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BRIDGE

JULY, 1984

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No 236

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LOOKING IN AT THE LIBRARY

THE idea of a library being a place simply to borrow a book is so old fashioned. Katy mentioned in last month's "Bridge" yet another facet to its many-sided services and prompted a visit to the Caversham branch to see how they have been doing under Mrs Mary Kendall. She has just finished her first year as librarian.

Mrs Kendall has worked for the county at the Slough branch, but immediately before coming to Caversham, was with the Mobile Library for the Housebound for five years. She found this most rewarding and it is splendid that such a system exists to help those who cannot leave home. In five years one can make a lot of friends and Mrs Kendall will surely have been missed by her many regulars when the opportunity to extend her work experience came in the move to Caversham. Mary is a shy but warm person, clearly knows what she wants and works well with her full-time and part-time staff. The atmosphere is good; friendliness and helpfulness are the order and Mary Kendall has welded the team into a useful working unit. It is sad that Barbara Austin is leaving for the Midlands after 18 months service where her talents as

designer have been so well used in the displays.

Room to manoeuvre

Since the alterations were made inside the library, more space has become available. Here exhibitions can be mounted and regular visitors must have been impressed by them. They are not only organised by the library but by other interested groups wanting to put over views and facts that will be of interest. These exhibitions, although for the most part using books from the library's own stock, also include material and books specially published for the purpose, eg the Caversham Adult Centre. Other displays have covered Keep Fit, Holidays, Best Novels, Publicity, Children's Books and there is plenty of space on the units for pictorial additions. A recent eye-catching exhibition by pupils from Thameside

School showed a variety of book-marks, book jackets and book plates all made by the children themselves. Always more space could be used. Local publicity never appears to be refused as is apparent when you face the crowded noticeboard. The new "diary of events" could also be good if used fully.

Starting Young

Children are catered for; though their part of the library is small, it is certainly well used. Play groups are invited to visit and decorations and quizzes fill up the wall space. Every Monday morning for half-an-hour from 11am there is "Story Time" for pre-school children (a special Christmas party for them was a great success). Local playgroups are encouraged to run their own story-time. There is even a small toy box to entertain the very young.

School visits are frequent and take place with an introduction to the books in the library and an explanation of the method of issuing. A story (preferably about a library) is read and a game included for first visits. Older schoolchildren come and find out how the classification scheme works. Plans for summer activities are well in hand.

For the file...

The collation of statistics has a fascination for some, and as they are a necessary return for the job



■ Staff at the ready for another day's work — Photo: E. S. Archer



■ One of the library's displays

may be of interest.

(Year to 31.3.84). There are 10,000 plus regular borrowers, 30,000 books in stock, 260,000 books issued, 2,350 requests for special books.

The cassette library is increasing in popularity and there are 1,500 in stock. The charge for borrowing is 30p.

The "new book" list is revised every two months. During this period the change over of tickets and tokens was standardised with the rest of the county.

And for the future

In a recent "Comment" in the Times

(15.5.84), Gillian Tindall, writing sadly about a recent librarians' conference, said that words like "quality" and "balanced intake" and "education" have been usurped by "service to community", "user-friendly" and "free access to the source of information". As resources are not infinite a choice must be made so that older values are not lost in pursuit of new ones. Ideas do change and so do values, and it is up to all those who use library services to see that standards are kept high. I think they are in Caversham.

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| TUESDAY | 9.30-1.00 |
| | 2.00-7.00 |
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TALKING POINT

By GRAHAM LYNCH-WATSON
CAVERSHAM PARK VILLAGE CHURCH



PUBLIC PRAYERS

COUGHT WE to bring a critical eye to bear upon the prayers we use in public worship? For my own part, I believe we should. For instance, I find myself troubled and in need of help over a familiar versicle and response such as:

Minister: Lord in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer

These and similar responses are widely used in public worship by all the major Christian denominations. What picture of God is suggested by such phrases? Is it not the picture of a God who is a reluctant listener? A God whose elbow you and I have to nudge — "O come on, please hear our prayer". Does not the petition "Hear our prayer" suggest that there is at least a possibility that God may not hear our prayer? A possibility that God may not be paying attention and needs a tug of the sleeve from you and me?

