



THE INDEPENDENT

# MILL ROAD NEWS

## Nº18 AUTUMN 2017

## Mill Road Our children



**A**s Mill Road is a mix of diverse communities our kids forge medleys of contrasting first memories as they leave babyhood and become kids. For those with two working parents getting to know the world may well involve days spent at one of our local day nurseries. This could be Ace Nursery in Parkside; or the Brunswick Nursery School, close to Matthews Piece, which has a global intake with an above average number of children speaking English as an additional language; or it could be the Patacake in Malta Road which is lauded by many local families.

But for children with at least one non-working parent, an au pair, a child-minder, or a grandparent looking after them, visits to Romsey Mill mother and baby groups are a first step. Then from two years onwards independence, sociability, friendships and intellect can get a real boost from attending Ross Street's Playgroup. At Ross Street kids get an opportunity to play outside, which is important for those without gardens and can enjoy creative and messy play. My grandchildren attended this playgroup for two years and I was really impressed by the thoughtful care and imaginative activities which they enjoyed.

**Ideas about pre-school provision are hot politics at the moment.** For several years now there have been schemes to try to subsidize the cost of childcare. From August 2017 there was an initiative to increase this to 30 hours. My understanding is that the administration of this scheme has been fraught, it involved parents having to apply to the HMRC childcare services for 'eligibility codes' to

allow them to participate. These codes were not forthcoming and temporary codes needed to be applied for within a very small window of time. This of course means that a single parent without stable internet access and little money for telephone bills is put at a disadvantage in accessing a benefit which may well have been designed to help.

It is of course important not to criticise policies which are intended to benefit those who do not enjoy much privilege and the lack of good affordable childcare can be a real burden for many families wishing to become economically active. What is also important however, is that such long-established and well-performing facilities as our own Romsey Mill and Ross Street Playgroup are not closed to pay for these schemes. **Right now the future of Romsey Mill and Ross Street Playgroup is under threat.** The proposal is that they will be moved to a site in Brookfields and most certainly diminished in quality as they will be crammed into limited space with other services which are incompatible with the needs of children. If this happens, future Mill Road children will have childhoods which are less privileged than those previously enjoyed by their older siblings and parents.

– Neil Perry, Chair of Mill Road Bridges and CEO of Romsey Mill



**15 October – 15 December, anytime**

### Online Art Sale

Cambridge Islamic Art helps raise funds and awareness of the proposed purpose-built eco-mosque on Mill Road. It is now building on the success of its first international online sale to showcase more rare and beautiful artwork in a second sale.

[info@cambridgeislamicart.com](mailto:info@cambridgeislamicart.com)

**Friday 17 November, 10:00 – 15:00**

### The Edge Café's 1st birthday celebration

Please drop in for free tea, coffee & cake.

**The Edge Café, 351 Mill Rd CB1 3DF**

[www.theedgecafe.cambridge.com/events](http://www.theedgecafe.cambridge.com/events)

**Tuesday 21 November 19:30**

**Amnesty Bookclub** discussing Hisham Matar's prize-winning "The Return". The Amnesty Bookclub meets on the third Tuesday of every month at the Six Bells. No fixed membership, very informal. Everyone is welcome!

**Six Bells Pub, 11 Covent Garden, CB1 2HS**

[www.sixbellspub.co.uk](http://www.sixbellspub.co.uk)

**Sunday 19 November, 14:00 – 16:00 St Philip's Church, 185 Mill Road**

**Sunday 26 November, 14:00 – 16:00 Radegund Hall, Coleridge School, Radegund Road**  
**Railway Singers Mass Choir Rehearsals (community and school singers forming choir)**



Historyworks invite you to help mark the Railways coming to Cambridge in 1845, a transformative historical moment. Come and sing in a series of railway-themed singing and movement sessions in Romsey. Gospel and soul, folk songs and much more!

Free, attend one session, a few, or all... The Railway Singers will then perform at the Mill Road Winter Fair on Saturday 2 December, and sing at the 'Romsey R' sculpture unveiling.

**Saturday 2 December, Rehearsal 10:00 – 10:45**

**then Concert 11:00 – 12:00 St Philip's Church**

**Final Railway Singers Performance at Mill Road Winter Fair** Then parade with us for four blocks to the "Romsey R" unveiling, the new public sculpture that celebrates this unique railway history!

