Gardeners

We have three very interesting and varied topics for the rest of 2014.

On October 29th Duncan Coombs of Pershore College gave a talk on 'Hidcote, a Garden created by Lawrence Johnston'.

On November 12th Marcus Dancer who has a specialist clematis nursery will tell us 'How to grow Clematis Successfully' and there will be clematis for sale.

On November 26th Stephen Griffiths, the Curator of Abbotsbury sub-tropical Garden in Dorset will talk about 'Plant hunting in the National Parks of Chile'.

The year will be rounded off by our Christmas Social on December 10th.

Caversham Allotment Association

The next meeting of the Caversham Allotment Association is on Tuesday 11th November at Church House, Caversham, next to Waitrose. This will be a Gardeners Question Time so bring all your questions along to our two professionals, Geoff Hawkins and Karen Fendley. This promises to be an interesting evening, so do come along, and please take note that Church House now has a lift, so no more struggling up those stairs!. The evening starts at 7.30 and there are refreshments and a raffle. Entrance is free. Contact Carol Wheeler on 0118 947 5802 for further details.

Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club

Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club will present Nick Grounds a National Demonstrator for an evening of spectacular Christmas Flowers entitled 'Seasonal Anticipation' on Wednesday 12th November at 6.30pm for 7.30pm at the Methodist Church Highmoor Road Caversham RG4 7BG. Entrance fee £12 in advance £15 on the door but we advise that you book early to avoid disappointment. Refreshments included. For tickets contact Tricia Toogood 0118-9476811 or Shirley Sexton 0118-9412329

Lions Goring

GOOD NEWS BULLETIN

What a joy it was when young and old visited our stall at Whitchurch village fête and enthusiastically played our table top games. Shown L-R in this photo; Charlie, Jamie and Haydn having fun whilst helping us to raise small amounts of money for charity.

Earlier in August we also hosted a group of children from Chernobyl on a visit to Rushall Farm near Bradfield for an activity day and a picnic along with much welcome help from members of Henley Lions Club.

For more action and fun support our Annual Woodcote 10k Road Run on Sunday 11th January 2015.



Caversham WI

The September meeting proved a 'puzzle' for members as Mr Anderson brought part of his large collection of odd items for us to guess what they were. Several of them were medical items which Mr Anderson offered to demonstrate but there were no takers! A very enjoyable evening and the President's watching of antique programmes helped her to win the quiz.

The competition for a family heirloom was won by Monica McMaster with Mandy Scofield and Romagne Flight as runners up.

One pleasing event was the installation of a lift at Church House.

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Caversham Heights Society

The first meeting of the new season got off to a fantastic start on 17th September with an enthusiastic and amazing talk by Corrie Starling, the Miller of Mapledurham Mill. Entitled 'Life at the Mill' Corrie's talk started by giving a brief history of Mapledurham House since its creation in 1492 until the present day, as well as its unusual place in the history of stately homes. One of these is the place of the mill, mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and now the oldest, and only, commercial working mill on the River Thames, though the present mill only dates back to the 1640s. Another unusual feature is that the house has belonged to the same Roman Catholic family and its descendants, starting with the Blounts and continuing to the Eyston's, the current owners. In 1613 six almshouses were opened for the local poor. They are still a distinguishing part of the village. Both family and house suffered greatly during the Civil War when the Royalists were defeated by Oliver Cromwell's Parliamentarians and during the Siege of Reading many of its treasures were looted, though the family were allowed to keep the land. Because of financial difficulties many windows were covered in when the Window Tax was introduced during the eighteenth century. These are still visible today.

Mapledurham has always been a working farm, and the milk from its 600 head of cattle is used to supply Marks and Spencer. There have always been financial struggles. To offset these the Estate has branched out into offering a variety of activities and events throughout the year. These range from craft fairs and battle re-enactments to allowing the estate to be used for film making – the most memorable being 'The Eagle has Landed' [1976] as well as numerous television dramas such as Midsomer Murders, Morse and Miss Marple. The money raised from some of these activities has been used to refurbish the mill which is increasingly used to help the estate's revenue flow. Apparently Mapledurham Mill is one of the most painted and copied buildings in the country. It fell into disrepair during the 1940s to the 1970s but since then it has been slowly repaired and from 2012 it has been managed by the present miller to see if it could become a commercial proposition. Slowly and painstakingly it is being lovingly restored to what it would have looked like 200 years ago. The wooden water wheel has been restored as have the grinding stones and a new screw thread turbine capable of generating 100,000 watts of electricity a year has been installed. It does not harm fish or wildlife on the river and provides enough electricity for Mapledurham House as well as some to the National Grid. It is estimated to have paid for itself within about ten years. The only other similar turbines are on the Thames at Windsor to provide electricity to Windsor Castle.

The last visit of the Society in September was to the SS Great Britain in Bristol Docks and to nearby Tyntesfield House and Gardens, magnificent examples of Victorian extravaganza at their best, now managed by the National Trust. All are well worth a visit.

New members are always welcome. Please contact Jill Hodges on 559 5307 or look at www.cav-hts-socfsnet.co.uk

Chazey WI

The Fine Art of Wining and Dining was a slightly enigmatic subject for our September meeting at Chazey WI. Graham Loxton-Best, a former reviewer for 'Which' magazine, chatted about his career as a secret diner and gave us lots of tips about service and presentation. He has a particular interest in the presentation of wines, and gave some amusing advice about the benefits of drinking champagne. After taking questions he was given a vote of thanks for an interesting talk.

Afterwards our President, Ann Knee-Robinson, gave us all the WI news locally and at county level, and reminded members about some of the events the county Federation have planned this Autumn.

Chazey WI meet on the first Tuesday of every month (except August), 7.30 for 7.45pm at Caversham Heights Methodist Church. If you would like to come along we would be happy to give you a warm welcome.

Rosehill WI

In August we had a get together with a cream tea and some of our members entertained us with poetry. Walks were planned for Theale, Englefield and Upper Basildon.

In September, we were greeted by our president Margaret Pyle on a lovely late summer's afternoon. We were very pleased to see Margaret looking so well following her knee operation in August, and hope she continues to make good progress.

The walks for September were at Cookham, and California Country Park.

Margaret then went on to say that Doreen Mann is moving away from the area to be nearer her daughter and thanked her for her many years' service, serving on the committee, arranging walks, sick visiting and birthday buttonholes. We will miss you, Doreen, and wish you luck for the future. We have two other members who are unwell, Sue Hurneyman and Daphne Walker, and wish them both a speedy recovery.

The talk was by John Harrison entitled 'Brickwork – A History All Around Us' and with the use of projected slides and a selection of bricks he was able to show us all the different ways that brick walls are constructed.

Our Bring and Buy continues to be a success, also the collection of milk bottle tops. The knitters keep the needles going for the babies of Buscot Ward. Many thanks to all who contributed.

We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at St Barnabas Church Hall at 2.00 pm, so why not come along and see what we get up to, you might be pleasantly surprised!!!

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