Is this what we really believe as Christians? How can this be squared with our Christian conviction that God is "always more ready to hear than we to pray"? To me it smacks of Elijah taunting the prophets of Baal and telling them to shout louder to produce results, because their god might be out hunting, or on a journey, or sound asleep.

Some may ask "Well, what would you use instead in public intercession?" Here is one tentative suggestion. Suppose, when the time came the leader of the prayer began by briefly and factually stating some need or concern for which prayer was being asked. Having given his facts, he might then leave a minute or two of silence in which all could pray in their own manner. Then he might say, as a versicle:

"Father we thank you that you have heard us"

To which the response might be:

"And we know that you hear us always".

And so on to the next short statement of need, followed by another silence and a similar versicle and response. Does not this somewhat better express the faith of the Gospels?

And then again, I find myself similarly troubled in spirit over a phrase such as this from the Intercession in the Holy Communion Ser-

vice (Rite A) of the Anglican Alternative Service Book:

"Hear us as we remember those who have died in the faith of Christ... according to your promises grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom".

Why, I ask myself, should I be bidden week by week to remember only those who have died in the faith of Christ, the faithful departed? Couldn't one argue that the faithful departed may stand in rather less need of our prayerful commemoration than those whose faith was decidedly shaky or even (to the human eye) non-existent?

This preoccupation with the faithful departed is reflected in the Church's Calendar. Only recently did I learn that the "Commemoration of All Souls" (November 2) or All Souls' Day as it is more generally known, is in fact intended solely as a Commemoration of the Faithful Departed. Naive and ignorant, I had supposed that All Souls' Day meant just that, All Souls' Day. I had supposed it was a day on which Christians held, in a wide and loving embrace of prayer, all those countless millions whose earthly existence had been terminated by physical death. The books all insist I was mistaken in that belief.

However, those of you who may have sympathy with my own viewpoint, take heart! Search diligently in your Alternative Service Book for page 336. There, at the foot of the page, among the funeral prayers is this petition. To my mind, it is to be preferred to that which we are bidden to use Sunday by Sunday. It reads simply:

Lord, we commend all those who have died to your unfailing love, that in them your will may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with them in your eternal Kingdom; through Jesus Christ Our Lord.



■ A few of the several hundred walkers who took part in this year's Christian Aid sponsored walk on May 16
— Photo Peter Sear



■ Judith Clark presenting a bouquet to Mayoress Mrs Jewitt when the Mayor, Councillor Ron Jewitt, opened the annual Food Fair at St John's. This year the Fair raised £166. With them is Rev Alan Wilson, priest-in-charge at St John's, who this year will be Mayor's Chaplain.
— Photo Peter Sear

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The newspaper produced by members of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches of Caversham and Mapledurham for the local community.

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

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

Published by Caversham Christian News Ltd, Church Street, Caversham, Reading. Telephone Reading 471703.

Printed by Thames Valley Newspapers Ltd, Tessa Road, Reading.

TO BE — OR NOT TO BE?

SHOULD the priest at Caversham be re-housed? Or should his present dwelling place at Buckside, Caversham be improved? These were questions that plagued some people in the village for many years. In fact from 1804 until 1844 when the matter was finally resolved. The story of those forty years of arguing and changing of plans is all set down in correspondence belonging to Christ Church, Oxford.

It begins a few years after the death of Caversham's priest, the Reverend Peter Vatas, in 1800. There was obviously a discussion about the new incumbent's living accommodation; for a letter, dated 1804, states that Peter Vatas had lived in a property that once belonged to the Brighams, who were originally the first lay rectors of Caversham. Thomas Brigham, cofferer to Henry VIII acquired the Caversham Rectory estate from the Crown after the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Later members of the family built a house on some of their estate land at Canons' End (now Cane End) and lived there. Their fine old home is now called Cane End House.

The next letter from Caversham (1809) asks Christ Church if they would consider buying two adjoining cottages for the priest. Back

came the reply that a recent fire at the college had caused a great deal of expense over repairs and it was not possible to do anything for the present.

Time passed and the poor incumbent's house was in a bad way. Dry rot had got into the drawing room and was rapidly consuming the wainscot. According to the letter it would soon spread into the beams. The cost of dealing with this matter was estimated at fourteen pounds. In fact it proved to be greater.