[www.creatingmycambridge.com](http://www.creatingmycambridge.com)

**Saturday 2 December 10:30 – 16:30**

### MILL ROAD WINTER FAIR!

Food stalls, children's activities, dancers, parade of local groups and musicians; much more!

[www.millroadwinterfair.org](http://www.millroadwinterfair.org)



**Tuesday 5 December 14:00 – 16:00**

**Romsey Hub**, monthly get-together for over-65s on the first Tuesday of every month.

**Ross Street Community Centre**

[www.cambridge.gov.uk/ross-street-community-centre](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/ross-street-community-centre)



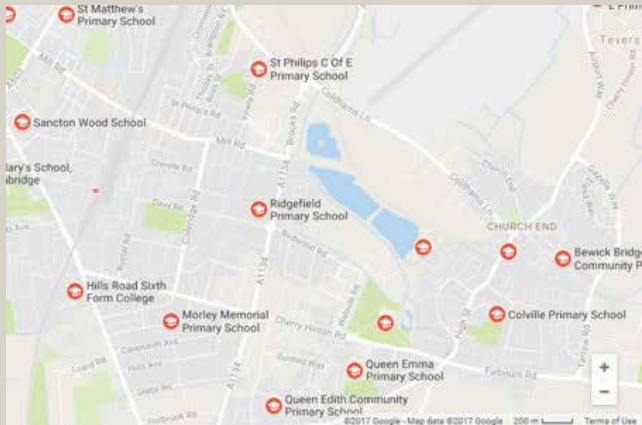


**Mill Road Bridges** is a constituted community group of 200+ members with a steering committee of local volunteers. We aim to promote the interests and rich cultural diversity of



Mill Road and its surroundings, and to engage with local residents, community groups, and traders in Petersfield and Romsey. We share information and help build community spirit through Mill Road News, [mill-road.com](http://mill-road.com), and Mill Road Meetup. [info@mill-road.com](mailto:info@mill-road.com)

# A CHILD'S LIFE ON MILL ROAD



(We are not counting Colville or Abbey Meadows or St Pauls as being local to Mill Road even though some Mill Road children do attend them)

	Places available for 4 to 5 year olds	Appeals for not being allocated a place	Preferences, which include an aggregate of 1st 2nd and 3rd choices
St Matthew's	90	14	154
Queen Emma	60	0	74
Queen Edith	60	0	60
St Philips	45	0	58
Morley Memorial	60	0	59
Ridgefield	30	2	49
St Albans RC (Now listed online as "closed")	30	0	45

**M**orley is the only school that has a deficit of takers to the number of places available. At first glance it looks as if the area is woefully short of school places. But some arithmetic is needed

We have seven local primary schools, most of which are named after saints or Saxon queens. The popularity of these schools varies greatly as the figures below show.

to find out how many kids there actually are coming up for school this September. If you add all the preferences you reach a total of 499 which needs to be divided by 3 as each applicant has 3 choices. This



Hi there! I'm Becky Lockyer from Willis Road in Cambridge and I'm on a mission. Over the next few years, I have set myself a challenge to raise £5000 to save 50 acres of Rainforest for my favourite charity, the World Land Trust. I am setting myself crazy challenges to reach this target, so keep an eye on the articles in here to find out what I'm getting up to!  
On May 6th, I organised a Charity Ceilidh at St Pauls Church in Cambridge, which was

really successful! 120 people attended and I raised £837, which is over 16% of my £5000 target! Thank you to all of you who came along and supported me on the evening, it was great to see so many of you there.  
I have organised **Ceilidh Number 2** for **November 25th back at St Pauls Church** again! The incredible Cambridge University Ceilidh Band will be playing for us and we will have a drinks bar, a raffle and much more!

Tickets are £10 for an advance ticket (£12 on the door) and include a free glass of bubbly in our sparkling drinks reception. Come and join us for an unforgettable evening of country dancing, music and laughter!  
Please visit my facebook page: "worldlandtrustceilidhcambridge#2!!", or email [becky.lockyer21@gmail.com](mailto:becky.lockyer21@gmail.com) for event tickets. It would be great to see you there!

gives us the uncomfortable answer of 166.333. The third of a child (the 0.333) is of course explained by some parents not using all their choices and others choosing at least one school a little further away. We can however be sure that in January 2017 there were at least 168 kids in need of a reception class place close to home for this academic year and that a great number of them wanted to go to St Matthew's.

### Why is St Matthew's so popular?

Maybe because it has achieved good results in Standard Attainment Test for quite some while. It is, however, close to a busy polluted road and has had to build upward, stacking classroom upon classroom, in a multi-storey block and losing playground space.

