

PETER SHOCK — a remarkable character

IT IS, perhaps, a measure of the great esteem in which Peter Shock was held, that St Peter's Church, which he had served so well, was packed on the occasion of his funeral on January 16. It was on this occasion that Derek Spears, who conducted the service, was able to tell us something of Peter's very deep Christian faith, particularly as proved during those last few weeks of his life, when his only regret was that there would not be time to do all the things he still so much wanted to do.

Since then tributes have poured in from all over Caversham and beyond to the wonderful work Peter did; they are far too numerous to do more than print one or two from those who knew him well. It is not surprising that few, if any, mentioned Peter's physical handicaps for, as one friend said, it was

not so much that he overcame them as that he ignored them entirely, or even capitalised on them. When his father bought him a tricycle in an effort to strengthen his muscles, it began his life-long love of cycling and his great interest in travel. In his book, "Beyond My Garden Hedge" published just before

he died, Peter described himself as a dedicated wanderer; and it was probably these travels all over Europe, which, combined with his zest for life and his interest in everything and everybody, led him into writing. His little pamphlet, "The Young Wayfarers" describe yet more of his travels, this

time with a group of young people.

It is not always realised that the organising of these groups of young people which he led all over Europe in recent years, had a deeper purpose. When, after the war, he made a pilgrimage to some of the devastated areas of Europe, he was shocked and horrified by what he had seen, and was determined to bring young people of all countries together.

Exchange System

With the sole assistance of a like-minded headmaster in Germany, Peter set up his own exchange system and in 1951 he took his first party of young people to visit German homes.

Meanwhile he was busy building up his coach business and persuading local authorities to use his bus for school transport. He became a great favourite with the youngsters he transported daily and even persuaded some of them to put together their own anthology of Lyrics and Limericks. He was not anxious to build up a large business; his interests were far too numerous for him to concentrate on one thing.

For good measure he was a keen musician and himself played five musical instruments.

But with all these interests, there was a very private side to Peter, one which led him to make

many solitary walking and cycling trips. Many of those who knew him so well from just one of his activities — it should be noted that many parents were acquainted with him through their own youngsters' expeditions abroad, for Peter was very careful to contact all such parents — knew only one aspect of his life.

Friendly Neighbour

Probably it was people like Kathy and Ted Fullbrook, his next door neighbours, who came closest to knowing the real Peter. To them he was a quiet but very friendly neighbour who was never happier than when he was entertaining a house full of young people, who would appear from time to time at the door with a key, to tell them he was off on a jaunt. His life, busy though it was, was strictly organised with a time allotted for everything, especially his Sunday afternoon cycle rides. He needed them for, as Kathy says, he did so much for other people. For his football teams he not only collected them in his own bus, but collected and attended to the washing as well, visited homes where necessary and left nothing to chance.

But more than that, Kathy recalls that, after the war he was the first person ever to make her realise that Germans were human like ourselves and that unnaturally fos-

tered hatred was something we must give up.

It was not just what Peter did that made him

such a special person; it was what he was. He was indeed a very remarkable character.

MALCOLM GRAY writes:

It is very difficult to know just where to begin when describing Peter's achievements in the boys' clubs. My own personal knowledge of them only goes back to the late 1960s when I first joined the old Chazy Boys' Club as an eager ten year old. Peter, however, had started his first club in Caversham in September 1947, meeting at Balmore Hall. The club then, as always under Peter, had a full range of indoor and outdoor activities.



The Chazy Boys' Club which I joined started in 1959 when Peter opened the doors of the Toc H centre to boys living on the fringes of Caversham, for whom few facilities were available. Peter, as ever, was willing to meet the needs of the young. It was the same in the early 1970s when the Lowfield Boys' Club was formed to cater for the demands of boys from Caversham Park Village.

Peter's enthusiasm for the club members was always great, whether it was organising holidays for them, arranging sporting fixtures or setting

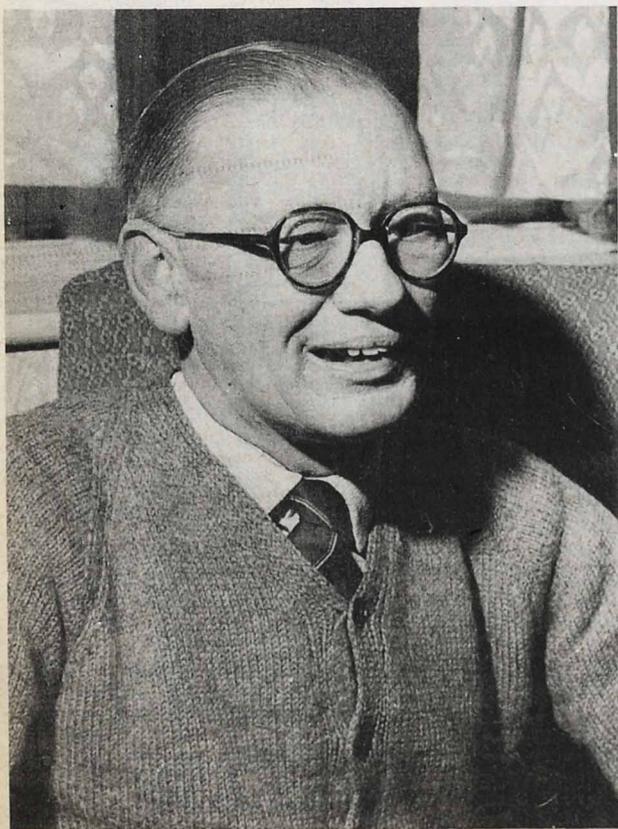
up special events. It was his encouragement that resulted in me becoming a member of the National Boys's Club, a great honour for me.

Devotion to the club

I am sure most people did not realise the amount of work Peter put in during his spare time to make certain things run smoothly at the club. It was this devotion to the club that led to the National Association of Boys' Clubs honouring him with the Keystone Gold Award for 30 years' service. This rare award was presented by the Duke of Gloucester and was well deserved.

To understand how much more Peter did than just supervise on club nights it is perhaps best to briefly describe his last year with the club. He organised a football match in South Wales against Treharris Boys' Club, one of many clubs in different parts of the country with which Peter had associations, followed, of course, by the return match. As well as this he arranged for the "Grange Hill" kids to attend our Spring Fair and organ-

continued on page 2



— Walton Adams

TALKING POINT

By RALPH ROGERSON
Methodist Minister in Caversham



TRUTH AT THE CROSSROADS

"You'll be in the darts team tonight, Bill?"

"Sorry, I've resigned membership — pressure from my wife."

"You're not serious!"

"'Fraid so. She insists that my membership threatens the security and stability of the home. When I withdraw my labour, especially at weekends to play 'away' matches, the house gets neglected, jobs are not done and crises arise in our relationship. Mind you, as a condition of my resignation, she's bought me a super dartboard and 'arrows' for exclusive use at home!"

"Really?"

"It's a fact — but one thing 'bugs' me. If I'm the sort of person to accept a 'bribe' from her, how will she know I won't accept a better 'bribe' from the opposition — if it is made?"

"That's a thought . . ."

* * *

IT IS unlikely that the furor surrounding union membership at the General Communications Headquarters at Cheltenham will have subsided completely by the time this issue of the "Caversham Bridge" is published. It is not the purpose of this column to regurgitate the familiar arguments — for or against — but a number of "spin-off" questions emerge from this affair to trouble the Christian conscience.

One such question is this:

"What is the future for Truth, mutual Trust and Integrity in a world where every nation relies for its security upon intrigue, falsehood, double-talk and all the other sins attendant upon this nasty business of international and industrial espionage?" We have heard much about the liberty of the individual in relation to this action at Cheltenham, but Jesus said that it is THE TRUTH THAT MAKES US FREE. Is not that freedom-giving Truth and mutual trust imperilled when, at the highest levels, sordid "means" are employed to secure so-called worthy "ends", and a licentious James Bond is presented as being the epitome of courage and daring? And ought not the Christian vigilante keep on saying so?

Jesus urges us to "tell it as it is", to be unequivocal in life and word. He calls us to shun double-talk such as:

"The matter is under consideration" which means "We have lost the file."

"The matter is under active consideration." = "Someone is looking for the file."

"In the not-too-distant future." = "Never."

"Never." = "As soon as we dare."

"We have had a full and frank discussion." = "We've violently disagreed on every issue."

"Your dress suits you." = "It's ghastly!"

"I've another appointment." = "I don't want to come."

And so on.

Our Western civilisation — nominally Christian — has largely rejected Jesus and the Truth He enshrines. We say "we know Him", but in virtually every area of life we disobey his commandments. In war we kill. In our greed we covet and steal. In our manners and morals we swear and blaspheme. We worship the scientific and materialistic gods of our own hands. We

reject the moral order. Perhaps God is pronouncing a judgment upon us through history and our adherence to a culture that pretends to know Him but in reality is a liar in whom the truth is not.

Our pathetic faith in knowledge as the maximum good is a contemporary fallacy. A nation and an individual's strength, we affirm, lies in knowing more, knowing it first, knowing it fastest — and it matters little how that knowledge is obtained. Aristotle said centuries ago — "If only man knew the good, he would do it," and after the lengthy testimony of painful history, we are still foolish enough to believe it! The answer to this fallacy is the insight of Christianity — that love is sovereign over knowledge which must be morally controlled. Unless life is conformed to the moral order the intrinsic "lie" on which our culture is built will destroy us.

