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BRIDGE

JANUARY  
1984

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No 230

# COLLECTING CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CARDS

By Winifred Annable

ONE OF the familiar sights at Christmas is the Christmas card. The first Christmas card was designed in 1843, at the suggestion of Sir Henry Cole, a Victorian gentleman, who, in later years, was involved in the Great Exhibition of 1851, and the founder of what is now the Victoria and Albert Museum. The price of the first card was one shilling each (a costly novelty) and only one thousand were sold.

Cole's card started the fashion and many were later privately printed. One printer — Lambert of Newcastle — marketed cards for general trade in 1847.

Why wasn't the Christmas card invented much earlier? The custom of sending a token gift dates from the times of the ancient Egyptians. In the monastic houses of Britain, precise and beautifully ornamented texts were exchanged at holy days and important church festivals.

It was the introduction of the penny post and post office reform by Sir Rowland Hill in 1840 that enabled ordinary people to send letters and cards anywhere in Great Britain for one penny. Thomas De La Rue from Guernsey had a publishing firm. It was he who discovered how to make the shiny white surface card, adopted universally for the production of Christmas cards.

The firm of Raphael Tuck (manufacturing cards at the present time) began production in 1871. The firm built up the trade by holding competitions with prizes for winning designs. Many well known artists of the Victorian era began to design for the cards. The final accolade of success came with the patronage of Queen Victoria. Her Majesty bought several hundred cards to send to friends at Windsor and Osborne.

The term "Christmas card" originally applied to post cards, not the double sided cards sold today. Valentine cards had been popular with the young people long before the Christmas card became a proposition and, in fact, the earlier cards looked rather like Valentines as they both had similar lace paper edges. The earlier cards referred to New Year only, or mentioned "festive season".

## Lack of Sensitivity

Early cards were not conspicuous for their sensitivity, and sometimes showed unseemly and alarming pictures, with poor verses or wishes. In 1879 a card showed a picture of a cat after a bird, with the caption "If one finds pleasure in a song, to eat the singer would be wrong."

What part does the Christmas card play in the religious celebrations? Attendance at church in Victorian days was part of the Christmas Day ritual so although feasting and festivities were well represented on the cards, so also were the Nativity, with the pictures of the birth of Christ, the Shepherds and the Wise Men. Verses from the Bible or popular carols helped to keep alive the true significance of Christmas.

I have made a collection of these early Christmas cards, and New Year Greetings, and I am always on the look out for interesting cards on the subject, for my collection. One of the oldest cards in my collection is dated 1884. It shows the traditional Father Christmas alighting with his sack from a railway carriage. Two little girls in period costume are holding out their arms to him. In the background is a magnificent steam train, with smoke billowing from a very tall chimney. The signals in the distance are typical of the earliest type of signalling system — "signal batons" with red and green oil lamps.

## Death

If the Christmas cards were about the birth of Christ, the recipient of a Victorian card was also reminded of his death. A small example of this is a card of about 1888. The card is dominated by a huge silver cross. Christmas roses are round the base, and two bees are winging their way over the words "With true Christmas Greeting". A rather dark picture of irises adorns another card, and is entitled Christmas Comfort. It reads "Christmas thought for the sufferer, weary and worn with pain, Jesus is born to bear thy cross, that thou his crown may gain". The words are by Cecilia Havergal, a prolific

Victorian poetess.

In contrast, Raphael Tuck published a card in the early 1900's of a tranquil scene, most unseasonable, but showing the costume of the day. It is by a lake side with a tent in the distance, a small boat is moored nearby and two youths in boating costume, supply the usual Christmas greeting.

Seasonal pictures were, however, available in profusion, such as the one in my collection of two robins in the snow. They have pulled a cracker, and one robin is wearing a paper hat. The other robin is holding a broken half of the cracker. The caption reads "May merriment and gladness rule within your hearts, this time of Yule" (dated 1908).

The beautiful silk embroidered card became popular in the mid-1900's, and I have an example of this craftsmanship. This type of card is not often associated with Christmas, so it is unusual. It portrays, in silk on fine muslin, a house with smoking chimneys, a dove bearing holly and mistletoe combined, and in red letters "I am the Christmas Kiss".

## New Year

New Year's Cards were the forerunners of Christmas cards and were in fancy and elaborate shapes. Greetings were on cards which were shaped like horseshoes, artists' palettes, board and easel, full and half moons and many other novel shapes. My favourite from this period is a card of 1890 and is a picture of two weird looking aircraft with spoked wheels and open cockpit. The message reads "My thoughts are airships flying fast upon a journey pleasant. All happiness be yours to last, and love be ever present." Large number cards presenting the date, liberally sprinkled with good luck tokens were also fashionable. Cards looking like cheques were made for the middle class and aristocracy — working class people didn't possess such things. I have a novelty card from that period. It is inscribed "The Bank of Good old Times, Old Chums' Branch", made out to a Miss Owens, to be paid the sum of One Year of Happy Days with the £ sign and the figures "365". I wonder what Miss Owens thought about it, as the card is decorated with a man playing billiards, two bottles of wine and three drunken men singing in the snow!!

## Postcard Club

Collecting postcards is interesting and informative. Customs, dress, transport, attitudes to life, town and country scenes, political organisations, sentiment and religion can all be seen in colourful detail. We can get a glimpse of what life was like in those far off days.

I belong to Reading, and District Cigarette Card and Postcard Club, which meets at Loddon Hall, Twyford the last Monday in the month. The club was formed about thirty years ago by several gentlemen getting together to talk about their collection of cigarette cards. The club flourished and postcards were introduced. Under the guidance of Mr Romans of Henley, our president, and Mr Husey of Swallowfield, and the committee, we have a happy and friendly club, meeting to discuss our cards with like minded people, and to sell them. Many more ladies have recently become interested in this fascinating subject, and to represent their interest, I have had the honour of being elected the first woman on the committee.

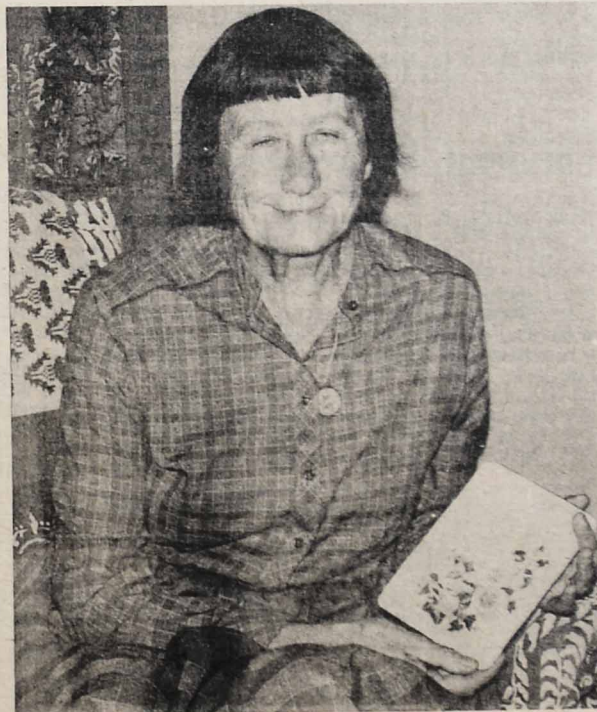
If you would like to know more please ring our Secretary, Mr M. Tubb (Twyford 340663) or myself (Reading 472596) for further information.

## Bibliography

"The Englishman's Christmas" by J. A. R. Pimlott.  
"Greetings from Christmas Past" by B. Hillier.  
"Christmas" published by Blandford Press.



■ Mrs Winifred Annable with one of her collection of cards, a Christmas card made in 1886 — PETER SEAR



D/EX 1758/21/1



# TALKING POINT

By RICHARD KINGSBURY ST PETER'S CHURCH

## CAVALIERS IN CAVERSHAM!

THIS IS my first chance to say "Hello Caversham and thank you for your welcome!"

But who is this strange, shadowy figure occupying the Rectory? First, I cannot and would not try to be like my predecessor! John Grimwade gave Caversham a uniquely distinguished ministry. I ask for no more than you gave him — freedom to be, and love for an individual as himself.

Providence, fortune — however you describe God at work — has been good to me. A child of a country vicarage, I did not seriously consider ordination until after working in advertising for a few years in London. At her wedding in Wensleydale, Angela assumed she was marrying a "budding wordsmith". Halting her own career in market research and with her scientific training in mothballs, she is the one who has made sacrifices to enable me to follow my chosen course. I hope I'll always be grateful for this.