Again the months went by, the years rolled on. Then early in 1837 a new idea was suggested from Caversham. Could not the tenants of the Priory, also Christ Church property, be given notice and it used for the curate (as he was now called) while a new house was built or

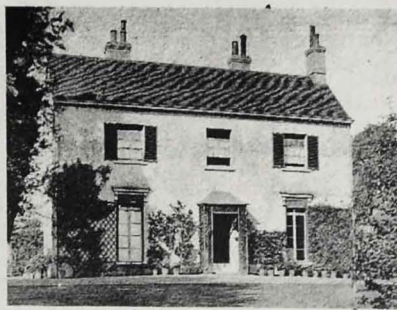
the old one repaired? The Priory tenants were two Miss Cowlades.

Another year elapsed when in May 1838 the Dean and Chapter received a letter from the Reverend Richard Roberts, curate of Caversham, in which he asked, "Is the proposal to repair or rebuild the parsonage given up?" He went on to say that he had heard that nothing of the kind was now going on and that if the scheme was abandoned he would have to give up the parish.

The letter from poor Richard Roberts seems to have got things moving again. His house was examined and Christ Church told that new gutters and tiles were needed for the room. The chimney needed repairs. A new beam was required to support the ceiling in one room. All windows and wainscots "which are numerous" would need replacing. The cost of the operation was to be in the region of two hundred and seventy five pounds!

In September of that year the Priory was also inspected by the local builder, Mr Johnson. He did not think the expense of restoring the Priory was worthwhile. It was damp and inconvenient. He suggested patching it up for fifty pounds and letting it on a long lease or pulling it down and rebuilding it.

Things began to happen! A letter from the Dean and Chapter on November 12 stated that they intended to rebuild the Priory, presumably for use as a parsonage. Then came a letter from Caversham (June 1839) saying that Christ Church had fixed the rent for the Priory too high for the Reverend Richard Roberts. He had only a stipend of seventy-five pounds yearly and to pay sixty of it for rent was unthinkable. Back



■ The Priory c.1875, then kept in good order and unlike the descriptions of it in the accompanying article.



■ Caversham Rectory around 1900

came the reply, The Priory was actually worth a rent of seventy-five pounds per annum! However Mr Roberts could have it for sixty. It was suggested he let his present abode for fifteen pounds when he moved into the Priory thus giving him thirty pounds a year to live on!

By September it had been suggested the rent should be raised to eighty pounds! The letter from Oxford said there was a good supply of water to the Priory but as yet no water closet. One might be added! The house, they wrote, was not quite finished.

A very irate letter the next month said the property was not yet fit for occupation. There were no grates, the chimneys were not yet built, and a large heap of rubbish from the alterations was in the grounds. The writer was the Reverend H. Poyntz and he indicated he was no longer interested in the curacy.

Within a few weeks yet another cleric, the Reverend Latward, had also declined the living.

By March 1840 the present curate of Caversham had resigned and by April the Priory was still empty "and the privies unusable!"

The old Christ Church cottage at Buckside was once again inspected with a view to improving it for the incumbent but the material was of little use and the walls only one brick thick and the foundations of flint. It was now 1841.

Finally, in January 1843, it was stated "that the Dean and Chapter had no alternative but to present to the living a clerk who would be compellable to erect a suitable house". That cleric was the Reverend Joshua Bennett, a Perpetual Curate of Christ

Church. Two house plans were drawn up. One was plain, square and of red brick and for a further one thousand pounds all rooms in this house could be made a foot larger each way. The other was a design in Gothic style, no doubt to complement the new Gothic-inspired residence of Mr Simonds, Caversham's lay rector, who lived nearby.

The last heard about the arrangement was that Joshua Bennett's mother-in-law, Mrs Eykyn, was advancing half the cost of building the Rectory provided the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church put up the remainder. This appears to have happened, for in October 1844 the new house was completed. Sighs of relief must have been breathed in Caversham!

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AROUND this time of the year there is a positive outbreak of events in Caversham which find me meeting so many people I know that all thoughts of retiring to a romantic roses-round-the-door cottage in the country go flying out of the window and I get a real sense of "belonging" here. Caversham, despite its faults, is, thank heavens, still very much of a real community.