Chris Justice, in his excellent "Talking Point" last month, has surely got it right. "If you and I want to see God's purposes established in our lives there is undoubtedly a lot of surplus material that needs to be removed first. The Bible shows us that sin . . . is the barrier that prevents us from knowing God personally," and "the Lord Jesus Christ" came into the world "to remove this sin by taking it upon himself when He died on the Cross". Was not that barrier, in great measure, illustrated by religious and political schemers in their display of self-interest and did not their sinful distortion of the truth percolate into the lives of ordinary people to gain their connivance at the Lord's Death.

It is only in the Light of the Cross that we see light upon the world's real need. That Light illuminates the world's condition and gives us the power to recognise and conquer sin as it really is amid the subterfuge and hypocrisy of double-talking, double-dealing — and double-agency! — i.e., that of pretending to serve Jesus whilst all the time serving the devil!

*Almighty God
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hid:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your Holy Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

PETER SHOCK — a remarkable man

continued from previous page

ised the Club's other fund raising events. He arranged a European football tour which took the Club to four countries as well as the club's other summer holiday to Cheddar, not forgetting various weekends away.

This is only a brief summary and does not take into account the day to day running of the Club. Nor

does it reflect the amount of paperwork involved. It was because of all this hard work Peter put in that very few things went wrong during the year.

It was a fitting finale that the last event Peter was involved with was to attend the opening of the Boys' Clubs' Club Week, where he had the honour of seeing one of his mem-

bers present the Berkshire County message to Earl Spencer.

It will seem very strange organising Club events without Peter. Throughout the many years in charge he left his mark on the boys he knew and became synonymous with the Boys' Club in Caversham. He will be greatly missed.

Tribute from George Brown

I first met Peter some 50 years ago when I moved to live in Hemdean Road and went to St Peter's Sunday School. As a new boy who knew no one, it was Peter who befriended me and since that day we have always been friends.

There were many of us in those days living in Hemdean Road and Queen's Street who all played together with Peter and a favourite meeting place was what we called the "Swilleys", i.e. the land opposite Hemdean Road School which was not built on then. When war broke out many of the children who were evacuated came to live amongst us and Peter made many friends and visited and corresponded with them long after the war ended. We all knew of Peter's handicap and how he had spent many

years as a small child in Great Ormond Street Hospital undergoing operations on his legs; yet we never mentioned this and he was always cheerful and joined in all we did. He loved to cycle to Goring and Streatley Hills and could always keep up with the best of them. His activities in those days were very varied and he produced several concerts which we held in Balmore Hall, and also took a very active part himself and gave many a delightful performance on his piano accordion. He also played at lots of birthday parties and was always in great demand. As time progressed his activities led him further afield and he took parties of boys for weekends to the Wye Valley and into the Welsh mountains, and made a great number of friends

especially around Kington where he often stayed. During all this time he never ceased to be interested in St Peter's and became a server and for many years he and I served together; also he continued with the Sunday School and played the piano for them every Sunday for over 30 years.

Peter made many friends all of whom remained as such all through his life and he will be sadly missed for he did so much for the community in Caversham in his own quiet way. There are many stories that could be told of the early days spent together playing in Hemdean Road and the surrounding district but they are too numerous to write about; I know that I and many others will always have happy memories of those days and the times we spent with Peter.

PARISH OF CAVERSHAM

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of the

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DIGITAL READING HALF MARATHON with Reading Recreation

READING (and Caversham's) big sporting day is Sunday March 25. At the time of going to press over 6,500 people of all ages have entered the Digital Reading Half Marathon. This means that when the Mayor sets them on their way from the University at 10.30am there will be at least 1,500 more runners than last year.

The main benefiting charity will again be the British Sports Association for the Dis-

abled, although many will be running for a very wide range of charities and good causes of their own choosing. Between twenty and twenty-five wheelchairs will start just fifteen minutes before the main body of runners, and the wheelchairs and the runners should start to merge by the time they reach Basingstoke Road (around three miles).

What still makes the Reading Run unique among runs is the fact that the largest part of the entry will still be local people. The

STAN ELDON'S COLUMN



13 miles for 13,000 feet

response from all over Reading has been enormous but there will be quite a few runners who have travelled a long way to take part. They will be coming from Scotland and Ireland, from the United States, France, Holland, Wales, the West Country and all corners of Great Britain. They include servicemen, policemen, bank managers, civil servants, doctors, prison officers, housewives, retired people (including a husband and wife who are both retired school teachers), London taxi drivers, professional

musicians, entertainers, students, builders, etc. etc.

There will be a few familiar names and faces from the athletic scene of the last twenty years or so. This will include Dr Ron Hill and John Whetton. Ron Hill ran in three Olympic Marathons and won both a European and Commonwealth title. His fastest time of 2 hrs 9 mins 28 secs for the full marathon is still one of the best recorded times for that event and at forty-four years of age he is an accepted world authority on marathon and distance running. He is

still very fit and ran around 2 hrs 20 mins in the London Marathon. He will certainly give the younger runners a run over the Half Marathon. John Whetton was European Indoor and Outdoor Mile Champion in the 1960's and only came back to running about two years ago. He ran the half marathon in around 73 mins in 1983 and is also in the Veteran age group. John is a glutton for punishment and helps to organise around six half and full marathons in the Midlands and North of England.

The ten mile point on



DIGITAL READING HALF MARATHON with Reading Recreation

the route is around the junction with Prospect Street and the lead runners should reach there by around 11.20am and from then until after 12 mid day there will be a steady flow of runners through Caversham. The Council will be publishing the road closures in the local press and as many roads will be completely shut to traffic while the runners are passing, you should make yourself familiar with these closures and restrictions. Last year Caversham was one of the best supported parts of the course and

I hope we can do as well this year.

For all those on this side of the river who are training for it, you should now be moving into the final stages of preparation. You should have been running about four times a week for some time now and your longest run should be up to ten miles or one and a half hours. Don't worry too much about speed but just get used to running and being on your legs for a couple of hours. On the day the crowd will help you to get through and the Finish will be there sooner than you think.

RENDEZVOUS CLUB

LITTLE did Mrs Joy Cook think when she was helping at the Emmer Green Youth Club that she would be running a highly successful club of her own for older people, with a membership of over 80 and a regular turn out of between 50 and 60.

Mrs Cook enjoyed her early work at the Youth Club and an opportunity came to go to Bulmershe College on the Berkshire Training Association, where she would be trained in all aspects of youth work. Part of this training included a project of her own choice and she chose to work with the community. With a group of young people from the Emmer Green Club to help her, by working together they devised a Community Club — after all, it was at the Community Centre and a youth club was already functioning well there. Knocking on doors locally was the first start — just to try and find out if people would be interested. There was sufficient response for them to go ahead, and by means of leaflets, local posters and publicity, the first meetings got under way. Mrs Cook says that this was the most worrying time — the first few came and the numbers stuck. Gra-

dually more people came and the whole venture really took off. It has now been running for three years. Your reporter was present on a cold wet winter night and over 50 people had come — most within walking distance or on the local bus — to enjoy a good evening out.

Weekly meetings

The Club meets every Thursday from 7.30 to 10.30pm. The entrance fee is 30p per person and this money goes towards the general running costs of the Community Centre. There is a licensed bar, run by a local publican and any profits made on the bar go to him. Coffee and light refreshments can be obtained, and the small profit made from this does go towards paying for any speaker's expenses or towards special occasions, like Christmas Parties. Nearly every evening starts with an hour of bingo and this is followed by a variety of activities — dancing of all sorts, Scottish, barn and square featuring on the programme. That there is a printed programme of events to the end of July shows how efficiently the Club is organised, and more events include a cheese and wine evening, talks,

competitions, mystery tours (in the summer). An afternoon and evening trip to London is planned, also a show, "Come Fly with Us" (The last show put on at the Club, an old time music hall, raised over £100 for charity). The age group of those attending at present is 50 plus; Mrs Cook would like to have some younger people too but realises the difficulties of parents getting out if there are children to be looked after.

None of this would be possible without the excellent staff, a dozen of them, all volunteers. Finding the right people is always the most difficult task and Mrs Cook has been really fortunate in her helpers. They are all so friendly. Mrs Cook herself is a useful disseminator of information and is able to answer a variety of queries. She was discussing the possibilities of organising something similar for a group of wheelchair people; if a good idea catches on, everyone wants to join in.

So if you are interested, either go along to the club on Thursday evenings or get in touch with Mrs Joy Cook at 11 Rotherfield Way, Caversham. Tel: 477108 (evening).



■ "Eyes down" to start the evening at the Rendezvous Club

— E. S. Archer

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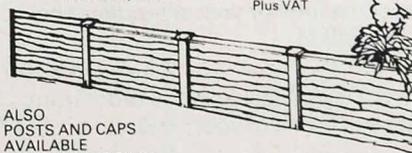
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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By WATCHDOG

UNSUNG HERITAGE

READING is just awakening to a hitherto unrecognised and unsung asset in its midst. Well, perhaps not entirely disregarded, for readers of this publication who have sat at the feet of local lecturer Jane Weight, the acknowledged authority on English brickwork, will have realised that there is an abundance of outstanding examples of this in Reading.