We wanted St Matthew's for our child but were allocated Morley. Our appeal was unsuccessful so the little one started at Morley this September. Two days into term we were pleased our appeal had failed. Morley's motto is "making learning irresistible" and this is not empty spin, they really do seem to achieve it. They have a garden exclusively for the reception children and all

parts of the school are tucked away in a quiet, relatively unpolluted, side road. A meet-other-families picnic was organised in the third week of term after the children had settled in. Possibly it is Mill Road's unsung treasure.

At the time of writing we were waiting for further information from Cambridgeshire County Council on the following questions:

- 1 How many Reception aged children are there in the Mill Road area?
- 2 What is the ratio of places to existing infant population?
- 3 What is the projected number of infants and other school children in three years hence, and will there be enough places for them?
- 4 How can more places be created?
- 5 How many appeals cited concern about their children needing to walk to school along busy polluted roads?

Hopefully we will be able to post answers to these questions online at [www.mill-road.com](http://www.mill-road.com)

– Charlotte de Blois, Mill Road

# Where we play



**F**or many Mill Road kids the only outdoor play available is a trip to the local play area. These facilities become important to our local children long before they can walk. The most popular are listed below along with some of their "aka" names. Every family, if not every child has a personal nickname for these places as they are so important to those who use them.

- 1 Mill Road Cemetery: "Stones for People Park" "The Bird Place" "The Dog Park"
- 2 Hector Pieterseon Play Area: "The Double Swing Park",

- 3 "The Chalk Park"
- 4 Ainsworth Street Play Area: "The Giraffe Park", "The Dino-saur Park"
- 5 Romsey Town Recreation Ground: "The Playgroup Park", "The Picnic Park"
- 6 Matthew's Pieces: "The Litter Park"
- 7 Flower Street: "The Little Park" "The Tucked Away Park"
- 8 Petersfield: "The Tramp Park", "The Wolf Park", "The Pigeon Park"
- 9 Donkey Common: "The Skateboard Park", "The Swimming Pool Park"

### What makes a good play area?

Six-year-old Nejem considers 'The Stones for People Park' to be the

best place to play. I asked him why the cemetery was top of his list but he was baffled, why should I bother to question the obvious? He just said emphatically, "it is fun". Therefore it was left up to me to work out where the fun comes from and here are my guesses, gathered from comments that Nejem made.

**Trees:** There are many 'climbers' in the cemetery. Some present a challenge and need years of perseverance to achieve, while others are immediately accessible. Unlike standard play equipment kids find their challenges with something that grows, changes with the seasons and is not fun predesigned by an adult.

**Hiding Places:** Windy paths and bramble thickets not to mention

gravestones. All these are essential for a good game of hide-and-seek or aliens and earthlings.

**Animals:** When you get fed up with the other kids there are usually dogs to talk to, also squirrels, cats and different birds including all the shy birds that hide in the bushes by the entrance and sing. There are scary big birds as well and the animals that they like to eat, rats, mice, slugs, spiders and butterflies are there too.

**A Running Track:** The circular path around the foundations of the old chapel makes an excellent running track. It can be good for racing on bicycles too. There are benches for the parents to sit on and when the grown-ups are feeling comfortable they usually make less fuss and let the kids get on with their fun without interfering.

**Muddy Puddles:** After rain there are a great variety of puddles, some

are usually really good 'splashers'.

**Things to Climb On:** Lots of stones, wood and walls.

**Things to Read:** Plenty of gravestones and you can read a little bit about the people who were alive in the olden days. You find out that then lots of people died really young and you have to look hard to find anybody who is as old as your Granddad.

**Things to Pick:** Cherries in mid-summer and blackberries in the late summer.

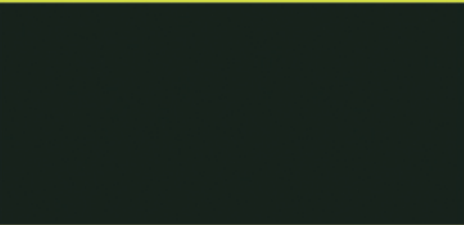
Fifteen-month-old Matthew is not talking yet but appears to favour play areas with swings. This includes all the listed sites except the cemetery.

Eleven-year-old Maya likes the **Hector Pieterseon Play Area**, Gwydir Street. It has giant sticks of chalk tucked into a neat waterproof tube and a large blackboard which allows her to do art work on a grand scale and a swing that can be used by two people at once.