Save the Children Week
May began with the Save the Children Fund Week. I wish I could claim to have played an active part, but I did turn out on the Saturday, first to Church House for bargains — and I'm most impressed by the SCF's

KATY IN CAVERSHAM

own products — and then to St Martin's precinct in time to see some gentleman apparently being guillotined. I didn't stop for the rest of the "entertainment" but I gather a good time was had by all.

□ □

The Acts

The next week came the third part of the Acts of the Apostles at the Baptist Free Church. I'm sure this will be fully reported elsewhere; all I'll say is that it was a real achievement, particularly when one thinks it was written and produced by Caversham people. Again what I loved was the sense of community — a real ecumenical effort this was, drawing people from all churches and districts.

Other events

I didn't, alas, get to St John's Food Fair, now established as an annual event, but I did manage the High-down Fete, as good as ever and fortunately not marred this time by the weather, and to a number of coffee mornings, bring-and-buy sales etc. I do sometimes get real bargains, but mostly I enjoy them for the chance of meeting people I know.

□ □

Co-op departures

Shoppers at the Prospect Street Co-op will have missed two very friendly faces in recent weeks — Doreen Biddlecombe, who has retired after 12 years with the Co-op, and Penny Levens, mostly on the check-out, who has left to have a baby. Doreen

lives with her husband Cyril, at Elizabeth House, so we shall still be seeing her in Caversham, and we hope to have news of Penny before our next issue of the "Bridge".

□ □

Calling motorcyclists

It's great to hear of enterprising youngsters who

are doing their best in the difficult field of employment these days. Mark Johnstone, the young son of a friend of mine, has set up in business repairing and servicing motorcycles; young as he is, he has had several years' experience with a local firm and is now fully competent to deal with all kinds of bikes from 50cc to 1300cc. His workshop is at 19 Ardler Road and the phone number is 476905. Good luck to him — he deserves to do well.

MELJON

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EMMER GREEN YOUTH CLUB

IF ANY of our readers are interested in getting an insight into the running and administration of our local Youth and Com-

SUE RYDER SUPPORT GROUP CAVERSHAM

THE Group extends its heartfelt sympathy to Mrs Moat, Matron of the home at Nettlebed on the sad death of her husband.

The profits from The Shetland Show were considerably reduced because of bad weather, so support is requested for the Summer Show at Nettlebed on July 29. The Group will be running the usual sweet etc stall and will be grateful for any contributions. Contact Mrs Ann Deane 473798.

munity Centre at Emmer Green, there is a vacancy for a paid part-time helper in the Office. The work would include assisting in some clerical duties and helping the permanent staff with some of the activities such as Keep Fit sessions, the coffee bar, the infants' creche and other light duties. Only a few hours a week are required.

If this sounds an attractive proposition, get in touch with the Youth Leader, Linda Chandler, at Emmer Green Youth and Community Centre, Grove Road, Emmer Green, tel: Reading 476794.

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

The Link Group

WHEN THE Link Group met on May 21 the main business of the evening was to hear a talk by Mrs Phyllis Heiden about the work of the local branch of the Parkinson's Disease Society, of which she is the secretary. Few members of the Link Group had more than a hazy idea of what it means to be a Parkinson's patient, or to be in the position of a caring relative, on whom falls a relentless burden.

The reason for this is primarily that the illness is not only incurable, but also the rate at which it progresses is extremely slow, so that sufferers and their relatives may be affected for many years. The consequences of this are most tragic if the illness develops early in life, although the onset is more usual in the sixties. This happens when the brain, for reasons which are not yet understood, ceases to produce the chemical dopamine.

In the absence of dopamine the brain is unable to transmit messages to the muscles of the body, which cannot then respond to the wishes of the patient. The effects of this vary in every patient. For some it may mean periods of rigidity, others may suffer from the tremor which is widely associated with Parkinson's disease. In many cases the muscles of the face may be partially paralysed, causing difficulties in swallowing or speaking. Many

patients are prone to falling, which may cause serious accidents.

From all this it is obvious that a Parkinson's disease patient needs the constant and devoted care of a relative. Sadly this is most often an elderly husband or wife, who does not enjoy full health. In the majority of cases the patient is cared for with the utmost devotion by the caring partner, but in other cases the constant strain may cause the breakdown of a marriage.