What is however being belatedly recognised by the Borough Council is that most of this brickwork is to be found in ordinary small houses in humble terraces, whose owners have never even considered that there is anything remarkable about their houses. Yet it is here that some of the best examples of pat-

terned brickwork are to be found, for in the last half of the nineteenth century and the first part of this, Reading had a flourishing brickmaking industry and its bricklayers were skilled in their use.

A particularly rich variety of their work is to be found in the Katesgrove and Christchurch areas of the town, but

Caversham also has its rather less spectacular share, particularly eastward of Prospect Street. Along and off Gosbrook Road red and grey bricks or yellow and grey bricks are used in interesting patterns, and in some houses red, grey and yellow bricks are combined. These houses may not have the accolade of listing, but they are part of a local heritage and reminder of the local bricklayers' art.

Alas and sadly fewer and fewer of these houses are surviving unscathed. Their doors, roofs and windows are all of a piece which give, or rather gave, their terraces a

pleasing wholeness. With time however, window frames rot or need re-painting, walls need re-painting and high pressure salesmanship offers easy solutions. So brickwork is painted over or clad in incongruous "Cotswold Stone", windows are replaced and the neat lines broken up, doors of any period except that of the house make their appearance and dormer windows sprout out of the roof.

The Borough Council is now working on a survey of areas of the town with good examples of this kind of house and is proposing to issue guide lines for owners who are

faced with the need for repairs or renewal. Their main advice will be that renovation rather than a drastic new look will add to the appearance and quality of the house and its neighbourhood. These will be the listed and cherished houses of the future.

West View Terrace in Star Road may not be on a par with a Bath terrace but it would be a pity if its attractive grey and yellow brickwork and its neatly formal lines, which until recently had remained untouched, should be lost to a future generation which would prize it more than it has been prized hitherto.

reduced the housing to fifty four units. This will simply not do, and if it gets passed will be just another example of driving a coach and horses through an already agreed Central Reading plan. There is room for improvement of the site, but not in the shape of a massive office block towering over the domestic scale of Caversham Road and dominating the river bank. The Council must resist this application. Neither should they be bamboozled by the sop of the quaintly termed "steamer facility" being proffered. This will not compensate for the destruction of one of Reading's potentially most attractive sites.

in this newspaper, but to members of the Residents' Association he was known as one who loved the Caversham in which he had spent most of his life and who strove to retain what was best in it for all to enjoy.

Not that he ignored Reading. Back in the late sixties he made a great impression at a public inquiry to look into the proposal to drive the Inner Distribution Road through the Forbury Gardens. His quietly authoritative account of the importance of the Forbury in the history of Reading went a long way to building up the opposition which eventually killed that ill-begotten scheme.

Only last Autumn he spoke at a public meeting in Caversham called to discuss the proposals for Balmore Hall. He was deeply opposed to its demolition and no one who heard him could fail to be moved by his account of the early days of Balmore Hall when Miss Rose Ratcliffe ran it and kept it in trim and attractive appearance for the community activities for which it was provided and in his opinion should continue to provide.

He was still seeking ways to save it when his life came to an end and he surely would have asked no more than that he should still be taking an active interest and not sit-

Continued on page 9

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Riverside Offices

The office block and housing destined for the Lorco-Goodmans-Salter site near Caversham Bridge are not likely to contain outstanding examples of local brickwork, but at least the plans as envisaged in the Central Reading District Plan allowed for seventy five housing units and kept a low ratio of office space to site size. Whether Reading actually needs another 27,500 square feet of office building is another matter.

However, we now find a planning application which has raised the office space to 37,660 square feet and

Leslie Hunter

When Leslie Hunter died last month, Caversham Residents' Association lost one of its oldest members. He had served on the executive committee from its early days and in the same week as the fire which led to his death, he had attended a committee meeting, walking the not inconsiderable distance from his house on a frosty January night which would have deterred many a younger person.

A tribute to his services to the community and his faithful membership of St Andrews Church appears elsewhere

CAVERSHAM THEATRE

FOLLOW THAT STAR

CAVERSHAM Theatre, that talented group drawn mainly from local churches, presented three performances of the musical nativity play "Follow that Star" on January 5 to 7 at St Andrew's Hall under the direction of Dorothy Byers.

The play could be described as the nativity story from the angels point of view, with a number of scenes in a very inviting-looking Persil, white setting, where such activities as star polishing went on whilst the main

action proceeded. Music was provided by a small choir located on the stage throughout the performance and a mainly youthful band, which displayed commendable restraint in the quieter passages — not easily achieved from trumpet and trombone.

It would be unfair to single out particular artists because everyone entered into the spirit of the thing with obvious relish but Gabby (Gabriel) and the Demon (Herod) were particularly well cast — "the demon" still had traces of green in his beard at church the next morning! The three kings were magnificently arrayed but

had some little difficulty in explaining satisfactorily what the third gift actually was.

The Saturday evening audience was near capacity with a good sprinkling of young people and everyone soon got the hang of several "Oh no I'm not" "Oh yes you are" routines. The choir accidentally came under fire from the audience at one stage from missiles aimed at the demon — at least it was presumably accidental. A very enjoyable evening, plenty of fun, catchy tunes which one could remember the next day but also a serious side. Well done again Caversham Theatre.

EMMER GREEN**The sad story of Grove farm**

FOR A long time I have been unable to find any more to write about Emmer Green in my articles for the Caversham Bridge. But recently I at last got myself to Oxford to read in the muniments room at Christ Church. On the shelves there are two large books of papers containing information on Caversham, for the college owned a great deal of land in the parish from the Reformation onwards.

In one of these books I discovered that a member of the local and well-known Berry family rented Grove farm at Emmer Green from Christ Church (now known as "Old Grove House"). It seems that the farm was also known as Plaster's Grove and here in 1794 James Berry was farming with his uncle. Even then the house was described as "large and old, built of brick and tile and well timbered". The farm buildings included a hen house, pigsty, an old barn "built of chalk and brick in panels, but chiefly boarded and thatched with a wood floor". A barn with a wooden threshing floor was still there several years ago. Another good barn, a wood house, cowhouse, stable and two hovels made up the rest of the farm complex. James Berry also had small parcels of land in Caversham's open fields about a mile away.

In 1814 James wrote to Christ Church asking if he could build a granary and pigsty at Grove farm for some sixty pounds and inquiring if he could get assistance with the cost.

By the winter of 1816 things were not going at all well at the farm and James again wrote to Oxford desiring delay in payment of the

rent until after Christmas "owing to a long and expensive harvest" and pointing out that he had made many improvements to the property in the last four years.

Things were no better in 1821 and Berry again wrote in the March stating that he intended giving up the lease of another farm of two hundred acres to enable him to pay the arrears and interest due to the college. October of that year was almost out when the Dean and Chapter wrote insisting on £412 arrears in rent. Nothing apparently happened. Then on February 6, 1822 another letter from Oxford insisted that unless James Berry paid three years' arrears, amounting to £495, by the twenty-first of that month steps would be taken for its recovery.

Kind Friends

On March 11 a letter was received at Christ Church from some of the gentry pointing out that "Berry was a moral, industrious and sober man" and the arrears owed by him were due to the agricultural depression. His friends would pay the money he owed and become trustees for the family until "they could be reimbursed by their own exertions". It

appears from a letter in 1826 that Berry had many relatives in the family who were dependent upon him and that he was still in difficulties, for in the January of 1827 a petition reached the Dean of Christ Church asking that John Berry be allowed to succeed his brother as tenant of Grove farm, which had been held by the family for some one hundred and fifty years. It was signed by the curate, R. Powys, William Montagu of The Hill and others.

So John Berry took over from his brother, but he, too, was hit by the great agricultural difficulties being felt throughout the country. After running the farm for three years he also was getting behind with the rent. By midsummer of 1831 a letter in his handwriting begs the Dean and Chapter not to press for arrears before harvest. He also says he is unable to attend a meeting with them as he has business to see to in London. Later he says he is unable to get to Oxford as he has to attend a funeral. Whether he was making excuses one cannot judge. By the composition of his letters he appears to have been an educated man. Just what his business connection was in London we shall never know. The Berrys were a good solid yeoman family who had obviously some standing in Caversham or the local



■ Grove Farm in Surley Row, Emmer Green near the junction with Gravel Hill.

— Peter Sear

gentry would certainly never have helped them and they had lived in the parish for several generations and knew a great deal about the locality. Indeed in 1808 a note from Christ Church said "there is a great want of land marks in the open field of Caversham and it is almost impossible to find out the College pieces with certainty". It was James Berry who knew the land marks and offered to identify the Christ Church property.

More correspondence appears in 1832 over the proposed enclosure of strips in the open fields and John Berry apparently admitted that the advantage of such enclosure would at least benefit him, throwing together all his scattered holdings and improving his lease "by three shillings an acre". However it was too late to save the Berry family from having to give up farming at Grove and four years later Edward Sherwell wrote to the Dean stating that Grove farm was held by three persons "who became security for the arrears of the rent of its late tenant, Berry, and have been losers thereby". The pre-

mises, he states, are very dilapidated, and offers to take down the old farm house and build a new one. Fortunately his offer was rejected and we still have the wonderful old homestead.