### Excitement

Ordained in Newcastle, after two happy Tyneside curacies and with two Georgie children (Mark and Anna), we moved back to London, where I worked as Chaplain of King's College 1970-75. A super little house in Westminster went with the job. From our bedroom window we could watch Duncan Sandys having breakfast. Then to Hungerford for eight delightful years, during which Eleanor and John were born. Thence to Caversham, with a mixture of excitement and apprehension!

Finding a hardworking and experienced clergy team here and with so many ongoing church activities smoothly running, I've realised it will take longer than expected to "settle in" and I have to temper my normal impatience, preferring to take things in my stride, quietly looking, listening and learning week by week. If you think your new Rector has sunk without trace, be assured — I'm still here and will surface in due course! The inevitable difficulties in adjusting to a "new" parish are compounded by the commitment I bring with me until the end of 1984, as a member of the Parole Board of England and Wales. If at present all you see of me is in the early mornings, scampering like the White Rabbit over Caversham Bridge towards the station, I'm not fleeing the country!

I don't have "policies" — but I do see the Church existing for the benefit of the community, not vice versa. Involvement in, for example, work with offenders seems to me a reasonable working out of the ministry of Jesus. Others do "their thing" (or, rather, His thing) in hospitals, in youth work, in a host of

community-based activities. I'm impressed already by the number of things Caversham Christians do beyond their places of worship. The signs of a healthy church are to be found in the health of the community!

People ask about plans to "split up Caversham" into a group of independent parishes. I have no such plans! If, twelve months or so from now, that seems a logical move, then we'll look at it together. The idea of the Rector imposing his wishes on the parish (as if he could!) or being a kind of "hit man" for the diocesan hierarchy is totally inappropriate. I'm here to work with a team of priests, serving the community through the Church, centring on our worship, and co-operating with colleagues in all denominations. That's more than enough to be getting on with for the moment!

Do I have strong views on worship? Only that the worship of each church should be suitably styled for the folk it serves, which means flexibility with as much congregational participation as possible! I rejoice in the very different "feeling" of each local church. (As a newcomer, though, I have some sympathy with those who express bemused frustration at finding different forms of service week by week in the same church!)

### History

With so much going for us and with such rich history behind us, I hope you share my view that we can take life seriously but not solemnly. In the last analysis there is a glorious absurdity about each of us. All our endeavours need to be seen in the context of what I'd call "Divine Humour". Carefree without being careless, laughing without being complacent, adventurous without being pompous — an almost cavalier lifestyle is appropriate for those who count their blessings whilst recognising the enormity of God's call to discern and serve Him in life — in its widest sense.

We belong to the one organisation which exists (as William Temple stressed) primarily for the benefit of those who are not its members. That seems to have been the ministry of Jesus. What more could we possibly ask for?



Richard and Angela Kingsbury at the reception after his Induction, held at St Andrew's Hall — E. S. ARCHER

### Postbag



Dear Sir,

My wife died recently and it was her wish that instead of floral tributes she desired for a park seat to be erected to her memory.

Sufficient contributions were received to provide not one but two seats, one in Caversham Court and the other in Balmore Walk, and the Leisure and Recreation Department of Reading Borough Council are arranging for these to be purchased and installed.

May I, through the "Bridge" thank all those who kindly sent donations, and suggest that other people might consider remembering their loved ones in a similar fashion?

PETE LITTLEWOOD

11 Moss Close  
Caversham

Dear Sir,

I wonder how many readers of the December issue of the

Caversham Bridge were puzzled and disturbed by Corrymeela Link's announcement that:

"GOD IS COMING OUT OF NORTHERN IRELAND"

Pretty drastic action! But really, it is hardly surprising after the way that "so-called-Christians" have been behaving — it serves them right! Also, in the name of sectarianism there have been many long years of bigotry, hatred and violence, both factions insistent that "God is on OUR side" ... the Deity must be greatly wearied and in need of a break. However you interpreted such a bizarre headline it would be enough to shake your faith in the omnipresence of the Almighty, and might well lead you to ponder as to where next he is planning to pull out! Such a report would serve to underline the current belief that Northern Ireland is indeed a God-forsaken country.

But, dear reader, not so! God is good. The words God and good have much in common, but they are NOT interchangeable. During "Summerfest '83", the Corrymeela

Community's week of Christian celebration last July, its founder Dr Ray Davey, led a workshop session entitled, "Can any good come out of Northern Ireland?" This was the inspiration for Corrymeela Link's series of meetings up and down the country addressed by speakers who are prominent in various aspects of the work of reconciliation in the Province. So you see, it is the good news of God's work of peacemaking which is coming out of Northern Ireland, for in the midst of despair there is hope, in the midst of hatred, love and in the midst of war a vision of peace. With what better news is there to start the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and eighty four.

Thank you, Caversham Bridge, for your misprint which has given me the opportunity to reaffirm that **GOD IS COMING OUT OF NORTHERN IRELAND!**

Shalom,  
**ANN VARMER**  
(Vice Chairman of the Corrymeela Link Committee)  
5 Picton Way  
Caversham RG4 8NJ

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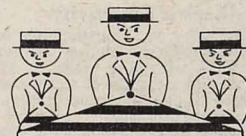
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All contributions for the March issue should be sent to Church House by noon on Wednesday, February 1. All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by Friday, January 27.

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

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# A Mapledurham childhood before the First World War

ON AN AUTUMN afternoon in October 1981 I called for a chat with Mrs Ethel Watkins of Hodmore House, Tinker's Green, Mapledurham. Tinker's Green consists of five houses lying between two farms, Hodmore and Greendene. Hodmore House is one of the two remaining thatched cottages in that area and had been Mrs Watkins' home before her marriage. Up until the nineteen-thirties a well stood at the junction of the four tracks around which the houses are found, but that has now vanished. This well was sunk in 1872 and was very deep.

## A pork chop for breakfast

Mrs Watkins' memories went back some seventy years to her childhood. Her mother and father, Mr and Mrs Clements, were one of several Roman Catholic families who lived on the Mapledurham estate. Her father worked for several local farmers, hiring himself out piece time. He would hoe a field of turnips for one, and scythe the edges of a harvest field for another. He was also a maltster and used to walk to Reading and back to work at Simonds brewery. Such strenuous work needed a good first meal with which to begin the day and Mr Clements always sat down to a large pork chop for his breakfast for there was invariably a pig in the sty at the bottom of the garden and the remains of its predecessor in the larder. Every year on the day on which the poor pig was stuck (killed) all the little Clements children stayed indoors with their fingers in their ears, for they could not bear to hear the poor creature's squeals, nor could they bear the



■ Wharf cottage, Mapledurham, now vanished. It stood beyond the mill going towards Hardwick

smell of its singeing hair as the carcase was held over burning straw to "tidy it up".

## Collecting Acorns and Stones

As a child Mrs Watkins remembered sitting "front horse" astride the leading horse in the cart team in the harvest field. When the waggon needed to move on to the next shocks or stooks she would indicate this from the horse's back geeing him up and feeling very important at the part she was playing in the day's work. She also remembered stone picking on local

fields. The money she earned paid for her school boots. The collected stones were built into little pyramids and the farmer measured them from the ground on one side up over the top and down to the ground on the other side. He then paid accordingly.

With her brothers and sisters she was also sent out to collect acorns for the pigs and was up at first light to get out before the other local children, though no doubt some of them also had the same idea.

At the time she was a child the Honourable Algernon Mills was tenant of Mapledurham House. He was very fond of horses and kept a fine stable. He was also the possessor of a very early Rolls Royce and drove past the school playground at ten to nine every weekday on his way to Reading station to catch the train to London. Every winter, around Christmas time, the little Clements would go to Rose Farm to sing carols. This meant a long trek down country lanes but they were each rewarded with a silver three-penny bit and an orange so the weary walk was worth it.