It is to provide some fellowship with others to counteract the loneliness experienced by the patients and partners, as well as to raise funds for the vitally needed research into the causes and cure of Parkinson's disease, that the local branch of the Parkinson's Disease Society was formed in 1978. At the monthly meetings there is often some form of entertainment or an informative talk. Paying for the transport of patients to the meetings is a heavy drain on the finances of the Society. Volunteer drivers are urgently needed; also anyone who is reasonably fit who could spare the time to help at the meetings or visit the patients would be greatly appreciated, and they should contact Mrs P. Heiden, tel: 481334.

The rest of the meeting was spent in discussing the allocation of funds, and arranging future meetings.

St Andrew's News

VICTOR Smith would like to thank the following for the time and effort which they put in during Christian Aid week, when the sum of £420.78 was raised: Mrs Clark, Mrs Manning, Mrs Lynch, Mrs Warwick, Mrs Orpwood, Mr Kent, Miss Butler, Miss Solly, Mrs

Beetham, Mrs Cooper, Mrs Smith, Miss Smith, Mrs Denning, Miss Amor, Mr Kitcher, Mrs Cleare, Mr Tonks, Miss Milling, Mr and Miss Alexander.

He would also thank Mrs Button who raised £10.00 at the St Andrew's cake sale.

St Barnabas' News

ON SATURDAY May 19 a coach load of friends from Sheldon in Birmingham (where the Revd Peter Sear previously worked as curate) visited Emmer Green on their way home from a day's sightseeing at Windsor. People from St Barnabas' congregation had organised supper for them in the hall, and welcomed them, albeit only for a couple of hours — just long enough for Peter and Anne Sear to renew old friendships. Many thanks to all who helped make their visit a success.

Many of St Barnabas Church helped with the Christian Aid week house-to-house collection. This year the sum

collected was £450 which was slightly down on last year, but still a worthwhile figure. Thanks to all who gave their time and money for the collection.

Since Easter the Sunday School children have been taking part in a Church Missionary Society project about the church in Zaire. The project has involved using filmstrips etc to discover about the work of missionaries in Zaire and what life is like there, and the children have learnt two songs to go with the project — "We are partners in the Gospel" and "All the little children are the same the whole world over."

St John's Notes

ABOUT forty-five members and friends of St John's Mothers' Union went on their coach outing to St Albans on May 8. On the motorway they were caught for a while in a traffic jam. They strolled through St Alban's medieval streets, which were full of colourfully planted public gardens to the cathedral where they saw where Roman bricks had been used in its construction and where medieval wall paintings had been restored. They went on to Luton, and noticed, above the rooftops, the crescent of Islam, on the newly built mosque. The Luton Mothers' Union welcomed them to tea in their pleasant church hall. There was a fascinating purple flowered tree in the church grounds, and two members brought home seed pods.

St John's Cubs had to miss the May Church Parade,

because they were in camp at St Benet's Lake at Mortimer. They have been taking part in a conservation project there, clearing rubbish and learning about the natural history of the area.

St John's Food Fair was held on Saturday May 26. It was opened by the Mayor, and in spite of very wet weather people came to buy the home made and farm fresh produce, as well as groceries and plants. Looking at the tables, just before the doors opened, people wondered where the idea came from that the British cannot cook! It was a very cheerful occasion, with everyone ready to do whatever was needed. Afterwards an energetic group put the church to rights, working together with the speed that comes from practice. The profit was £170. Thank you everyone who helped.

St Peter's Wives

PC ROY Upson, Crime Prevention Officer, surprised members at their meeting in May by saying that the majority of domestic burglaries are carried out during the day. It was revealed that visits to neighbours, short shopping trips and transporting children to and from school provide ample opportunity for the casual burglar to gain access. Moreover, security is often neglected when the householder expects to return "shortly".

An opening as small as 9in x 9in can allow a burglar to enter the home and make off with small items: any larger access will enable him to leave with electrical equipment and antiques. PC Upson advocated the fitting of window locks and other security equipment, keeping all keys on the person at all times, taking photographs of treasured possessions (whatever their monetary value) and marking them with a postcode. His lecture also covered the security of cars and children, and provoked a lot of questions. Officers from the Crime Prevention Department are always willing to visit householders to discuss security measures. No charge is made for this service. A representative from the Scholl Footcare Company will address the July meeting, to be held on the 17th at 8pm in Church House.