That seems to be the end of the story. After some one-and-a-half centuries of farming at Grove the Berrys were finally beaten by the agricultural depression, as were so many others. Perhaps they would have been more fortunate if the land had been better, it was certainly not the sort to give great returns, but they struggled to do their best, no doubt. However, things went from bad to worse and in the end they had to leave a home they must have grown to love. A sad story indeed.

M.K.

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APOLOGY

IN A recent article about Mapledurham before World War I, I mistakenly referred to the late Mrs Ethel Watkins' parents as Mr and Mrs Clements; they were in fact, Mr and Mrs Brooks and Mr and Mrs Clements were her grandparents. My apologies to Mrs Watkins' family.

M.K.



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ROUND THE CHURCHES

ST PETER'S PANTO PARTY

MEETING point in January took the form of a panto party at Queen Anne's School, its main aim being to welcome socially, Richard Kingsbury, the new rector, and his family. It was an excellently organised affair and those who provided the ample repast and decorated the hall in an appropriate manner, are to be congratulated.

positive bevy of Ugly Sisters, a couple of Cinderellas, Queen of Hearts, at least one Lord Mayor, Tweedledum and Tweedledee, Robin Hood and Maid Marion, Little Bo Peep (no signs of a sheep though), to say nothing of a batch of assorted rabbits, mice and other animals. Richard and Angela and their family provided almost the entire cast of "Aladdin" and many other families came in groups.



■ Cinderella and family at St Peter's Panto Party

— K. P. Bennett

Many of the 150 present turned up in costume; there were some strange beings floating round the hall and many people got to know each other, perhaps for the first time, by the simple question: "What are you supposed to be?" Some were easily recognisable; there was a

enuity that went into the costumes was amazing.

There were the usual games, the choir rendered the history of Caversham during the interregnum in a chant composed by John Stratford, Neil Summerville gave a performance of mind reading which

was the envy of all present and Richard provided his own contribution with letters from all corners of the globe concerning possible bookings for the Parish holiday, finishing with a letter from "a well-wisher" to John Grimwade, warning him of what would happen to his old

parish under Richard's guidance.

Everyone stopped giggling long enough to round off the evening by singing, in true panto style, an appropriate ditty composed by person or persons unknown. Altogether a thoroughly enjoyable and successful evening.

GOSBROOK ROAD REVIEW

"FAMILY" is a word that is touched on quite frequently at Caversham Methodist Church, and nowhere more than in the Sunday School. During the past two years, young people who have grown up in the "family", are now taking an active part in the running of the family. Seven young people are now working alongside experienced Sunday School teachers.



■ Dawn Ault with her Sunday School Class at Gosbrook Road

— Eunice Cooper

They bring new ideas and enthusiasm to the task they have undertaken. It is hoped that the young teachers will be able to join with others on a Basic Training course which is to be organised by The Reading and

Silchester Methodist Circuit.

Another way in which the family has been working together was in a massive "spring-clean" in the guise of a Coffee and

Maintenance Morning, a morning which eventually finished at tea-time!! Old and young together, cleaned the Hall walls, cleared out cupboards, cleaned

out gutterings, re-glazed windows, smartened the kitchen with new tiles and put slates back on the roof — to name a few of the many jobs undertaken. It was

a day of work — but also a day of fellowship. When all was finished, the comment was heard — "I have enjoyed myself, when are we going to do it again?"

Uic

by PHILIP WEBB



Yes, I'd be delighted to marry you two...
but tell me... why did you choose our church?

Well, we asked around...
and you was the cheapest!

ROUND THE CHURCHES

BAPTIST NEWS

JUST A CAT NAP

THE non-appearance of any report in the last issue of Baptist activities must be the non-event of 1984. It passed without comment and readers must have thought that those associated with the Church were in hibernation. However, to dispel any rumours which may be circulating, it can be said on good authority that the Church is very much awake and kicking. Perhaps this is typified by the hordes of people who patronise "Meeting Point" each Friday. "Meeting Point" was started some years ago as a gentle exercise in outreach — a limbering-up in reaching out to the community around — and it has developed into a somewhat lusty affair of marathon proportions which attracts ever-increasing numbers. One wonders why snack lunches and cups of tea have such magnetism. Perhaps it is not so much the menu as the waitress service for the operation is motivated by a band of nippies the like of which Joe Lyons never saw. Maybe this is the clue to success, the friendliness which is not only freely available but truly free to all who are bold

enough to "taste and see".

Then again on Monday afternoons the Women's Own moves steadily, albeit slowly, from strength to strength with new members joining the ranks. At the other end of the age scale there are the Brownies — thousands of 'em — and a waiting list to boot. In between there are a number of young people's groups which flourish under various guises and there is a resurgence of a hybrid group of young and not so young who are rehearsing tirelessly for the third and final act of that successful musical the "Acts of the Apostles" to be staged in May. Then there are the "Gospel Singers" who are tuning up in readiness for a further performance at Easter and hopefully they will shortly find another pianist to help them in that their previous one had to "retire" for health reasons. Here is a marvelous opening for someone with the talent to "get in on the act". If you think the Lord is calling you to this particular task ring Reading 478330 and seek further information — without obligation.

ST JOHN'S NOTES

ST JOHN'S Guides, Scouts, Cubs, Brownies and Beavers held their Christmas Party together, on December 30, in the Hut. About seventy children went, and enjoyed themselves very much. Towards the end some of the younger ones were sleepy. "Though how they could be in all that din, we could not understand!" said a helper.



St John's Mothers' Union held their Annual General Meeting on January 24. The Enrolling Member presented the account of a year's varied activities. These included supporting work with deaf children, Mothers' Union work overseas, church children's organisations, and all the activities at St John's. Alan Wilson and the Rector added that the care and love the Mothers' Union members show for their neighbours was vitally important. It was very pleasant to be able to thank Mrs Whiteway, the secretary, and Mrs Ovenden, the treasurer, for their long and efficient services.



Some of the congregation have Church of England Children's Society Donation boxes. You drop in what you want to, when you want to, and the total collected this way in 1983 was just over £100. Several older members who had boxes have moved, or died, and it would be helpful if some younger people would take a box. If you are at all interested ring 475664 or 472084.

WEATHERBEATERS



St Barnabas' Sunday School children ran a "Weatherbeater Sale" in aid of the Blue Peter appeal to help the victims of flood or drought. £52 was raised — enough to provide potatoes for a year for three families in hard-hit South America

ST MARGARET'S NEWS

IT WAS a happy co-incidence that Dr Martyn-Johns ninetieth birthday happened to be the same day as the St Margaret's Epiphany party, so everyone was delighted that she was able to come along for a little while after her most exciting and exhausting day. Cathy Pynn had made her two birthday cakes and everyone sang happy birthday. It was lovely to see so many young people at the gathering and to have Keith and Anne Knee-Robinson back amongst us once more. Many thanks to Michael and Helen Dunn who organised all the games and to everyone who made it such a happy event.



The little Bring and Buy sale organised by the Young People's Group to help the Blue Peter Appeal made fifteen pounds fifty pence, a jolly good effort. Well done.

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'Being a Christian in everyday life'

By DAVID MILLING

THIS year's Lent study groups will be on the vitally important theme of "Being a Christian in everyday life". We shall attempt to relate our Christian faith to certain areas of life, in which we are all involved, directly or indirectly. It is all too easy to be a "Sunday Christian", and to regard the Church as a kind of refuge from the problems which we have to face in our daily lives. We appreciate the value of "the gathered church", meeting together for worship and fellowship; but we can

easily miss out on the challenge of being "the scattered church", living out our faith in our neighbourhood, in our family life, in our place of work, and in the public life of local and national politics. Christians have a responsibility in all these areas of life, and the love of Christ has to be expressed by individual Christians within the wider community.

When we try to live a Christian life, and to witness to our Christian faith, outside the safe limits of "the gathered church,"

we often feel lonely and insecure. We are conscious of being involved in uneasy compromises between ideals and realities, and as a result we hesitate to share our problems with our fellow-Christians. This year's Lent house groups will be an opportunity for trying to relate our Christian convictions to the problems of daily living, once we start doing this, we may find that other people's problems are very similar to our own, and that we can share these problems together, even

if we cannot solve them. At least, we can begin to escape from living our lives in separate compartments, and we can be more open to God, and more open to one another.

Gathered and scattered

The Lent course will begin with an ecumenical service at St Peter's Church, on Sunday March 4, at 3pm. At this service, the Rev Philip Lee-Bapty, Minister of the United Reformed Church in York Road, and Chaplain of

I.T.E.M., will speak on "The gathered and scattered church". The Lent study groups will also be ecumenical, and will meet in houses in different areas of Caversham and Mapledurham, during the first five weeks of Lent (ie from March 12 to April 13). The themes of the five Lent studies will be as follows:

1. "The Christian in his place of work" (study composed by Mr Jerome Morland, a Roman Catholic, and a member of I.T.E.M.).
2. "The Christian

in unemployment and retirement" (study composed by Mr John Frew, a Methodist, who is involved in the Luton Industrial College).

3. "The Christian in family life" (study composed by Mrs Marion Pyke, an Anglican, and a counsellor with wide experience in marriage guidance work).

4. "The Christian in the neighbourhood" (study composed by Mr Peter Holbrook, a Roman Catholic lay reader, who is involved in the ecumenical church in Caversham Park).

5. "The Christian in public life" (study composed by Mr Philip Giddings, an Anglican, who lectures in Politics in the University of Reading).