In those days there were two local carriers who would take goods into and out of Caversham and Reading. One, unfortunately, enjoyed a little drink at local ports

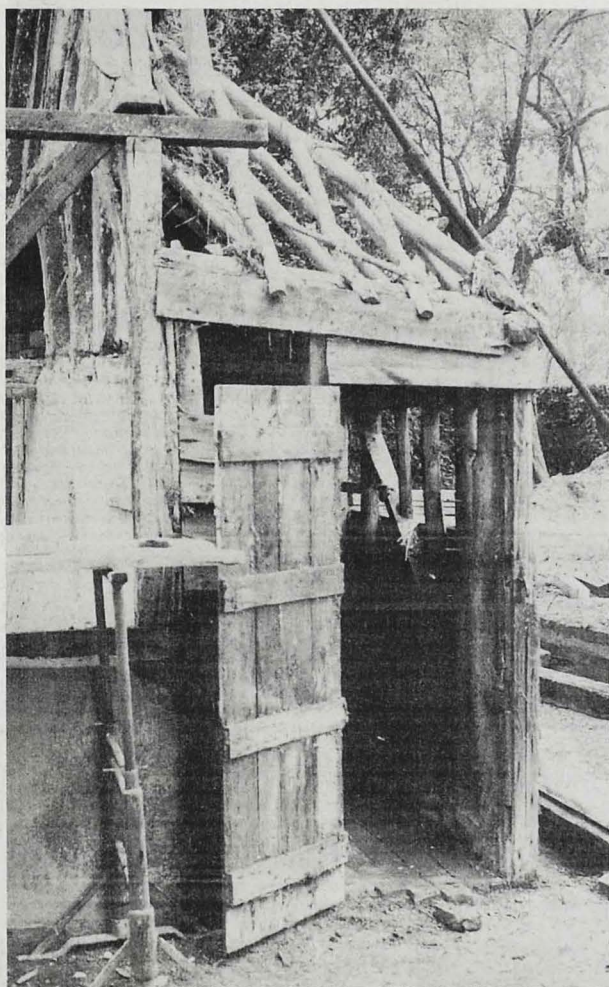
of call and would often forget to leave or pick up items at the Pack Saddle being, by then, a little the worse for a pint. He simply drove on further into the country to his own home village or the next tavern without a thought for his customers.

The headmistress at the little Church School was the renowned Miss Butler who taught there for forty four years. She married late in life, having made a home for her aged mother for a very long time in the little cottage adjoining the school. She wed the local thatcher, Mr Martin, and they lived in Myrtle Cottage at Chazey Heath.

Around 1925 it was decided that Mapledurham needed a parish hall, so under the leadership of a Mr Daniels, of Lilley farm, the local people banded together and built the present hall beside the old school by their own efforts. It was Ethel Clements who was the first person to have the hall for a wedding reception.

Sadly, not long after my happy and interesting afternoon with Mrs Watkins she died, and I am most grateful that I was able to write down her memories of Mapledurham years ago. Such reminiscences are unfortunately not often heard and still less remembered.

MK



■ Skeleton of an old wattle and daub cottage at Chazey Heath. It may have had only two rooms up and two down, or less, plus a lean-to outhouse.

## The Churchpeople's Luncheon Club Reading

THE CHURCHPEOPLE'S Luncheon Club is an ecumenical association, through which Christian men and women from all walks of life can meet to share an informal meal and get to know one another.

The Club, which was founded in 1965 meets on the first Thursday in each month at St Laurence Hall, Abbey Square, Reading from 1.00-2.00pm. A light buffet lunch is served at a flat rate of £1 per head, with wine and soft drinks available for a small additional charge.

Guest speakers (who are invited to address members during coffee) have included bishops, priests and ministers of the Anglican, Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Nonconformist denominations, as well as representatives of other religions and of agnosticism. Contemporary social problems have been dealt with by Members of Parliament, by medical and legal consultants, and by laymen responsible for a wide range of institutions and organisations. Other eminent speakers have covered such matters as Christian journalism, music and the language of worship.

## Membership

Currently, membership is over one hundred, and new members are always welcome. The annual membership fee is £4.00, and further information can be obtained from the Chairman, Bill Vincent (tel: Reading 472965) or the

Hon. Secretary Eric Few (Wokingham 780938).

Why not sample a meeting? Just telephone the Hon Sec to let him know you are coming; we hope you will stay to join us.

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All felled, felled are all felled;  
Of a fresh and following folded rank  
Not spared, not one  
That dandled a sandalled  
Shadow that swam or sank  
On meadow and river and wind — wandering weed —  
winding bank.

Or if we but knew what we do  
When we delve or hew —  
Hack and rack the growing green  
Aftercomers cannot guess the beauty been.  
Ten or twelve, only ten or twelve  
The sweet especial scene.

SO MANLEY Hopkins mourned his felled Binsey poplars over a hundred years ago, as he would have mourned the loss of the Caversham Court poplars had he been alive today. Last month we gave warning that they would probably have to go, but still hoped that if possible they would be saved. But before the words appeared in print they had all gone.

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## RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT BY WATCHDOG

### MORE POPLARS LOST

#### STUBBLE BURNING

There had been hints that all was not well for some time before, and Cllr Mrs M. Singh had even arranged for an independent survey, but the day before it was to be carried out all thirteen came down. Eight of them showed signs of decay, though nothing like the amount seen in the one that fell in last year's gales. However, understandably risks could not be taken. Five, though, showed no sign whatever of decay and could have safely remained for years. To say they would eventually have had to come down is an argument that could be applied to any tree. To say they were decayed at the top strains belief. A poplar tree's very shape would make discovery difficult, and by now the evidence has all been hastened away.

Once a tree is down it is down. The most we can hope for is suitable replacements, in spite of a council spokesman grudgingly declining to make any promises. Future generations at least would enjoy them, even if present ones will not be able to. Local authorities seem to have it in for poplars, at least in this country. Their shape is unique among deciduous trees. It would be sad if no more were planted.

#### CAVERSHAM BRIDGE HOTEL The disappearance of

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the Caversham Bridge Hotel when the present lease runs out, and its replacement by a large modern complex has been a concern of Caversham Residents' Association for some considerable time. It now seems

to be spreading to the view to preserving a link between the Leisure Committee's recommendation for a hundred and fifty bedroom hotel, and the idea of a conference centre seems to have been quietly dropped, and in its place is a suggestion that the complex should incorporate some housing. The Policy Committee added its recommendation that "consideration be given to the retention of that part of the existing Caversham Bridge Hotel closest to the bridge as a "riverside bar" with a view to diffusing opposition to the idea of a new hotel which visually would do nothing for its riverside site and would entail the loss of a building which, although not listed, is eminently suited to this position. Whether this new hotel will be suitable for putting up friends and relations on family occasions is of course another matter. One suspects not.



■ Un-poplar move.

— E. S. ARCHER

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## READING 472131

## LOOK BACK AT CAVERSHAM

MARY KIFT has done it again. After the success of her book "Life in Old Caversham", she has once more produced what promises to become a best seller and has at the same time helped to solve our Christmas present problems.

In a beautifully produced book she has brought together a collection of photographs, many not seen publicly before, which bring to life the Caversham of the latter half of the last century and the first half of the present one. Its quiet streets are disturbed by little more than farm carts and bicycles, though occasionally towards the end of the century the odd car chugged past, a forerunner of things to come. Its inhabitants are seen turning out in crowds to witness events that would scarcely cause a ripple in the hurly-burly of present day life. They troop along Oxford Street for a Sunday School Festival, they cram Prospect Street for the funeral procession of a Crimea veteran, they hire wagonettes to go to pick cherries at Stoke Row, and greatest excitement of all, they pour in on foot and bicycle to watch two thatched cottages burn to the ground.

School children celebrate Empire Day, the Royal Volunteers parade with shining brass and whitened belts, patriotic ladies sew in Balmore Hall, and coronations, proclamations and victories are suitably commemorated. The big houses of Caversham, over-furnished and with well kept gardens, reflect a life style that could only be maintained by a plentiful supply of servants. Vicarage garden parties, with croquet on the lawn and tea served from a tent by capped and aproned maids, represent a way of life that was soon to be shattered for ever.

The river played an important part in village life. One rarely-seen photograph shows the old bridge taken from much the same spot as those that Havell painted. Punts and rowing boats quietly glide along,

boat builders' premises occupy the banks and parties board steamers on summer afternoons. The final picture shows the river making its presence felt in 1947 with one of the heavy floods that from time to time inundated Caversham.

Mary Kift is to be congratulated on presenting this collection, as are Verity and Martin Andrews who produced and designed it, and Caversham Bookshop who published it. It can be purchased there for £4.