Bottom of everybody's list is the little play area by the car park in Great Eastern Street. Nobody wants to play in a car park next a busy road (*not to mention risking run-ins with drug users and drinkers – Ed.*) Possibly that piece of land could be put to better use?

– Charlotte de Blois, Mill Road  
Photos: Daisy Zoll, Ann Sinnott



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Andy Ahmad-Cooke  
Recovery Coordinator  
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## The Baby Row in Mill Road Cemetery

CFHS recently transcribed the grave register for the parish of St Paul's in Mill Road Cemetery. I was asked to photograph the original book and check the transcription. One of the first things I noticed was that the sexton had designated a row for infants. He called it "The Baby Row".

There are at least 12 babies in this row, one stillborn and some only a few hours or days old. The graves span the western path just behind the lodge.

Only four graves have a visible marker: Frances William Lardi, Dorothy Rosemary Hilda Marshall, Guy Tremeneere Passingham and Michael Allen Brookfield (pictured, right).

More information at [www.mill-roadcemetery.org.uk](http://www.mill-roadcemetery.org.uk)

— Mary Naylor



## Mantel Madness

My naughty big sisters used to poke their fingers in the gas mantels at Nana's house in Kingston Street. I don't know if she ever worked out why the mantels broke. Nana did not get electricity until after the war.



— Name withheld to protect the guilty

## Calling all Nans, Grans, etc...

Do you wish you could spend more time with your grandchildren? Do they live far away or have they reached a stage where they don't need or want to be entertained or looked after?

On the other hand, do you have regular contact – and responsibilities? You might love seeing your grandchildren develop week by

week and enjoy the excuse to play and have fun. You may at times, however, be struggling a bit with child care, finding it exhausting and all-consuming. Do you have your own rules or do you try to adapt to those set by the parents?

We are thinking of arranging a time for grandparents to meet informally, say for coffee once a month. You'd be welcome to bring your charges or not, as suits your commitments and your mood. You could enjoy meeting others in similar or contrasting situations and exchange experiences and tips. Alternatively you could just relax for a while and talk about something else!

Interested? Please email Sarah [saraholiver99@hotmail.com](mailto:saraholiver99@hotmail.com) or Charlotte [charliedeblois@hotmail.com](mailto:charliedeblois@hotmail.com)

## Help kids and Romsey Mill this Christmas

Romsey Mill Christmas cards are available at the Romsey Mill Centre and the Romsey Mill Charity Shop. Five lovely designs to choose from! Message inside: "Merry Christmas



and a Happy New Year". Pack of 10 cards (one design) with envelopes: £3.99 (14.5 cm x 14.5 cm). Sold in aid of Romsey Mill.

## Honourable tradition of kids' graffiti in Mill Road

Were you one of the many children who looked forward to the children's shows at The Kinema or Playhouse? Maybe you dug your pennies into the side wall of what is now the Sally Ann or scrawled your initials there?

Read more about both places on [www.capturingcambridge.org/mill-road-area/mill-road/44amillroad](http://www.capturingcambridge.org/mill-road-area/mill-road/44amillroad) or [www.capturingcambridge.org/mill-road-area/mill-road/kinema](http://www.capturingcambridge.org/mill-road-area/mill-road/kinema).

Whilst visiting the site do check out the childhood memories of the



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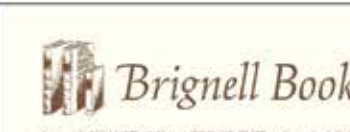


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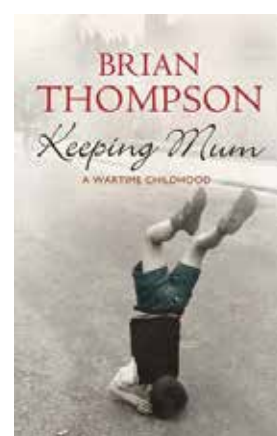
PHOTOGRAPH THANKS TO SIMON MIDDLETON

many people who allowed themselves to be interviewed by the Mill Road History Project (now Mill Road History Society). Just click on [www.capturingcambridge.org/projects/mill-road](http://www.capturingcambridge.org/projects/mill-road) and browse the familiar faces you'll see there.

Mill Road History Society thanks everyone who volunteered to take part. If you have a story to tell do get in touch by emailing [millroadhistory@gmail.com](mailto:millroadhistory@gmail.com).