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Such professionalism THE BAPTIST Church was filled to capacity on three evenings in May for the third and final part of "Acts" — that spectacular musical in the modern idiom based on the story of the early church as narrated in The Acts of the Apostles. The presentation was the brain child of Mrs Pam Chilvers who composed the music and wrote the lyrics. As each part has been presented the standard has improved to the point where it matched and, indeed, surpassed similar professional productions and this, in no small measure, is to the credit of the Revd Philip Webb in his capacity as actor producer.



Whilst it provided good quality entertainment it was primarily conceived as an act of worship vividly portraying the trials and tribulations, the joys and sorrows

"ACTS"

to those who know him.

Not wishing to be greedy

Yes — it is a pity that "Acts" could only be stretched to three parts — mammoth task though that undoubtedly was — for the avid followers of this drama have been left looking for more. On reflection, however, the time to end a feast is before the onset of indigestion, pleasant memories are the more enjoyable.

which were the birth pangs of the Christian Church. The cast, including the musicians, are to be complimented on their panache notwithstanding the producer's humorous remark that whilst they were not perfect they were not always wrong in the same place.

Given a less confined stage — and what scope that would have given the talented Mr Martin Beek who designed and painted most of the scenery — and more suitable facilities for the orchestra together with the other sophisticated trappings of a theatre, the three parts of

"Acts" could not fail to be a box office "sell-out". The confines of the stage, however in no way inhibited the lofty centurion who crossed it in two strides to deal with a rebellious mob with the words; "Right, we have a way of dealing with this", his work-a-day professionalism was obvious

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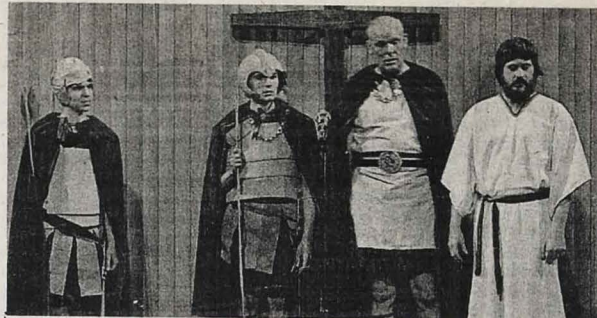
Rosehill WI

MISS Vincent, the President, opened the meeting and welcomed four new members. She then introduced Mrs Ingram, who read and explained the resolutions for the AGM in June, before the voting on each one. The charity for this year will be the Ken Thomas Scanner Appeal and the British Association of Myasthenics. Some lovely articles were viewed in the exhibition entitled "A memento from a grandparent".



■ Finale, Acts III

— Peter Bean



■ Two scenes from Acts II

— Peter Bean

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

'ACTS' A MUSIC DRAMA

Conversion on the Road

THE MUSIC drama "Acts" performed at the Baptist Church has been one of the most significant witnesses to Christian fellowship seen in Caversham. Yet Pam Chilvers, author of the drama, has not always been a Christian.

Only after she had gained her degree at the Royal Academy of Music did she turn to Christ. Believing in little, fearing death and depressed at the empty philosophies of Camus and Sartre, she returned to her home town of Grimsby. Near the river she passed one day a group of Christians playing music in the street.

"Everything became clear to me", Pam says, "like Paul on the road to Damascus". She realises that Jesus was asking her to follow Him. But what was most difficult was that she knew this meant a total commitment. She was faced with the hard decision to hand

over her musical career to Christ. Nevertheless once the decision was made Pam saw that her whole life, her gifts as a musician, her education, were in fact a training for her ministry in life, her ministry of music in the service of Jesus.

Pam met George, her husband, whilst at the Reading University Postgraduate School of Music. The family then settled down in Caversham. So it came about that Part 1 of Acts was brought to Caversham in 1978.

Music for the People of God

Pam wanted to bring the various youth groups together in Christian fellowship. Since she saw her ministry had to be through the musical talents God had given her, she turned to musical drama. The music drama would be based on scripture and on a musical idiom which would appeal to as wide a range of people as possible.