MC

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**WHERE ON** earth is the spirit of Christmas, I thought as I set out this morning (November 29) to check on one or two items for this column? Christmas preparations seem to start earlier and earlier — mine start at the end of September when I suddenly realise the last posting date for New Zealand is only two weeks off. It's hard to keep up any sense of excitement for so long and even the arrival of Advent itself seems an anti-climax. Is there, I wondered, still any magic about Christmas?

**Eureka** As luck would have it, I'd arranged to call at Thameside Primary School to look at the recent alterations. And here I was transported right back to my own childhood memories of Christmas. The school was awash with silver stars, cut-out Father Christmases, candles in pottery holders and, in a corner of the Library, the figure of Father Christmas himself surrounded by gifts.

As I said, I'd really come to look at the buildings but honestly I find it hard to talk about them, since the school was literally alive with the magic of Christmas. Mrs Lancaster, the head, was rushing hither and

thither, generously invited me to come and talk to her some time — and I think that will be the time to write fully about the fantastic alterations. Meanwhile Mrs Wallis, the secretary, kindly took time out to show me round. In one room, Mr Harries, showing the children how to make decorations, was, sadly, doing this for the last time — after seven years at Thameside he is about to move to New Town School as Deputy Head. In the cookery corner a parent was showing a group of four young children how to make biscuits and prepare their own lunch, while Mrs West, Head of the Lower School, was coping with further

## KATY IN CAVERSHAM

Christmas preparations in between lessons. And needless to say, Bob, the caretaker, was completely caught up in the excitement.

Hopefully I'll get back to Thameside before long but in the meanwhile suffice it to say this was a real Christmas bonus for me!

### Apologies!

Seriously taken to task by a reader, I must apologise if I'd given the impression that the greengrocers on St Martin's precinct was no longer up to standard because of the new lay-out. Didn't I know, I was asked, that the staff were just great and that every effort was made, as always, to see that everything on the shelves was fresh and sound. Of course I did, Mrs P., and I can assure you it's still one of my favourite shops.

Oddly enough — I don't know if she was aware who I was — the young lady who served me in the Church Street newsagents went out of her way to ask what I thought of their new lay-out. Being a bit old for change, up till then I'd not thought much of it. Amazing what a difference a kind enquiry can make to one's attitude; immediately I gave the new arrange-

ments my complete approval.

### Caring shop assistants

Another reader asked me if I'd give special mention to the manageress of the office in Church Street who, confronted by an elderly lady who was a little confused and vague about what she wanted, showed a superb example of patience and helpfulness. As my friend said, she didn't in the least mind waiting to be served herself.

### The Public Library

I've just been told there have been alterations to the local library since the arrival of the new librarian and that it's such a cheerful and nice place to visit. This definitely calls for further investigation, so I hope to be able to do something about this early in the new year.

### Window cleaning

My apologies to any reader who was led astray with the information I passed on about my last window-cleaner. As it happened he let many of us down. However, after months of trying to ignore the state of the windows (one neighbour went out and bought lace curtains so as not to see the dirt on hers) I happened on one who has

now served us faithfully for several months and at a lower rate. He, or rather they, tell me they're prepared to go anywhere in the district. So in case you're still having problems do ring Neville's Cleaning Services (875973), 65 Barnsdale Road, Reading. I think you'll find them helpful.

### Mucky Caversham

Yet another reader has asked me to mention the rubbish that is scattered around the Peppard Road/Baltimore Park bank. Willingly! Why do people have to be so mucky; last week I stumbled over an old vacuum cleaner in a lane at the back of Westfield Road. And if anyone is interested in a crimson three-piece suite (condition uncertain) do try the bottom of our garden. Yes honestly! Now the leaves have fallen off the trees there, I'm discovering a whole lot more things people have literally heaved over the fence — don't they know the local council will collect such stuff for a very small sum?

### Clinic closure?

I was sorry to hear reports that the Emmer Green Clinic is closing, and that new young mothers were turned away, being told that because of the impending closure it

wasn't worth taking new names on to the list. Those who use this clinic are obviously likely to be encumbered with small children and without their own transport. A trip into the Royal Berks by bus poses many more problems than the trip up to Emmer Green. It is to be hoped that none will feel the journey just isn't worth the effort. If this amenity is to close, it will be a great loss to Caversham.

### Richard Stainthorpe

Richard Stainthorpe, who became a well recognised figure around Caversham as manager of The Caversham Bookshop and through his participation in several

### End of the Year

And that about winds up the column for 1983 — it only remains for me to thank those who have provided information and to remind readers we are interested in everything that happens in Caversham; (apart that is from rape, arson and murder. We can rely on the national papers for those.) Keep it coming! And a Happy New Year to all our readers.

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## MOTOR CYCLING AWARD

MANY OF the Bridge's readers will be aware of a recent television campaign "Think once, think twice, think bike" — Good advice, but motorcyclists can also contribute to their own safety and road sense. Amongst such schemes is the National Star Rider Scheme and recently Peter Sear of St Barnabas' Church gained the Gold Star (the highest award of the scheme). (Indeed his examiner thought he was the first clergyman to gain such an award).

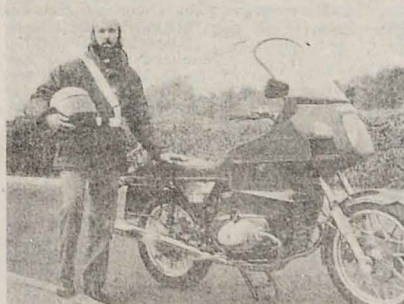
The training consists of an initial course of seminars to improve riding and handling

skills, anticipation of what other road users are about to do, and knowledge of one's bike as well as a written test. Then there is a road test covering twenty miles of varied road conditions. Peter feels that the test has given him greater awareness of his own potential and confidence in riding his bike.

With an increase in motorcycle accidents (particularly among the younger age group 17-24) any scheme which promotes greater safety and skill must be welcomed. Riders can start with the Bronze and Silver Star awards before proceeding to the Gold Star. Further

information about the scheme can be obtained from Mr Eric Dye, tel: 475227 and perhaps we may hope that before too long others of our motorcycling readers will join Peter in displaying a gold star.

D.S.



— Anne Sear

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# ROUND THE CHURCHES

## CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST NEWS

### Caversham Methodist Mens' Supper Club

OVER 20 men from Gosbrook Road and the Heights Methodist Churches met at the Heights Church on Tuesday November 8 for the first of what is hoped will be a series of occasional meetings. After supper Rev Bernard Arnold of Christchurch, Woodley, spoke of his work as a prison Chaplain.

He traced the history of the prison system, described how prisons are organised and the categories under which prisoners are held. His audience learned how Methodist Ministers are by law entitled to become prison chaplains along with Roman Catholic and Anglican priests and how in Reading the Chaplains exercise a joint ministry. During the discussion which followed, comment was made on the problems arising from the remand system and from the present overcrowding of prisons. Concern was also expressed of the possible effects on inmates of the proposals of the Home Secretary to remove the right of remission of sentence for good conduct. It was felt that the effect on prisoners would be psychologically bad since there was no incentive for prisoners to earn remission. There could well be a deterioration in the atmosphere of prisons.

#### Annual Bazaar

This year's Christmas Bazaar was opened by Mr John Frew who, during his introductory remarks, spoke of the work undertaken by the Reading Emergency Accommodation Project (REAP) at Brock Barracks, the Reading Churches Housing Association in the hostel for single-parent families at Caversham and its projected hostel in Reading and in the hos-

tel for men at St George's Mission in Stepney, which seeks to rehabilitate homeless men to be able to care for themselves in their own accommodation. An exhibition of the work of all three projects was on display in the Church vestibule. The Bazaar proceeds were for these charities.

During the opening ceremony Mrs Dorothy Frew presented prizes to the winners of the Young Peoples Arts and Crafts Exhibition and Competition. The prizewinners were:

Age up to 6 years — Matthew Handford;  
Age 7-11 years — Charlotte Boardley;  
Age 12-15 years — Caroline Bull;  
Age 16-21 years, joint winners — Catherine Hackman, Deborah Rogerson and Neil Chappell.

The photograph competition was won by Ian Chappell. In addition to the usual stalls and refreshments there was a display of haute couture clothes designed and created by Mrs Lorraine Balmforth.