The Lent course will end with an ecumenical service, to celebrate the Resurrection, which will be held soon after Easter. Details of the place and time of this service will be given later. We hope that some of the study groups will want to continue after Easter, to explore more fully some of the issues raised by the Lent course.

LINK LUNCH

ABOUT seventy people representing 12 different Caversham Churches of various denominations, sat down to the second Link Group Lunch at the Baptist Church on January 21. Since the work of the Link Group is all about meeting people, it is obviously necessary that those concerned should get to know each other first, so it was an excellent idea to get everyone to change places half way through the very satisfying meal by the simple expedient of providing different coloured paper napkins. In

this way many of those present were introduced to people they scarcely knew and by the end of the meal a very friendly atmosphere had been established.

Doreen Bennett, founder member of the Link Group, then spoke of the aims and achievements of the group, formed nine years ago, when she and others began to realise just how many disadvantaged people we actually had in our midst. It was, she said, most important to provide understanding and friendship and this had been done in

several ways, each member of the group having a special interest in a particular organisation whose needs they could then pass on. The response to the Christmas appeal had been very good; tea parties had been given in members' homes for the elderly, toys provided for the NSPCC, Family Aid, Battered Wives home and so on.

The Work of REAP

Mike Kane, the Link Group's special REAP contact, spoke of the work of the Reading Emergency



Link Group members (left to right) Janet Fergusson, Linda Bates, Pat Jenkins, Doreen Bennett, Valerie Birtwhistle and Mike Kane with Tony Carson from REAP at Link Group lunch at Caversham Baptist Church. Peter Sear

Accommodation Project and introduced Tony Carson, the appeals director of the Project. As many people know, a shelter for the destitute, known as the Keep, was opened at Brock Barracks at the end of 1982, with the help of the Simon Community. Since that time over 430 people had been cared for at the Keep which is open round the clock. Currently REAP is exploring the possibility of first and second stage accommodation for those capable of moving on and the Project is in the process of becoming a registered charity.

There are many facts about the destitute which are not always realised and Tony went on to speak of some of them. Such a condition, he said, could happen to anyone; some of these people were in this position due to mental, medical, psychological and other reasons; some just could not cope. Seldom are they given to violence and, indeed, are particularly vulnerable, when sleeping

rough, to attacks by young thugs.

In such circumstances they could seek no redress from anyone, since they were technically breaking the law by sleeping out and could not turn to the police for help. REAP was currently forming excellent relations with local hospitals, but it has to be admitted that nobody was really interested in "tramps" who fell ill and hospitals, even if they would take them in for emergency treatment, would keep them only for a few hours. Doctors often refused to treat them. In the whole of London, Tony said, only two hospitals would take such people in. The DHSS would supply only £3 a day for deals and this only on a daily basis, leaving nothing for accommodation. Among the saddest cases were those just out of prison with nowhere to go and nobody to turn to once their small allowance had been used up; it was a sad fact that some of these looked on their arrest and imprisonment as a

high point in their lives for, in many cases, it was the first time in years that anyone had taken notice of them.

During 1983 more than three hundred stayed at the Keep and were helped. They had once been a factory worker, an accountant; anyone who has once started on the slippery slope and has found how hard it is to get up again.

What can the rest

of us do? REAP needs your help. Donations of cash, food, clothing, underwear, shoes, socks, bedding (especially blankets), toiletries, detergents, disinfectants, first-aid materials are always welcome. Or could you spare time to help?

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RANGER ENROLMENT



■ (left to right) Alayne Flewin, Lynn Holbrook, Paula Varma, Allison King and Amanda Eggleton at their enrolment as members of the 1st Caversham Easter Ranger Unit. At the same ceremony Paula Varma was presented with her Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. The Rangers meet at Caversham Park School on Tuesday evenings and would welcome new members. Their leader is Mildred Cookson, tel: 478284.

—Peter Sear

WATCHDOG

Continued from page 4

ting back and "leaving it to the younger folk". He was, in the best sense, an English gentleman of the old school and will be sadly missed.

NOTE: Caversham Residents' Association Annual Meeting will be held on Monday April 2 at 8pm in Church House. Subject, after formal business, A Third River Bridge.

Subscription: £1 for three years or 40p per annum to the Membership Secretary, 63, Cromwell Road.

CUB-SCOUT ARTISTS



■ Ben Crook (left front), Charles Morrison (centre) and Daniel Giani came first, second and third in a Christmas painting competition arranged for the 3rd Reading (St Peter's Caversham) Cubs by "Artworker" in Gunn Street. With them is Cubscout leader Mrs Barbara Chapman.

—Peter Sear

2nd Caversham Park Brownies

EACH year the 2nd Caversham Park Brownie Pack follows through a Christmas Venture. This is where each Brownie of the Pack is involved in some form of service to others, which fulfils

part of their Brownie Guide promise. For the Christmas 1983 venture each Brownie took part in a sponsored silence which lasted for thirty minutes, during one of their meetings. Each girl

made at least one Christmas card and spent their time reading or pursuing a similar activity. It was a stark contrast to the usual time during meetings. In all £205 was raised which was sent to the Helen House Hospice in Oxford to aid their work. This

was one of the most worthwhile ventures the Brownies have been involved in. Each Brownie found the effort worthwhile, especially when they received a letter of thanks from Sister Francesca, the Mother Superior.

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MONEY ISN'T EVERYTHING

—Peter Sear

AGAIN this Lent share in the work of the Church overseas by giving money through USPG to five projects:

Evangelism in Tanzania where many Muslims are now showing an interest in the teachings of Christ. The Church is presented with an opportunity for outreach which must not be lost.

A pension fund for retired presbyters and lay workers of the Church of South India, many of whom are now trying to live on less than £1 per month.

Revitalising the Church in Madagascar where there are few priests or catechists, and other resources are scarce.

West Malaysia — a project to set up a correspondence training course for clergy and laity.



Medical work among those whose poverty makes them more liable to sickness and disease.

USPG are providing a wallet which gives details of each project and includes a separate envelope for people to give to each scheme — perhaps by going without a meal each week and putting the cost of that meal in the appropriate envelope. The wallets will be available in all the Anglican churches in the parish.

As the wallet says "Money isn't everything... but it helps our partner churches overseas, just as they help us towards a richer spirituality."

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ROUND THE CLUBS

Blgrave WI

BLGRAVE celebrated its twenty-first birthday during January with a luncheon. Mrs J. Price, the President, welcomed fifty members and special guests Mrs T. Richards, J. P. County Chairman, Mrs S. Hill County Treasurer, Mrs Clark, Berks Federation Secretary, and Mrs D. Durie of Group Link.

An excellent meal was provided by the Committee to be followed by the cutting of a cake made and iced by Mrs M. Popplewell Vice-Chairman. A toast to the Institute was proposed by Mrs T. Richards.

Earlier in the month three new members were welcomed by the President, who after

the business, introduced Guest Speaker Mr D. Clark, who showed his interesting collection of slides, with commentary on "Camping in Chitral", a rugged and desolate region of Northern Pakistan, which includes the Khyber Pass. A very well supported Competition to find the Prettiest Brooch was won by Mrs Housden, 2nd Mrs Hutt, and 3rd Miss M. Chapman.

Chazey WI

AT THE January meeting, members enjoyed an interesting talk about Yoga given by Diane Laing. A busy programme for 1984 was outlined by the President, Mrs Marjorie McComb. This

started in the most enjoyable way on January 21, a fine cold evening when 44 members and their husbands enjoyed a moveable feast. This was quite a planning feat and so popular that there have already been discussions about repeating it again next year.

WI Market

On January 20, the WI Market moved to Church House. Customers found their way to the new venue and appreciated the warmer hall. More producers are still needed so if anyone is interested, please could they call into Church House one Friday morning between 9.30 and 10.30am. We are looking for bakers, gardeners and craft items.

the speaker, said that he had learned about the need for more cattle in India from an Indian student. Cattle are not quite as valuable as racehorses, so can go by boat. The Indian Government agreed to pay for the aeroplane and Christian Aid tried the complicated way of supplying help by flying out cattle. Eventually two journeys were made from Stansted airport to New Delhi via Istanbul and Lahore. Although he had had to shoulder heavy responsibilities in this affair, Mr Stansfield told a good story well, causing much laughter, while his slides also helped to give a clear picture of how the cattle fared.

Better feeding and housing of the cows is most important. Artificial insemination would be useful and the introduction of pumps for irrigation. There are already buffalo there which yield milk and Jersey cattle from New Zealand. There had been half-breeding from Friesian cows. He said it would have been better if his under-graduate students or some of his audience had gone instead of the cattle, but people who will volunteer to go to India for two years to help are now being recruited.

During the evening refreshments were served of cheese, wine and squash. Later Muriel Waite played the organ for community singing and dancing for everyone to end an enjoyable evening.

Mrs Jocelyn Bradley visited the club on January 16 and brought the latest selection of the Pippa Dee fashions for adults and children to show the members. Mrs Bradley explained how the garments were designed in colours to blend together and gave tips on washing them successfully. The members were then invited to try on the garments if they so wished.

A friendly Whist Drive was held on January 23 with Doreen Crawley in charge of the procedure and ready to give advice on points of play. The winner was George Feast, the runner up Daisy Heath with the consolation prize given to Freda Haines.

