

EX LIBRIS

SUMMER IN CAVERSHAM

As I write this, towards the end of July, the school holidays are beginning, Pottermania has swept the country and so too have the rains. In Caversham we have been fairly fortunate and so far escaped the worst of the dreadful nightmares we have seen on our TV screens.

The weather was perfect for St Peter's annual summer fete, the Real Ale festival devotees battled their way across a flooded entrance and the Shakespeare in the Abbey Ruins, escaped relatively unscathed. Several Caversham people took part in this year's production of 'Midsummer Night's Dream.' The show went on, even on the day of the great downpour. And for the record it didn't rain that evening. A big 'thank you' for all your work!

The Kingsbury's leaving party was a memorable and enjoyable occasion, a relaxing and informal opportunity to catch up with so many different people. The large number of those present, from all sections of our community, reflected the great work Richard and Angela have done among us. Again a big 'thank you'!

There were many other fetes and events that attracted great support despite the appalling weather. I think the people of Caversham, both those who run them and all who go along to support them, should be congratulated. It is the accumulation of these small, and sometimes not so small, gatherings that gives life to our community. Long may they continue! Let's hope this year's Caversham Festival is a success. Mark it in your diaries: Saturday 8th September.

CADRA RUBY ANNIVERSARY

Not surprisingly this leads me on to mentioning CADRA's ruby anniversary celebrations. CADRA has been going for 40 years. It not only keeps a watching brief on transport, planning licensing and policing in our village, it works with the other resident associations north of the river to promote social cohesion and well-being across the whole of our community. Do keep the evening of Wednesday 17 October free and come along to Caversham Primary School, 7.30 - 9.30. There will an exhibition of CADRA's work; past present and future, many local groups will also be present including other residents associations. There will exhibitions around the hall of many of the organisation working around Caversham. There will also be a room set aside for a 15 min or so slide show. Here is an opportunity to find out what is going on in the community, what plans the Council has for our roads and public transport, what the police are doing about making Caversham safer and what many voluntary organisations are doing to improve our village.

CAVERSHAM COURT REFURBISHMENT.

One very significant difference everyone will notice will be the changes to Caversham Court. Perhaps you have been to one of the many meetings to discuss what is planned. It is controversial, as any major change is bound to be. The proposals have generated a keen debate which itself shows a healthy interest in what is going on around us. Whatever the end product, my concern is that it is well looked after and does indeed become a safe and relaxing place for all the people of Caversham. My worries were increased earlier this month. I have mentioned the Abbey Ruins play. On our way to one of the performances my wife walked through the newly refurbished Forbury Gardens. There on the one of the patches of grass was a group of

people ranging I'd say from their mid 20s along with small children and teenagers. All around was a mass of litter, bottles and general mess. I do hope this sort of anti social behaviour will not be tolerated in Caversham Court. It is certainly one of the questions I shall be asking on the evening October 17th.

AN ART AND CRAFTS SHOP FOR CAVERSHAM

Over the years Caversham has had various arts and crafts shops. I regret to say that none has survived, so I hope the latest venture, called 'AURA', succeeds. This will depend on a couple of factors, not least the willingness of Caversham people to support it. Here is some information about the business provided by the proprietors of AURA .

'Aura' is a new Arts and Craft shop open in Paddock Road Industrial Estate, Caversham, just off Star Road. The retail outlet was opened on April 21st and stocks craft lines such as artists materials, acrylic paints, oil paints and water colours along with Gouache paints, canvasses, brushes and easels. Also in stock are card-making products, and scrapbooks, painting by numbers and a Kids Kraft Korner. The arts and crafts side of 'Aura' is run by Craigs mum, Rachel, and holds classes for card makers on Fridays between 10am-12noon where people can gather and make cards and have a cup of tea and various tutor and demonstration classes are being held also. Times of opening are Monday – Friday 9.00am-5.30pm. Aura has also been supplying office stationery for 9 years prior to expanding into the arts and crafts world.

The owner of the company, Craig Bilsby, can boast of four generations connection with Caversham, His great grandfather was a chimney sweep back in the early 1900's with many affluent clients such as Mapledurham House! His grandmother was born in Oxford Street, Caversham and lived in the same house for over 58 years and then moved to Luscombe Close. His mother, Rachel, grew up in Caversham and married and lived there when Craig was born. Craig went to Thameside School, (where incidentally both his grandmother, mother and father had gone as children to the same school!) and then to Highdown School. Craig

employs 6 members of staff, including his mum and dad, so they really are a family run business.

You may have seen the roundabout, junction of Vastern Road and Caversham Road, which is sponsored by Aura.

Aura is based at Unit 2 Paddock Road Industrial Estate, Caversham, RG4 5BY, Craig and Rachel would be pleased to see you so pop in and have a look around. On the occasion I popped in Rachel was very helpful indeed. She made a telephone call to check out an item I was interested in and said how pleased they would be to order in anything they could trace not in stock. The telephone number is 0118 9477500.