#### BB Display

It is an accepted fact in the entertainment world that a chaotic final rehearsal means "It'll be all right on the night". All right on the night it certainly was for the Boys' Brigade company at their display on November 25 — their very first major display since they were formed five years ago.

The display consisted of a varied programme of activities illustrating the weekly activities of the company including a very smartly turned out drill and maze marching display and the very first public performance by the recently formed drum and bugle band, all performed with admirable discipline and precision.

In lighter vein were several sets of games and sketches including noughts and crosses played with boys of the company and members of the audience and "Game for a Laugh" which demonstrated that famous actor Mr Walker was no soprano and members of the audience mysteriously put on several stone. Two "ladies" appeared part way through to sweep the floor — after a few moments the boys recognised two of their officers incognito, and the audience were able to eavesdrop on some local confidences. Some of the unrehearsed bits brought the house down — like the little lad wearing his big brothers suit whilst trying to sweep up some confetti with a huge broom and hold his trousers up at the same time — but he managed it.

At the end of the evening those present learned of the badges awarded to many members of the company and it was announced that Paul Barfield was to be promoted to company sergeant. The guest of honour, Mr R. Sherwood,

former president of the Reading Battalion in his closing remarks complimented the company on its turnout and display and reminded all that the Boys' Brigade stood on two main pillars — discipline and the Bible Class. The display was indeed a credit not only to the dedicated officers led by Derek Ritchings, but also the parents, the church and also the boys themselves. There are a few vacancies in the company available to boys between the ages of eight and 15.

### ACTS — PART THREE

Rehearsals for the final part of this trilogy have now begun in Caversham Baptist Free Church, Prospect Street. Those who saw the first two parts and wished they were part of these exciting musicals — now is their chance. Those who are young of heart and sweet of voice will be warmly welcomed in this inter-church project. Rehearsals are every Wednesday at 7.45pm, and production is scheduled for Whitsun 1984.

## GOSBROOK ROAD REVIEW



■ The 1st Caversham Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade parading the Company colours for the enrolment.

THE YOUNG people at Gosbrook Road have been busy tying up the ends on the last of their projects for their Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. They have been putting the final touches to varied cooking projects, producing a Church Magazine and finishing the correct numbers of hours at Squash.

All through the year the boys and girls have worked individually and in groups on many tasks to bring them to the Bronze and Silver standard. This has included re-decorating the small hall at the Church, getting up at 5.30am to make early morning tea for the residents of Springfield St Luke, planning and taking a Sunday School class, working to improve their standard of music, running a keep fit class, and one young man making eight static line parachute jumps. The young people hope to receive their awards

on December 12. On Sunday November 6 the Boys' Brigade and Girls' Brigade held their annual Enrolment Parade. Rev Ralph Rogerson led the service, and some of the boys and girls took part. Catherine Hackman, Anne-Marie Robinson sang two songs and Dawn Ault sang to her guitar.

The Gift Day and Church Anniversary was held on November 26-27, and a Gift Day total of £1,234 was realised. Rev John Stephens and his wife Margaret, were the guests of honour. Methodist Church.

Entertainment was given by "Methodist Rhythm", the steel band from West Reading Methodist Church, David and Catherine Munns took part from Caversham Heights Methodist Church, "New Light" from Caversham Baptist Free Church and our own "Ambassadors". The Sunday services were conducted by Rev Patricia Herriot-Ing and Rev Ralph Rogerson. During the evening service Miss Ellen Landells and Mr Austin Rogers were received into the membership of the Methodist Church.

## ST JOHN'S NOTES

### CAVERSHAM SUE RYDER SUPPORT GROUP CAVERSHAM

THE GROUP recently held their Annual General Meeting, reviewing the year and planning the future.

The All Sort Fair held very much as a last minute idea realised a magnificent £109; thanks to all who contributed. Future plans include a Jumble Sale — so start storing — more details later.

The Group has been able to give £500 this year to the home at Nettlebed and the sale of Christmas Cards is raising £500 for headquarters.

Again thanks and New Year greetings, to all the Group's supporters. Inquiries to Ann Deane 473798.

THE AUTUMN Bazaar is St John's big fund raising effort for the church overseas. It has been happening since the last century — how has it gone on so long? Well, the stall holders hardly have one bazaar over, before they begin to plan, contrive, hoard, help each other, and get help from their friends and neighbours, for the next.

All this work meant that Caversham Hall was filled with stalls, and the stalls were filled with a colourful display of bargains. Many of those bargains were home made and showed what a variety of skills had been used in this stewardship of talents.

There were "moments" of course. The lucky number first prize, a box of groceries, was rapidly unpacked, priced and set out on the grocery stall! It took much longer to collect it

up, "unprice" it, and pack the box again. At one moment there was the possibility that people might be able to "guess the name" of two dolls. The Guides, very gracefully, withdrew theirs. (The survivor was a picture, dressed in left over scraps from someone's wedding dress). An unidentifiable object was given to the White Elephant stall. Suggestions varied from table

lighter to a bit of gramophone. It is still unidentified! Alan Wilson showed his abilities as an auctioneer, and raised £20 on a TV set given to be sold. The total raised in the afternoon was £420, and it goes, with prayers, to help children in Puna, in India, and sick and injured people in isolated Montongone in Lesotho.

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# ROUND THE CHURCHES

## BAPTIST NEWS



■ Lifeline Christian Rock Group — (Left to right) Steve, Hilary, Peter, Nickie, Charlie and Robin — who, with the Rema group, gave a concert at Caversham Baptist Church featured in last month's edition.

### FEEDING THE MINDS

**DID YOU** know that the government of Czechoslovakia had given permission for Stanislav Svec to visit this country to talk about his work? Hardly banner headline news and perhaps you may not have heard of Stanislav Svec either. You are not alone for it was only when he arrived at the Baptist Church in Caversham recently that many others first came to know him.

Stanislav Svec is a Baptist Minister in Czechoslovakia and is secretary of the Czech Baptist Union. His main concern is for the lay training and theological education of his fellow countrymen and women. No mean task behind the Iron Curtain as the congregation on a recent Sunday morning came to learn. Ostensibly he is free to do as he wishes but it was obvious to all that he is hedged around with many constraints. He recently had to obtain his government's permission to import £1,500 worth of theological books, a gift from EUROLIT, the literature programme for Eastern Europe supported by

the churches of Britain through FEED THE MINDS — and this was perhaps the least of his problems.

At the Service Mr Svec was welcomed in his native tongue by Mr Alan Sanders and he responded brilliantly in English much to the relief of all present. Mr Svec gave a short Address in which he stressed that the work of the Christian Church, not only in his country but throughout the world, was entirely dependant on individuals getting-up and getting-on with the many tasks crying to be done in Christ's name — faith without the accompanying action was of little avail. Mr Svec also entered with great enthusiasm into a spontaneous dialogue with the congregation in which pertinent questions were put to him. In this respect the most poignant remark was that young people of Christian background seeking jobs or further education started with a handicap relative to their communist counterparts. Yes, Mr Svec gave much food for thought and prayer, his hearers sat in rapt silence and one could have heard a pin drop.

Whilst Mr Svec may have arrived as a little known entity from some far away place he left having made a profound impression and will ever have a place in the hearts and minds of Baptists in Caversham.

### CELEBRATION '83

It has for sometime past been part of the Baptist Church's outreach to offer friendship in Christ's name to those who have transgressed the Law and, as a result, have found their way to "The Chalet", the Langley House Trust's home for discharged prisoners in Reading. The Langley House Trust recently celebrated the Silver Anniversary of its founding and concurrently the twenty-first anniversary of the opening of "The Chalet". To mark the occasion a Service of Praise attended by officials of the Trust, by those in their care and a goodly gathering of Church Members and friends was held in the Baptist Church. During the Service, in which "New Light", the Church's Young People's Singing Group took a prominent part, an address was given by Mr A. Richards, General Secretary of Langley House Trust, and this was followed by a "down-to-earth" testimony by Mr Tony Ralls, himself a discharged prisoner who had come to learn of Christ's saving grace and now worked for the Trust. The proceedings concluded with afternoon tea served by a band of ladies of the Church under the leadership of Mrs Vera Fletcher.

## ST PETER'S NEWS

OUR NEW rector might well have been forgiven for wondering what kind of church he'd joined when he and his family turned up at a party in the garden of Ken and Doreen Bennett's on November 4; mysterious dark figures cavorted around a bonfire, no doubt muttering incantations, while others set fire to a grand display of pyrotechnics which seemed to be never-ending.