The January meetings ended with a Bring and Buy evening. The members brought articles which were sold in aid of club funds.

from Reading Museum. Members also had an exhibition of regional dishes.

Townswomens Caversham Afternoon Townswomens Guild

THE January meeting was held at Church House. Mr G. J. Tutty gave an interesting and informative talk followed by a film showing the dedicated work done at the Dr Barnado Village for the physically handicapped children. This gave rise to a lively question time. There was also a well supported Bring and Buy stall. The next meeting is on February 16 at 2pm. New members would be warmly welcomed.

Caversham Ladies Club

AT THE January meeting in the Baptist Church Centre the club had a demonstration of cake icing given by Mrs Shelley Strong. Members found it very interesting, and although many of them had probably been icing cakes over the years, they were able to appreciate the different and possibly easier methods of decoration shown them by Mrs Strong.

After the chairman thanking Mrs Strong for a very enjoyable afternoon, the meeting ended with the usual cup of tea.

St Peter's Wives

"A HISTORY of Underwear" drew a record number of members, and friends to Church House in January. Mrs Lois Hibbard combined the skills of quick-change artist with those of a diligent researcher and recreator and period costume to give a truly entertaining evening. She dressed as Eliza

beth I and Nell Gwynn might have been seen in private moments, and then went on to illustrate how changing under-fashions in the Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian eras were dictated by vanity rather than comfort or practicality!

On March 20 the Group meets at Church House at 8pm to hear a talk on health foods.

Caversham Women's Institute

IN SPITE of the chilly weather the January meeting was very well attended.

Letters of thanks were received from the aged and housebound who had received gifts or grocery vouchers from the proceeds made at the very successful Annual Bazaar.

Members watched a demonstration of canvas-work given by Mrs E. Knight.

The many talents of members craftwork made an excellent display including painting, crochet, knitting and needlework etc. Social time was an hilarious game of "Give us a Clue". The Annual General meeting will be held on March 15. The Competition — "An egg decorated by a member".

Caversham Darby and Joan Club

THE winter commenced with a musical afternoon given to all members by Mrs Burden who plays for singing and dancing which all always enjoy. The next meeting members welcomed a few of the Sainsbury Singers who gave some solos from the musical shows they had appeared in. Everyone enjoyed a journey to the pantomime at Swindon to see Aladdin; it was a good journey and afterwards they had a lovely supper at Hungerford. All home in good time with everyone quite happy!

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WEDDING AT HOME PASSPORT

Townswomen's Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

EARLY arrangements about the bazaar to be held later in the year were made at the January meeting of the Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild. A slimming club may be started, making use of sauna baths. Drama group are reading a play and social studies were to hear a talk by Mr Donald Clarke about Egypt and the Nile.

Flying cattle to India
Malcolm Stansfield from the Department of Agriculture at Reading University, who was

Townswomen's Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

AT THE Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild meeting Mrs Heseltine spoke on "Alice and the Red Centre", a circuitous journey which she had undertaken, in Australia, from Alice Springs, via Ayers Rock. The slides showed the beauty and variety of the countryside, the development of Alice Springs, through which the Telegraph Line had been laid in 1882 from Adelaide to Darwin and the huge red rock formations, in the Ayers Rock area.

Caversham Community Association

THE first meeting in 1984 was on January 9. Members of the club showed their talents in a New Year Concert with solos and duets in song, piano and organ playing, interspersed with poetic recitals. An amusing sketch performed by club members was produced by May Plant.

Maplewood WI

IN THE absence of Mrs Fry, the President, Mrs E. Harden took the twenty-ninth birthday Meeting, to which the County Chairman Mrs T. Richards and ten guests from the Group Institutes came. The birthday cake was made and iced by Mrs M. Pilgrim. The speaker was Mrs Susan Hill, who spoke about the European Parliament in a lively and informative manner — and members felt that they needed to show about this subject.

Many people took part in the competition "Name this person", arranged by Mrs H. Baker. Maplewood meets in St Andrew's Hall, Albert Road, on the third Tuesday of each month at 2.30pm. Do come if you would like to join this Institute, or to come as a visitor.

Rosehill WI

MRS Allwright welcomed members and one visitor to the first meeting of the year. After the usual business Mrs Aldridge was the speaker. Her talk, entitled "Food through the Ages" took members from Stone Age man to the present time and was most informative about the history of food. She brought articles connected with the subject



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OBITUARIES

WALTER POND

WALTER Pond of Albert Road Caversham died on January 13, 1984. He was well known in Caversham for many years and he and his wife, Phyllis, were married in St Peter's Church in 1924. He was commissioned in the Tank Corps in World War 1 and his career was with the Great Western Railway; he served in the Home Guard in the Second World War.

Walter was a founder member and

Vice President of Caversham Lawn Tennis Club and was the first President of the Reading School Parents' Association. He was also a keen Freemason and much respected for his work in the craft in which he was a member of Caversham Lodge having occupied the Chair in 1957.

He leaves a widow, Phyllis, a son Peter and three granddaughters; we extend to them our condolences.

BRUCE BAILEY

IT IS with sadness we report the death on January 19 of Bruce Bailey, known by many in Caversham as "our friendly butcher"; for 18 years before his retirement Bruce served his customers, who he called "my lovely ladies", behind the counter at Jennings in Prospect Street.

Bruce lived in Caversham all his life and saw many changes, including the building of the Donkin Hill area. Only two weeks before his death he talked of how, as a boy, he would slide in an old bath tub down Donkin Hill which then was only a track. He was a homeloving man with simple pleasures, the main being his pigeons. He was a member of the Caversham Pigeon Club and with his wife, Win, served on the social committee. Nothing gave Bruce more pleasure than to wait patiently at the top of his garden watching for his first birds to arrive back from a race.

As a young man Bruce was a keen sportsman, enjoying football, boxing and swimming. During the last war he was a Commando, serving

mainly in North Africa.

Bruce became ill about five years ago and fought his illness bravely; he even returned to work during last year to help out. Towards the end of the year he was given a clean bill of health, only to find in mid-December that it was not so. He knew what was going to happen; he hated secrets and faced up to it so bravely counting every day he awoke as a bonus. He was pleased that he had been with his family for Christmas, the New Year and his 43rd wedding anniversary, which occurred a few days before his death.

So many people attended Bruce's funeral that the cemetery chapel was full to overflowing, many having to stand throughout the ceremony, which was conducted by Alan Wilson.

It was easy to be fond of Bruce; he was liked by so many and will be greatly missed. We feel everyone who knew him would like us to extend our deepest sympathy to his devoted wife, Win, his sons Geoff and Neil and daughter-in-law Lesley. May he rest in peace.

B.D.

LESLIE HUNTER

LESLIE Hunter, who died on January 17, lived in Caversham for most of his life, having moved from Kidmore End in 1916. He took an active part in the life of the church, both at Kidmore End and at St Andrew's, Caversham. In his earlier years at St Andrew's, he assisted in conducting children's services. He served at the altar, and continued to do so right up to the time of his death.

He worked for several years for a wholesale grocery firm. Later on, he became a schoolmaster at the Bluecoats School in Reading and at Emsworth in Hampshire. He took a keen interest in amateur dramatics in Caversham, and produced several plays. He was also involved in the former Caversham Literary and Debating Society. For many years, he was on the committee of the Caversham Residents Association, and in this connection opposed the alteration of the Reading Town Hall and its famous organ.

Recently, he campaigned for the preservation of Balmore Hall. He loved to cycle round the countryside, and visit the village churches, and he made a reputation for himself as a local historian. Leslie Hunter was a true traditionalist, in the best sense of that word, and was eager to share with others his own love for the legacy of the past. He will be missed by all who knew and loved him, and will be remembered as a true gentleman, and a faithful Christian.

HILDA KINGS

CAVERSHAM Methodist Church will miss very greatly their dear friend Mrs Hilda Kings who died on January 6, 1984, after a long illness bravely borne. Hilda had been a member of Gosbrook Road for over 50 years. Before moving to Caversham she had been a member of the old London Street Chapel and then Whitley Hall Methodist Church when London Street closed.

In her early life Hilda worked as a tailoress for Heelas. During her long membership of Gosbrook Road, Hilda had held many offices. She was a Sunday School teacher, an organist and a class leader. Hilda belonged to the choir, Guild and

Women's Fellowship. For many years Hilda had been pianist for the Women's Fellowship and Secretary of their Holiday Club.

Hilda was a very talented lady who loved painting, embroidery, music and gardening. She was always at home in her garden and the ladies of the Women's Fellowship had spent many happy afternoons there. Hilda had a great interest in everything, even during her last few days in hospital. One of her last messages was "Give my love to the Church". Hilda died a true Christian and it was a privilege to have known her. She leaves a son, Alan, daughter-in-law Marlene, and grandchildren, Elaine, Andrew and Philip.

THE CHURCH AND THE CHILDREN

ST ANDREW'S Sunday School meets in St Andrew's Hall 9.15am. Contact Mrs Sheila Ivens (477180) or Mr Peter Watsham (478744).

ST BARNABAS Sunday School in the Hall 9.15am. Contact Mrs Jean Carroll, 45 Brooklyn Drive (472598). (Also Children's Service last Sunday in the month).

ST JOHN'S Nursery Church (for children up to 8 years) in church during the Sunday eucharist at 9.15am. Family Service 1st Sunday in the month at 11am (mainly for children over 4 years).