The Acts of the Apostles was chosen because it told the story of the young Christian church and the crises it faced as it developed into maturity. Pam sees in this a parallel for the youth of today as they face the crises of growing up and the help Christian fellowship can give as they set out on the journey of life.



■ Pam Chilvers at rehearsal — photo Mark Fossey

OBITUARY THOMAS BENDER

THE RECENT passing of Mr Thomas Bender understandingly brought with it a measure of sadness to the Christian communities centred on St Andrew's Church where, prior to the limitations imposed upon him by failing health, he was a regular worshipper, and at the Baptist Church where he was well known through his son-in-law and daughter, Mr Ken and Mrs Joan Shield. Tommy, as he was affectionately known by his beloved wife, Clare, came to Caversham some twelve years ago to join Ken and Joan at their home in Albert Road. He soon linked up with and was a keen member of Caversham Bowling Club where, as elsewhere, he endeared himself to many. Tommy was undoubtedly one of this world's characters — to

him a spade was a spade and he had an inexhaustible fund of stories gleaned during his long life of ninety years. He had a great sense of humour which, coupled with his simple but deep Christian faith, stood him well to the end. His working life was spent in the Postal Service in which he held many appointments and from which he finally retired as Head Postmaster of Derby.

Through the "Caversham Bridge" Tommy's many friends extend sympathy and love to Mrs Bender, to Mr and Mrs Shield and their family. May they gain comfort in the knowledge that their loved one brought joy and blessing to many with whom he had contact in his relatively short time in Caversham.

Outreach

The aim of Acts 1 was twofold. First Pam hoped to help the young people taking part in the drama to deepen their understanding of Scripture. Membership of a church or even belief in Christ has never been a pre-condition for taking part in the productions. Secondly and perhaps more important was her aim to reach out to people who would not normally go to a Church service. Outreach in this sense is in Pam's words, "pre-evangelism aiming to make people think", it is the spark that leads to Jesus, the light of the world.

Part 2 of "Acts" was written in 1982 and performed in 1983. The intervening four years had seen changes in the group as people moved on and as youngsters grew up. The style of the music also changed but Pam, who is trained in the classical tradition, feels that this training has helped her write in different styles more relevant to young people.

The script closely follows the Good News translation but whereas the music, once written, did not change, the spoken script was adapted as the needs of the production dictated.

Whilst working on the music drama Pam's appreciation of the humour of Scripture came through. One example she quotes is in Part 1 when the entry of the Sanhedrin is written as a skit on the pomposity of much religion. An aspect not altogether absent from our modern Christian Church!

Christians Denominations and Fellowship

The rehearsals and performance of Part 3 this year justify Pam's theory that the barriers between differing Christian denominations not only need to be broken down but can be broken down. In this way Christ's message may reach out to all men. Members of most of Caversham's Christian denominations took part in the productions. Even so bar-

riers can be rebuilt so quickly that true Christian fellowship in Caversham must be seen as a continuing process of understanding, working and praying together.

Opposition

Opposition has not been lacking. Some people oppose the very concept of a music drama, others believe it is debasing and detrimental to the Gospel. Pam however believes that Jesus has called her to use her musical talents. These can not be hidden under a bushel. Music and drama are public acts by definition. So it is that Pam hopes to reach out to a wider public through a public act in prisons, army camps, shopping precincts... indeed wherever there are people. She believes too that the oral-visual impact of music drama is most suitable for reaching out to the hearts and needs of people who would never begin to pay heed to the Good News in the ordinary course of their lives.