Wisely the organisers had roped off the area and the 100 odd people who turned up could enjoy themselves without wondering whether little John or young Mary was going up in smoke somewhere. Meanwhile an excellent repast of hot soup, baked potatoes, hot dogs and so on, was being served at the other end of the garden. All honours to Charles and Marion Croft, John and Kathleen Hardy for their hard work and to Ken and Doreen who, no doubt, had the job of cleaning up the garden the next day. It was a grand evening!

The next meeting point will be the Nativity Play on December 18, 4.30pm and 6.30pm in St Peter's Church. And on January 7 there will be a grand panto party at Queen Anne's School (Tickets from church wardens and sidesmen, £1.50 for adults and £1 for children), mainly for the purpose of welcoming our new Rector and his family.

And if you've got difficulties with getting there, do ring the Bennetts (473096).

After many years of organising the distribution of the ODM throughout the parish, Peter South has handed over these duties to Peter Fry of Peppard Road, also a member of St Peter's. He'll be glad to take orders from

new subscribers. Finally, our condolences to the young lady in the choir who managed to shed a tooth in the middle of the Advent Service; for her benefit and that of the rest of the choir, this is not an obligatory part of the Advent ritual and is not recommended unless absolutely necessary.

### SIR RICKMAN GODLEE FUND

The Trustees of the SIR RICKMAN GODLEE FUND would like to draw attention to the provisions of this local charity. "To relieve in cases of need persons resident in the Parishes of Whitchurch, Whitchurch Hill and Mapledurham, who are sick, convalescent, disabled, handicapped or infirm."

They would be glad to hear of anyone who could benefit within the limited funds at their disposal. Please contact the secretary — Mrs B. Hives, 1 Palmers Cottages, Whitchurch Hill.

26780

## THE REV. ALBERT MOLINEAUX



Photo: Walton Adams

THE REV Albert Molineaux of 15 Blenheim Road, Caversham will be leaving this area in January to take up a new appointment as Minister to Totteridge Union Church in North London. He has been the Minister to the URC Broad Street Church (formerly Congregational) for seventeen years. Although his Church is not in Caversham, many of his "flock" over the years have worshipped at Broad Street and journeyed from Caversham and he is well respected both sides of the river.

He is an officer of the URC District Council and at other times he has been President of Reading Free Church Federal Council and the Chairman of Reading Council of Churches, both of which organisations he has served loyally and faithfully. He has been Free Church Chaplain to Battle and Prospect Park Hospitals for about twelve years, and his devoted service to a vast number of patients will be recalled with gratitude by those to whom he ministered in their hours of need.

We thank him warmly for his Christian witness and service in this area and ask God's blessing on his new sphere of activity, as we do for his wife who has also served the community in many capacities.

C. E. Buck

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# FAREWELL TO ERIC AND GWEN BEALE

ON NOVEMBER 21 Dr and Mrs Beale left Emmer Green to live near their daughter and their son and his family in Gloucestershire. They will be greatly missed by their many friends who, over the years, have come to love and respect them all for

their kindness and truly Christian outlook in caring for all with whom they came into contact. The Caversham Bridge Scheme in Emmer Green undoubtedly owes its success to Dr Beale's hard work and dedication as the first area organiser.

Dr Beale came to Caversham in 1925 and joined the Priory Avenue practice, where he remained until 1958. Again he earned high esteem for his dedication to his patients and their needs. He was always willing to give that little extra of himself for the support and encouragement of those in his care. Mrs Beale was a constant help throughout this time.

During these years the love of music provided relaxation and inspiration in their leisure hours. They sang in a madrigal group and Dr Beale was a member of St Barnabas' choir. He also played the organ in the absence of the regular organist. He served on the Parochial Church Council, was a district warden, and later a parish warden. Mrs Beale was an active church member, serving coffee after services on Sunday mornings, holding a stall at the Christmas Fair and arranging other social functions, including that of the Lenten groups held in her home. For many years she visited Springfield St Luke to serve tea and was greatly loved by the ladies for her bright and cheerful approach.

Everyone will wish Dr and Mrs Beale great happiness in their new surroundings. May God's blessing be with them.

W.R.



Eric and Gwen Beale with their farewell present from St Barnabas' Church, a copy of William Havell's early 19th-century engraving of Caversham Bridge viewed from St Peter's Hill.

—PETER SEAR

## THE LINK GROUP

WHEN THE Link Group met at the Rectory on November 28 it was obvious that the speaker, Mrs Audrey Roach, had aroused the deep concern of everyone present by her comprehensive survey of the work of Reading Mencap. From small beginnings the facilities offered had expanded considerably, working in conjunction with the statutory services such as Brookfields, Addington, and Bishopswood Schools, so that Reading must surely be one of the areas best catered for in the country.



Parents of mentally handicapped children are given help and support from the moment, as soon after birth as possible, when the problem is diagnosed, and this can continue for the rest of life when necessary. Mrs Roach stressed that the main aim is to enable every child to develop into an adult who can lead as independent a life as possible. To provide all these facilities requires a considerable number of dedicated, fully trained workers, who in return rely on the help of voluntary workers. Special interest was shown by the members present in our local hostel, Heathcroft, which provides short-term care for children, offering much-needed relief to their parents.



There are still a few places available on this residential course and the fee, including full board, is £20. An article on the College appeared in the Caversham Bridge in June. There is already a party of 12 from Caversham and about nine theological students on the course. Anyone interested is invited to call John Frew on 472140 or the College on 0582 29374.

John Frew

appreciated and enjoyed by all who take part. A Christmas party is planned for December 7.



Plans for the Ecumenical lunch, to be held on January 21 in the Baptist Centre were discussed, and arrangements made for a Carol Singing welcome.

Thanks were expressed to the hostess Mrs Angela Kingsbury. The Link Group has members of many denominations, and new active members are always welcome.

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## MISSION TO SUBURBIA

WE ARE all called to mission, and although this may have a narrow meaning to some, the

majority probably feel that it also has to do with how we live our lives, what we bring to worship, and what theological tensions we experience in our daily lives. These are some of the subjects to be dealt with at the course at the Luton Industrial College from March 9 (at 8.30pm) to March 11 (at 2.30pm). We will also be looking at mission to today's world and discussing the priorities in a suburban church. These issues are all of considerable interest to the churches in Caversham and anyone attending College will find it both stimulating and challenging.



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# THE SOCIETY OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST OXFORD

By Brian Woolgar (Lay Oblate) SSJE

MANY PEOPLE have questioned me as to what this Society is now doing in this age of change. For those who do not know, it was founded in Oxford in 1866 when three men under the leadership of the Revd Richard Meux Benson took the traditional religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, thus becoming the first religious community to be established in the Church of England since the Reformation.

The primary emphasis in the life has been on prayer and on the orientation of the whole life towards God; it is still the primary aim while facing the different conditions and fresh demands of a rapidly changing world. No longer does the English Congregation of the Society have work overseas, and the original buildings at Oxford have been transferred to St

Stephen's House Theological College. It now has four centres in England: London, Leicester, Oxford and Haywards Heath.

These four houses, each in its own way, are meant to be centres of prayer and community where people of all ages and various backgrounds may find help in their spiritual search and in their everyday lives.

1. **St Edward's House, Westminster** — appreciated by many people as a place for prayer (away from the great Abbey complex). In recent years it has become a centre of fellowship and reconciliation as well as of prayer, and groups and individuals from a wide spectrum of society "find their" way here. Also on display in the house one can find paintings done by artists which are hung on the walls. Inquiries should be addressed to the Prior or Guest-master 22 Great College Street, London SW1P 3QA.