ST PETER'S Sunday School meets in the Rectory at 9.15am (except 2nd Sunday which is Parade Service).

ST MARGARET'S (MAPLEDURHAM) Family Workshop 2nd Saturday of each month 10am-12 noon. Contact Mrs Heather Robinson, 4 Hilltop Road (476873).

CAVERSHAM PARK At Caversham Park School 11am. Contact Mrs Paula Andrews, 5 Gifford Close (478430).

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS METHODIST Junior Church — Sundays 11am. Youth Squash — Sundays 8pm.

GOSBROOK ROAD METHODIST CHURCH Bee-Gees — Sundays 10.15am. Sunday School — Sundays 11am Young Peoples Club — Sundays 7.30pm.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH 10.30am Creche — up to three years. Beginners, juniors and seniors three to 14 years. Fourteen Plus Group. Secretary: Mrs J. Morgan, 7 Grove Road, (Sonning Common 72-3704).

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LINK GROUP

ON JANUARY 16 the Link Group held its monthly meeting at Doreen Bennett's home. The Chairman in her report said that December had been a very busy month. It included a most successful Christmas Tea Party at the Baptist Centre, to which about twenty-four people came, followed by a Toy Service on December 9, from which toys were distributed to the NSPCC, the Battered Wives' Home and the Family Aid Centre in Katesgrove Home. Finally the Group greatly enjoyed singing carols with members of St Andrew's Choir to some of the elderly people in Caversham.

The Treasurer reported that donations had been given to Brookfields

School towards the swimming pool they hope to build, to REAP to help buy food, also to Mencap and the NSPCC.

Since funds have been depleted by these activities this naturally led to a discussion on the best means of increasing them. It was generally agreed that a "Good as New" Sale would be the most likely to succeed, so long as only items which really were as good as new were offered for sale. Items for the Brick-a-brac stall could be professionally valued, thus ensuring a return commensurate with the generosity of the donors. There are so many needs in Caversham that every penny of profit is wanted.

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THE LADIES OF GREENHAM

By Zoilus

THE ROYAL County of Berkshire has many boons and blessings. We are lucky to live in so fair and prosperous a region, but there is one place that has brought a more sinister renown to the county. Just outside Newbury Greenham Common has been transformed into Greenham Air Base, home of the dreaded Cruise missile and spawning ground of the most notorious protest group of the day, the Greenham Women.

A friend of mine, a committed and sincere supporter of CND, visits the site with comforts for the beleaguered garrison without the gates, and I was glad of the opportunity to go with her because I feel it is wrong to pontificate on any of the controversial activities of our mixed-up human race — from planning to pornography —

without seeing it. So a visit and a sort of amateur investigative journalism into the dreary phenomena that is Greenham seemed to be in order.

Dreary is the operative word, from the clapped out concept of contemplating the use by any nation of such a horrific weapon as Cruise to the pathetic belief that the self-imposed discomfort of a hundred (or ten thousand) women in their dismal purgatory outside the fence will have any significant bearing on an international problem. But I'm afraid I have always been sceptical of the value of any mass protest. A quarter of a million people banding together to sit on the ground in Trafalgar Square for an afternoon proves nothing more than their own view on a certain cause and the efficiency of the famed Rent-a-Mob organisation. A useful safety valve, perhaps, but as a contribution to solving the actual problem, little or nothing.

But back to the Ladies of Greenham. The weather was in character, dreary and wet and the

various little camps spread alongside the perimeter fence and at the main gates were a be-draggled cluster of polythene patchwork tents in a sea of mud, populated by a score or so of the permanent garrison and several children, babies and tots mostly, who were probably the most lively lot there, sitting round a camp fire consuming bowls of a rather repulsive looking stew which most certainly was a darn sight better than it looked.

I was unlucky in my choice of day as the majority of the campers were away in Newbury either standing in dock or acting as a support group in the public gallery, but it seems that there are normally round about one hundred and fifty semi-permanent residents spread over seven camps, as each of the seven gates is always manned. Greenham women come in all shapes and sizes and ages. Like the denim army we see every summer at the Reading Pop Festival, there is a clone-lady similarity, but leading the life they do, gumboots, slacks and two or three sweaters is the only sensible

garb; they are not running a holiday camp, more of a self-created concentration camp. I talked with several of the ladies of HQ at the main gate — Eva, a middle-aged survivor of the original Praetorian Guard of early days who was obviously an accepted leader, a wanly beautiful American freelance journalist who had wandered over from the States and toted a camera from her shoulder, ever ready to snap the emergence of any questionable convoy from the base, and Liz, a single-parent mother who commuted regularly from a flat in Islington with her family to share in the comradeship and dedication of Greenham.

Soon it was time to study the other side of the penny. Most of the people of Newbury regard the ladies of Greenham with about as much enthusiasm as their forefathers greeted the Black Death and most of the pubs and cafes on the roads have forthright signs "Greenham Women not Welcome". The landlady of one small inn on the outskirts of the town said she was happy to serve a regular band of

the women whom she described as being nice, quiet customers, and a man who actually lived at Greenham was fairly ambivalent in his attitude saying he respected their views and though they were a well-meaning lot he thought they had been their quite long enough to make their point — "Why don't they go away now and leave us in peace?"

But probably the majority of Newbury folk feel really bitter about the St Joans of the Common. They are not happy living next to a lethal pile of Cruise missiles but many feel that as one of the longest periods of peace this country has enjoyed could be marked down to our possession of the nuclear deterrent, why should their unease be compounded by the arrival of a crowd of half-baked hoydens to park themselves on their doorstep and live in squalor — augmented every so often by thousands of supporters from all over the country to disrupt what was a choice corner of Berkshire's green and pleasant land. And look at the cost of it all! Why should the locals

have to pay for containment, policing and punishing of their unwelcome visitors? This, I suspect, is one of their strongest objections, and it does seem an unfair way to operate the law.

Finally, I don't think my visit has changed my own view of the whole sorry saga of Greenham. The women say that their constant presence at the gates has the purpose of keeping attention drawn to the missiles within. Maybe that isn't a bad thing either because our possession of such devastating weapons could well deter an aggressor, though I don't suppose that's the way the ladies want us to read it. I pay tribute to their sincerity, they are brave and one is tempted to say that it is only the patent absurdity of their actions that lets us accept them as a public nuisance instead of a public danger.

P.S. As I write this I hear on the radio that the Greenham Women have been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. It's all very confusing!

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WASTED ACRES

By Zoilus

MOST OF us have a soft spot for allotments and allotmenters — which seems to be quite a good all-purpose word for those happy gardeners who spend so much of their spare time delving and sowing and creating a little cottage industry of their own so that the family can eat the best of all food — their own produce.

Before the war, when many people had no garden and during the war

when we were exhorted to "dig for victory" beans sprouted and cabbages and cauliflowers thrust their leafy heads up from almost any suitable spare plot, but now that all post-war houses have their own garden and produce in the shops is varied and comparatively cheap the charms of allotmenting have faded and over a third of the allotments are unattended, unwanted and grown into a tangled wilderness. So the Council has

made a survey with a view to consolidating the plots on many sites so all the workable land is together in one area, freeing acres of hitherto wasted resources for more productive use.

What use is yet to be decided so the Reading Horticultural Federation is being consulted and the eventual decision made by the full Council. Housing is a social need that springs to mind but each site should be judged on its own merits and in some areas

there may be a need for public open space, a leisure activity or even some clean light industry.

Incidentally, it is good news for the allotmenters of Balmore Park that now it is decided that Balmore Hall is to go only two of the allotments will be taken for the doctors' surgery instead of six. We are all sad to lose the Hall, but the decision was in the hands of the new owners, and demolition is their decision.

HOSPITAL FRIENDS

AN ELDERLY Scotsman from Aberdeen, shabbily dressed and obviously far from wealthy, arrived at the office of the League of Friends of Reading Hospitals. Out of his pocket he produced a grubby wad of notes; £100 in tenners as a way of saying thank you for the life-saving treatment and care he had received in hospital.

This was just one example of gratitude by patients which Mrs Sally Judge, secretary of the League of Friends, mentioned when she spoke to the AGM of the Caversham Bridge Good Neighbour Scheme.



Other income is from the big Hospital Fete each June, from donations and subscriptions, from legacies (£11,500 in 1983) from special fund-

raising events, like the record-breaking Folk Dance (thirty seven hours and twenty-three minutes) by members of the University who raised £135 by their efforts!

And where does the money go? In 1983, Mrs. Judge told the meeting, £24,500 had been spent. Some of the money had been used to provide expensive medical equipment — £5,000 for a machine to remove kidney stones which would reduce the time spent in hospital from two

weeks to two days. Four colour TVs had been provided for long stay patients; flower vases, curtains and carpets; a printing machine for the occupational therapy department; grants for transporting people to visit relatives in hospital; providing a tea-party for patients on the geriatric wards.



More information and a leaflet explaining about the League of Hospital Friends is available from

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tals
5 Craven Road
Reading RG1 5LE

Earlier at the meeting Mrs Kate Besley, the central organiser of the "Bridge Scheme" spoke about the work during the past year. Help had been given in emergencies, in sitting with an invalid husband or wife so that the shopping could be done; over one hundred requests had been received for transport, to the doctor's or chiropodist's, to visit relatives in



■ Mrs Sally Judge, Secretary of the Hospital League of Friends, with Revd Ralph Rogerson at the Caversham Bridge Scheme AGM.