– Caro Wilson for Mill Road History Society, [www.millroadhistory.org.uk](http://www.millroadhistory.org.uk)

## Mill Road must-read



*Keeping Mum: A Wartime Childhood*  
Brian Thompson  
Mum and Dad – Squibs and Bert – were a complete mystery to Brian Thompson as he grew up in Cambridge and London during the 1940s. His mother danced with the Yanks all night and slept under a fake fur coat all day, and when his father bothered to come home he resolutely discouraged Brian in everything.

This is one of the very best books about childhood I've ever read. Brian Thompson writes about the most appalling things with humour, insight and compassion. AND it all happens just off Mill Road. Don't just take my word for it, read the reviews on Amazon. Also available on Abebooks.co.uk.

– Caro Wilson

## Serious partying for India

Mill Road celebrated Indian Independence on 9 September with a rich day of talks, music, exhibitions, storytelling and delicious food made by Raj and Amrik Gharu, from Lally's Newsagent.

This special event was organised by the Mill Road History Society in partnership with India Unboxed, Cambridge University Museums and Botanic Garden, and the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum. It was part of the Open Cambridge weekend, and held at the Cambridgeshire Deaf Association on Romsey Terrace.

– Photo captions courtesy of Ed Jenkins, Simon Middleton, Lucy Walker and Richard Wood



Dancer from Sanskruti School of Dance

## Street Play: A Great Way to Get Children More Active

Are you interested in street play as a way for children to have happier, healthier lives, and to help foster stronger, more connected communities? The Playing Out model lets residents create their own temporary play street, with traffic diverted for an hour or two every week or month, giving children the freedom to use the space outside their own front door.

We'd love to hear from you if you've got something to share about street play in your area. You can join our LinkedIn group, "Street Play", to connect with others across the UK.

For help, support, and information about implementing street play in your local authority area contact [daniella@playingout.net](mailto:daniella@playingout.net).

– Daniella Radice,  
Project Manager, Playing Out  
[www.playingout.net](http://www.playingout.net)



Bollywood dancing with Vidya Math from Roshni Margi Dance School



Ramayana storytelling (with visiting cat)



Amrik and Raj Gharu (Lally's Newsagent) provided the food



Dadhi Chudali, Romsey Postmaster, reciting his poem

**THE MILL ROAD NEWS** is published by the non-profit organisation **Mill Road Bridges**, c/o The Six Bells Pub, 11 Covent Garden, Cambridge UK. Mill Road Bridges is a volunteer community group serving Petersfield & Romsey wards in Cambridge.

We welcome your submissions on any topic about the Mill Road community. Send images and short articles to [info@mill-road.com](mailto:info@mill-road.com). Please note that articles cannot favour a political party, they should not be of a purely commercial nature, and we reserve the right to edit, refuse, or postpone use of submissions.

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MRB logo: Sam Motherwell, Gwydir Street  
You may download this Newsletter at [mill-road.com](http://mill-road.com).

Don't forget if you want to find out more about what's going on in and around Mill Road, watch Mill Road TV– a YouTube and Facebook channel. With over 30,000 channel views and over 80 videos in 22 months we are growing continually. This is a community 'platform' project so please get in touch if you have any time to help or would like to share your news via video, and please remember to 'like' and 'share'.

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# Rants & Raves

Letters and opinions can be addressed to [info@mill-road.com](mailto:info@mill-road.com)

**Dear Editor:** The interview with Sgt. Ian Wood in your last edition was very interesting. We heard yet again how Mill Road traders need to unload stock on the pavement. As a local resident I disagree, surely Mill Road traders need to encourage customers to come into their shops to buy things! There is nothing more off-putting than shopping on a street where vans and cars mount the pavement at speed. Come on traders, respect your customers' safety. How about canvassing the County Council to have the double yellow lines removed? Let the through traffic find more appropriate routes. Canvass for improved West East

road links both North of Cambridge and South of Cambridge. We are told that there is money for infrastructure surely Mill Road should benefit from this cash. Let the through-traffic and lorries find another way of getting from A to B!

– Nicola Terweil



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Receive emails about community events! Join Mill Road Bridges on [www.mill-road.com](http://www.mill-road.com) or email [secretary@mill-road.com](mailto:secretary@mill-road.com). Mill Road Bridges is open to anyone with an interest in Mill Road.



# MILL ROAD NEWS THANKS....

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