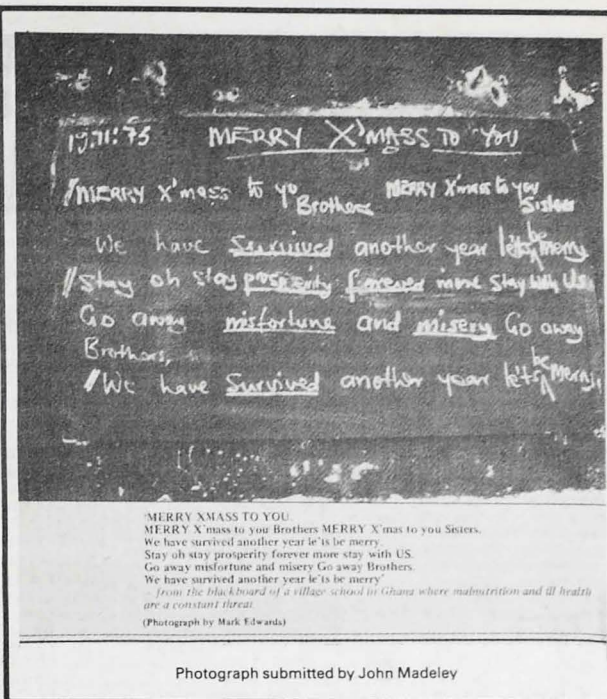


2. **St John's House, Leicester** — residing in a delightful house with its pleasant garden, as in all the houses, the function is "to be" rather than "to do". Nevertheless the Fathers resident are available for the work of retreats, quiet days, spiritual counselling etc, particularly in the Leicester diocese. They aim to be a close-knit, religious family but open to all who seek their help and friendship. Inquiries to Father-in-charge, 2 Woodland Avenue, Leicester LE2 3HG.



3. **SSJE Priory, Oxford** — The Society still maintains a centre in Oxford, not far from the old Mother house. The work here is pastoral with individuals as well as with Anglican convents in Oxford and elsewhere. The garage of the house has been transformed into a most beautiful chapel which helps to make the house a real centre for the prayerful contemplative life.

Inquiries to the Father-in-charge, 228 Ifley Road, Oxford OX4 1SE.



Photograph submitted by John Madeley

## 4. The Anchorhold, Haywards Heath

This house is in many ways different from the others in that two or three members of the Society are resident while the rest are not under the commitment of religious vows. A particular feature is experiment in "meditation in movement", making use of bodily movements in the service of contemplative prayer. This is a house of exploration into contemplative prayer and community life with manual work such as pottery, carpentry, gardening and weaving. A particular concern is to seek a real understanding of the treasures which India has to contribute to the spiritual life, while maintaining a firm hold on the faith and discipline of the Church of England.

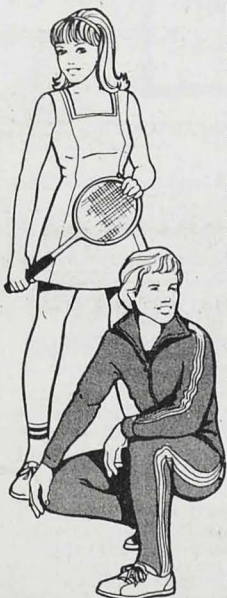
Inquiries again should be to the Father-in-charge, Paddockhall Road, Haywards Heath, Sussex RH16 1HH.

In addition to the houses mentioned above, there are self governing communities of the Society in the USA and Canada observing the same rule, and the three communities are bound together by a Central Council.

Associated with the Society is a considerable body of friends. This association provides valuable practical help by way of prayer and service, and helps to extend a knowledge of the religious life. If you wish to know more write to the Father Superior St Edward's House, 22 Great College Street, London SW1P 3QA.

I hope that this will help to answer some of your questions.

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## ROUND THE CLUBS

### Chazey WI

AT THE November meeting the President, Mrs Marjorie McCombe, introduced two new members.

The speaker was Mr John Hunt, Manager of the Reading Marks and Spencer store and husband of Dr Anne Hunt the programme secretary. John gave members an interesting insight into every aspect of the store from "sell by" dates on food to new display features, clothes, gifts, fresh flowers, finishing with careers opportunities for youngsters and an invitation to members to partake in a private visit to the store in the new year. The talk was obviously well received and resulted in a barrage of questions.

By popular demand a six week First Aid course has been arranged for January, starting on Tuesday, January 24 at Mapledurham Pavilion. It is to be taken by Mr Cripps, who talked

to members earlier in the year. A lace-making course has been arranged and starts on February 6.

A Cookery Book has been produced of members' favourite recipes and those used for the moveable feast in January. This is now available price £1.

### Caversham Community Association

THE CLUB met for a skittle contest on the November 7. A tasty meal was served during the evening. Prizes were awarded to the winners, Anne Wright and Colin Dee.

On November 14 Cyril Kirby was welcomed to the club again to show some of his photographic slides. This time he portrayed scenes of Zimbabwe (formerly known as Rhodesia) where he spent a memorable holiday accompanied by his wife Trixie. The mem-

bers enjoyed his excellent photographs of beautiful scenery and the animals in the Wild Life Reserve. Mr Kirby completed his slide display with some striking photographs of the Victoria Falls on the Zambesi River.

At the meeting the following week a "Mini" Bazaar was held for the members. Bargains were sought on the White Elephant and Fancy Goods stalls, the Christmas Stationery stall did a brisk trade whilst the

### Maplewood WI

slides.

Christmas parcels were brought, which will be given to Caversham Old People's Luncheon Club.

Mrs J. Ford gave a lively report of the Autumn Council Meeting in Newbury when the

speaker was the Bishop of Reading. He was very amusing.

The President, Mrs J. Fry, read two letters connected with the Institute's interest in a Kenyan schoolgirl. The letter from this student, Pauline, was particularly charming, thanking members for helping to pay her school fees.



### Rosehill WI

MRS SEABY, Vice-president opened the meeting, welcoming three visitors, and members. Then followed the usual business with news of the "At Home Day" at Mrs White's house in aid of Mencap, also the successful Jumble Sale on October 22.

The talk was given by one of the Institute's own members, Mrs Pam Ridley, entitled "A journey through China" which she and her husband made in 1982. This was illustrated by slides and was most interesting, giving a clear picture of this fascinating country.

The competition for a Christmas table decoration was won by Mrs Gillings.

### Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

HOW DOES one describe an annual general meeting in an interesting way to the readers of a newspaper? This can seem specially difficult to someone who was not actually there! However at the annual general meeting of Reading Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild a new committee was introduced and was welcomed by the Secretary.

The previous year had started with colourful Mr Turk describing Swan Upping. Later on there had been a chance to watch him at work along the river bank. Mr Don Clarke stepped in at a moment's notice with his

travels in India, China and Imperial Ethiopia were the next two subjects so there was plenty of interest and variety. At one memorable meeting two speakers arrived, but all ended happily with a delightful talk on some tapestry and fabric pictures, whilst Rosalind Renshaw from the "Evening Post" stayed to listen and came again in August to throw much interesting light on her work as a journalist and women's page editor. In perfect summer weather beautiful arrangements of flowers and foliage were made up by Mrs Massie for members to see. Captain Massie finished the year with his talk on Concorde.

The group had not managed to get around to having another bazaar after its big effort last year, but the drama group had acquired new members. In Social Studies Mr Peter Stratton talked on "Our local Policeman" in November.

There had been visits to the Hexagon and elsewhere, including one by the social studies group to Dorney Court near Windsor in the spring, and various tea or coffee meetings. One is planned in aid of an animal sanctuary and members were also looking forward to a party before Christmas.

Support has been given to the Kenneth More Memorial Fund during the year; members were informed about a forthcoming appeal from the NSPCC.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday in the month at 7.30pm in St Andrew's Hall. The retiring committee was thanked by the Chairman, Mrs Denning, and presented with gifts.

### The Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

THE CAVERSHAM Afternoon Townswomen's Guild held their November AGM at Church House and welcomed a new member Mrs Leach. The treasurer reported on the recent Autumn Fayre which raised nearly £200 and Mrs Livingstone the returning officer welcomed the new Chairman Mrs Olive Wetherill

and her committee, together with the secretary Mrs Enid Mills and treasurer Mrs Anne Deanne who will continue for another year.

The programme for 1984 together with a reminder that a birthday cake would be cut at the December meeting to mark the formation of the Guild 22 years ago, ended the afternoon.

### Caversham Ladies Club

THE November meeting of the club was the Autumn Fayre, with our usual number of members and some friends. Tables of craft, nearly new, bric-a-brac and cakes were well covered and selling was brisk. Tea and biscuits were served during the after-

noon and the whole was a great success.

At the end of the month the club had its Christmas lunch at a local hotel. Very much enjoyed by all, and many thanks to the manager who always makes us so welcome.

### Blagrove WI

AT THE November meeting Mrs J. Price, the President, welcomed a new member and also Mrs T. Richards JP the County Chairman. Later Mrs Richards, who has sat on the Bench at Reading Courts for many years, gave a most interesting and informative talk on her "Life as a Magistrate". Questions

from the audience were invited. The vote of thanks was given on behalf of the members by Mrs Ford.