— Peter Sear

hospital (including at the Sue Ryder home in Nettlebed where transport can be very difficult). The members of the "Bridge Scheme" had helped with the distribution of

two hundred parcels at Christmas. If you could help the "Bridge Scheme" in any way, by offering to visit housebound

people, doing shopping, providing car transport (this especially is a great need). Please telephone 472374 or 476181.

READING DÜSSELDORF CHURCHES EXCHANGE

ON JULY 5, 1983, the Oberbürgermeister of Düsseldorf unveiled in the City Hall a plaque in memory of Dr Phoebe Cusden who, when Mayor of Reading in 1947, founded the link between Reading and the German town. During the past 36 years the exchanges between the two towns have been

many and varied, including choirs, nurses, teachers, orchestras, fencers and tennis players, and one that is now well established and regular is that between members of Reading and Düsseldorf churches.

In October, 1984, there will again be a visit to Düsseldorf led by the Rev Gerald Restall, Director of St Mary's Centre. Participants will be hosted by members of churches in Reading's linked town and will offer reciprocal

hospitality in 1985. Members of all Reading churches, whatever denomination, are invited to join the party, and members of Caversham churches who have taken part in previous years know what an enjoyable and memorable week is assured.

Düsseldorf means "Village on the River Düssel". Now however, it is a city three times the size of Reading and astride the mighty Rhine. It is the business centre of the Ruhr industrial region, but on its outskirts are delight-

ful little towns like Kaiserswerth and attractive countryside like the Neander valley.

Florence Nightingale studied nursing at the Deaconess Institution in Kaiserswerth, whilst the Neanderthal was named after the pastor Joachim Neander, writer of "All my hope on God is founded" and "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation", who gained inspiration for his hymns when walking in this valley where later the skull of the

"Neanderthal Man" was found.

Martyn Allies, Chairman of the Reading Düsseldorf Association, whose phone number is 472007, will be very pleased to provide further information on the visit.

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For further information, call or telephone our friendly staff
John Stevens (Secretary), 10 Gun Street, Reading
(behind Heelas) Telephone Reading 595678

90178

Postbag

Dear Sir,
THE Mapledurham Area Residents' Association was founded twelve years ago with residents drawn mainly from properties in the north of Reading in the parishes of Mapledurham and Kidmore End.

Since the 1978 boundary changes the majority of our members now reside within the Borough of Reading (Caversham).

Because of dif-

ficulty in recruiting active committee members it has been proposed that the Association should merge with the Caversham and District Residents' Association and membership transferred. This latter organisation is willing to accept a merger and I am sure they would adequately look after the interests of the present MARA members.

The proposal would be discussed

and a decision taken at a meeting of the MARA membership in Annual General Meeting to be held on Tuesday, April 10, 1984, at the Mapledurham Playing Fields Pavilion, Upper Woodcote Road at 7.45pm

V. H. C. WATSON
Hon Secretary/
Treasurer
Mapledurham Area Residents' Association

5 Scholars Close
Caversham

The Newest Musical — ACTS PARTS III



■ A scene from Part II of "Acts"

Photo — Philip Webb

The final part of Pam Chilvers' new musical, telling the story of the Acts of the Apostles, "Acts Part III" is to be staged at Caversham Baptist Church from May 9-11.

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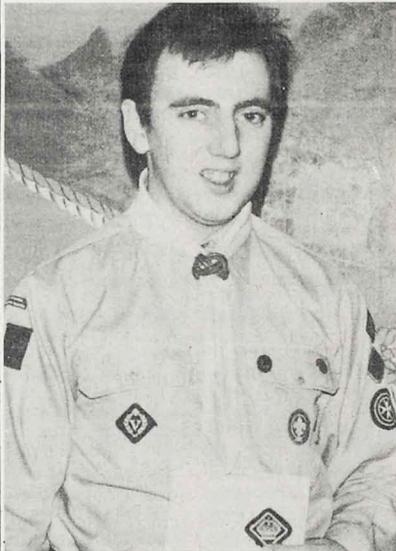
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TOP SCOUTING AWARD



■ Congratulations to Terry Williams of 89th (Milestone Wood) Venture Scouts who has been presented with the Queen's Scout Award, the highest award in Scouting. It took Terry four years to complete the various projects for the award — including a winter expedition to the Welsh Brecon Beacons.

— Peter Sear

Sue Ryder Group Caversham

THE Group recently held a planning meeting which resulted in:

1. **Jumble Sale**
April 28 in Caversham Hall.
2. **All Sorts Fair**
October 13 in Caversham Hall

Keep these dates free!

All inquiries will be welcomed by A. Deane, tel: 473798.

The Rev Bernard Metcalfe

READERS may like to have current news of the Rev Bernard Metcalfe, curate at St Peter's from 1972-75. He left Caversham for Aylesbury, then went to Thamesmead in Kent. He will shortly be moving to Totton.

The population there at present is 25,000 but is expected to grow in the next ten years by another 10,000. Quite a challenge! All best wishes go to him from his many friends in Caversham.

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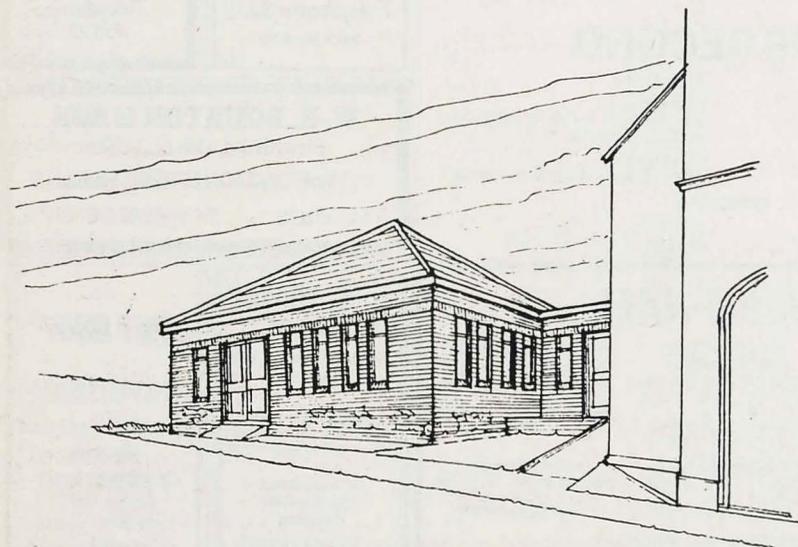
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THE CHAPEL ON THE HILL



Members of the Chapel on the Hill in Emmer Green working on the foundations of their chapel extension (see Revd Chris Justice's "Talking Point" last month) — Peter Sear



An artist's impression of the finished building

THE END OF THE WILDERNESS

IT WAS a beautiful blue sky day on December 30 when The Wilderness began to vanish. The Wilderness was a small piece of land in Darell Road, once part of Toots farm, and it had remained the one little bit of original Caversham in the area.

When all else was built over this small plot lay untouched. Here ash, wild cherry, sycamore, and a couple of small oaks grew over the years from seedling to sapling until they became trees of some sixty or more years of age.

Beneath them blackberry bushes thrived and little glades of grass were here and there. Every January catkins began to lengthen and grow golden on a row of old coppiced hazels and every Autumn squirrels were on the look-out for early nuts. Each Spring a patch of semi-wild forget-me-nots flourished, getting larger yearly. Primroses, too, increased nearby. It was a lovely place, a haunt of many wild creatures. On occasions rabbits have been seen and fox and badger have wandered there at night. But mostly it was beloved by the birds. Black-cap, willow warblers and chiffchaff

have all nested there, and long ago the wryneck. In Summer the cuckoo was always searching for a nest in which to lay her eggs and swallows and martins hawked beside the tallest trees for insects.

The Wilderness was just the name given to this little "nature reserve" by those living near it. Originally the land may have been the old farm orchard for there was an ancient apple tree of species unknown and

several unidentified damson plum trees of superb flavour which multiplied happily in a far corner.

Now the Wilderness has gone and two new houses will soon be found in the road. The last couple of days of 1983 were rather sad for those of us with homes nearby who loved this little patch of countryside, but we must think ourselves fortunate that we had it to enjoy for so long.

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 8.00am Holy Communion
 9.15am PARISH COMMUNION
 11.15am Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Sundays)
 11.15am 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
 8.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
 11.00am PARISH COMMUNION
CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH
 10.30am Morning Service
 6.30pm Evening Service
CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (Caversham Park Primary School)
 11.00am FAMILY COMMUNION (1st and 3rd Sundays)
 MORNING WORSHIP (2nd and 4th Sundays)

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL
 10.30am Morning Service
 6.30pm Evening Service
METHODIST
Caversham
 11.00am Morning Service
 6.30pm Evening Service
Caversham Heights
 8.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
 11.00am Morning Service
 6.30pm Evening Service
ROMAN CATHOLIC
St Anne's
 9.00am, 11.00am (also Saturdays 5.30pm)
Our Lady of Caversham
 8.30 and 10.30am, 5pm Mass
St Martin's School
 9.15am Mass
Mapledurham House
 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday)
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 January 29 — Gemma Chard

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St Margaret's
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