A large party of members and friends spent a very enjoyable afternoon when they attended the Old Tyne Music Hall at the Kenton Theatre, Henley.

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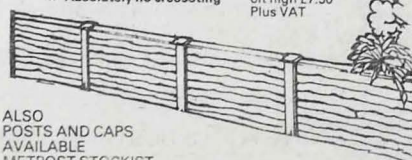
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# HAVE CASE — WILL TRAVEL

BILL WATERS, manager of Keith Bailey Travel Agency — till recently known as Gangplank — shows a very proper reticence if asked for examples of howlers perpetrated by customers. It would not do, he says, to run the risk of somebody recognising themselves if quoted, however harmlessly, in the "Bridge". Bill, in spite of his sense of fun, takes his job very seriously. Starting life with British Rail, he transferred to travel agency work some 16 years ago and has been in charge at Caversham for some time now.

## Unlimited Service

The Caversham office is fortunate to have free parking facilities for customers, and it is able to furnish details about inoculations, visas,

rates of exchange etc, can obtain travellers' cheques and currency if given notice, and, of course, one can buy railway tickets there. They can give advice on all manner of subjects, much of it gained from their own experience; they are not afraid to pass on recommendations and are always pleased when customers return after a trip to say how much they appreciated any particular travel firm.

It's probably not always realised just how seriously travel agencies take their staff training. Colleen Chandler, for instance, who has been with the firm for three years, is currently taking a British Airways course and is already very knowledgeable on the subject of travel. But, she says,

the most important thing is knowing where to look for information. Computers have, made the whole thing easier and bookings all over the world can sometimes be made on the spot.

Becky Walker, who has been with the travel industry since 1962 and comes from India, worked with airlines before coming to the agency.

The fourth member of the team is Matthew Barrett who has been with the agency since

June 1982 and is all set for a career in the travel business.

Some readers might be interested in a promotional evening to be held this winter at the Caversham Bridge Hotel on February 15, on cruising. It goes without saying that Bill and his colleagues will be pleased to pass on further details.

## Future Planning

So whether you're planning a business trip, a short break or a long holiday, even if you're very vague

about the kind of holiday that would suit you best, call on your local travel agent and discuss it with him. Of course he will find it easier if you know exactly what you want and when, but if you're one of those people who insist on travelling "on August 34" or who wants to book a trip to America and refuses to give further details about destination, well at least you won't be reading about your howler in the "Bridge".

# PUFFINS RAMPANT!

By Rusticus

THE CAVERSHAM Players ("The Puffins") romped gloriously through John Dole's comedy "Cat on the Fiddle" with their latest presentation at St Andrew's Hall. Producer Reg Stannard had clearly encouraged his cast to go to town. Without "going over the top" every performer played his or her part to give maximum delight to three full houses.

Farce is "boisterous low comedy... absurdly, her accent and tone remained certainly boisterous. With a plot twisting credibility beyond reason, the characters over-rode critical qualms by their sheer exuberance in absurdity. Purporting to represent a newly married couple's dilemma involving an unexpected, ravishing Italian visitor (Yvonne Coe), a coolly nutty mother-in-law (Bernice Milling) and a diamond necklace which came and went like a yo-yo, the farce offered the usual ingredients — three locked in the bathroom, mistaken identities in bed, flashes of cami-knickers, a re-appearing thief and a happy outcome out of all our afflictions.

Principals Sheila Hodson and Derek Spears — the hapless couple — had to play it fairly straight. Sheila's wide-eyed feminine rage was well sustained and matched Derek's "Oh my God!" at every twist in the plot. For Derek Spears this was a magnificent tour de force. Here was the tousled haired young hero grappling with the inexplicable and winning through without knowing how or why. A veritable Beowulf in blue jeans, from his first entry with shirt tail flapping, Derek portrayed the unworried husband with alarmingly flamboyant ease. Where he tended to shout and flap, Bernice Milling as mother-in-law showed masterly use of the eloquent silence. Her charm, wit and exquisite timing made hers an outstanding performance.

The star of the show, All round this was in every way, was an infectiously Yvonne Coe as the sultry Latin lady. While

negligees and nightgowns slipped alluringly, her accent and tone remained certainly boisterous. With a plot twisting credibility beyond reason, the characters over-rode critical qualms by their sheer exuberance in absurdity. Purporting to represent a newly married couple's dilemma involving an unexpected, ravishing Italian visitor (Yvonne Coe), a coolly nutty mother-in-law (Bernice Milling) and a diamond necklace which came and went like a yo-yo, the farce offered the usual ingredients — three locked in the bathroom, mistaken identities in bed, flashes of cami-knickers, a re-appearing thief and a happy outcome out of all our afflictions.

unobtrusively clever, the set and lighting entirely appropriate to the finest detail. Reg Stannard is to be congratulated on producing such a winner. The entire company, on stage, back stage, front of house, must be applauded for conspiring to achieve the hitherto impossible — temporarily overcoming this writer's aversion to farce and actually making him laugh!

Costumes were

## The Jubilee Club, Mapledurham

ANOTHER YEAR has drawn to its close and for the Jubilee Club it has produced some very happy occasions. The lovely warm summer was perfect for a visit to Wisley, a trip on the Thames and tea in the garden at the homes of Judy Maunder and Gladys Fowles. Indoor meetings began again in September with a very interesting afternoon spent in making artificial flowers under the expert guidance of Mrs Reed from Three Mile Cross. Her own display of her handicraft was of a very high standard.

The two main fund raising efforts, a jumble sale in September and an open afternoon (with a few stalls) in October made the Club well over two hundred pounds, a welcome amount as funds were beginning to become a little low. Now members look forward to the New Year and a trip to the pantomime at Windsor in January.

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11.15am Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Sundays)  
11.15 Matins (2nd, 4th Sundays)  
6.30pm Evensong

**St John's**  
8.00am Holy Communion  
9.15am FAMILY EUCHARIST  
11.00am Children's Service (1st Sunday)

**St Andrew's**  
8.00am Holy Communion  
9.15am FAMILY EUCHARIST  
11.15am Holy Communion (not 3rd Sunday)  
11.15am Matins (3rd Sunday)  
6.30pm Evensong

**St Barnabas**  
8.00am Holy Communion  
9.15am FAMILY EUCHARIST  
11.00am Service for Parents and Children (last Sunday)  
4.00pm Evensong (2nd Sunday)

**St Margaret's, Mapledurham**  
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11.00am PARISH COMMUNION

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# WE RECORD

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October 30 — James Duncan

**St Andrew's**  
October 16 — Louise Kent

**St Barnabas**  
November 6 — Christopher Bolton  
December 4 — Marty Ofonagoro, Christopher Hartley

**Caversham Park**  
October 23 — Timothy Rains, Matthew Cadman  
November 20 — Alan Jones, John Donegan

## MARRIED

**St Barnabas**  
November 26 — Anthony Coombs and Sheila Bowley

**St Margaret's**  
October 8 — Dawn Westall and John Ferguson  
October 29 — Stephen Hamer and Janet Gosling

**St Peter's**  
October 8 — Gary Everett and Susan McKenzie  
October 29 — Michael Jukubiel and Kim Prime

## FUNERALS

**St Andrew's**  
October 13 — Nancy Belfield-Smith  
November 23 — Edith Tilley

**St Barnabas**  
November 4 — Frederick Garner

**St Peter's**  
October 7 — Diana Littlewood



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The Rev David Milling, St Andrew's House, Harrogate Road. Tel: 472788.

The Rev Graham Lynch-Watson, 51 Galsworthy Drive. Tel: 475152.

The Rev Derek Spears, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel: 472070.

The Rev Alan Wilson, St John's House, 9 South View Avenue. Tel: 471814.

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January 18 — 20 Osterley Drive (Pat Gray)  
January 25 — 18 Woods Road (Jean Latter)  
February 1 — 1 Kelso Mews (Diana Etherington)

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131 Hemdean Road  
Caversham, Reading  
Tel. Reading 473793

## G. J. BOXALL

Painter and Decorator

344 HEMDEAN ROAD  
CAVERSHAM  
Tel. Reading 472181

## PAINTER AND DECORATOR

J. Bousley  
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## D. HARRIS

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