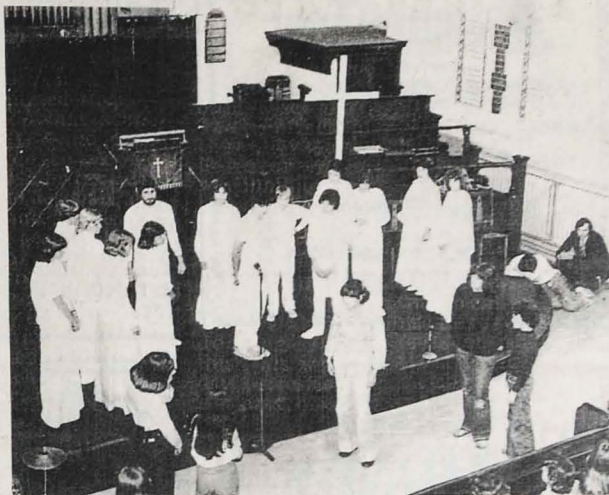
Teamwork

When asked about the mechanics of rehearsing such an undertaking, Pam stressed her belief in delegating responsibility. Philip Webb was in total charge of production and Martin Beek in charge of scenery and costumes. As a team the group worked in close harmony, a feature of Christian fellowship that showed through in the final production.

Philip Webb will soon be leaving Caversham and when asked if this would mean the disintegration of the group since he has been such a key figure, Pam replied that "if the group is meant to continue we will be provided with someone else". This deep faith is the mainstay of Pam's Christian commitment.

Whatever Next!

What of the future? The group is once again practicing on Wednesday evenings. They are rehearsing all the songs of all three parts with a view to recording them. The hope is that they will be published so



■ A scene from "Acts — Part 1" — photo John Williamson

that other Christian groups may have access to a means of preaching the Good News that has proved so popular and successful in Caversham.

Some people felt that there was an element of selfishness in not publishing "Acts" and it is now clear to Pam that the decision to publish is not a personal matter. Rather it is in response and obedience to Jesus' own command to preach the Good News.

The future after this is less certain. "Acts" tells the story of the emerging Christian Church and its divergent groups. These reflect the denominational differences of today's Church.

The production of Part 1 differed from that of Parts 2 and 3. Part 1 was symbolic. The believers wore white, the adversaries of Christ wore black, the crowd a neutral denim. Part 3 was more explicit with its impressive stage set.

Whatever comes next will be a continuation of the group's work of preaching the Gospel and to remind Christians that in Christ they are all one.

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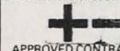
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Maplewood WI

AT THE May meeting the President, Mrs Joy le Mare, introduced Mrs Iris Sizer, Voluntary County Officer, who led the discussion on the resolutions to be moved at the

forthcoming National Federation Annual General Meeting at the Royal Albert Hall, London, and voting instructions were given to the Maplewood delegate. A bursary was granted to Mrs Margaret Jeffery for a course at Denman College, Marcham, near Oxford.

The President was pleased to welcome two new members.

This month's competition, word making, was easily won by Mrs Diana Appleton. Members greatly enjoyed a trip to Moor Copse Reserve at Tidmarsh in beautiful spring sunshine.

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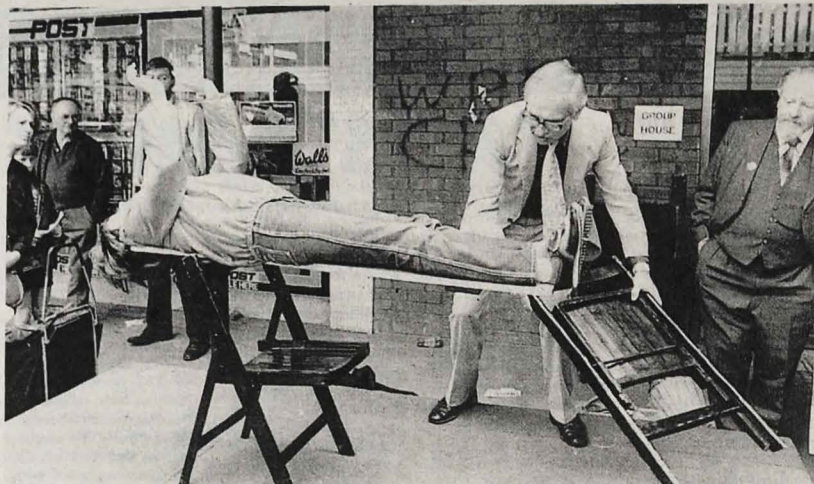
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Rising to the occasion

14-YEAR-OLD Elizabeth Ransen assists Peter Westlake demonstrate the art of levitation. Peter, International Cabaret Star and Member of the Inner Magic Circle, was helping to draw attention to the Save the Children Fund May Fair being held at Church House, just along the road from the St Martin's Shopping Precinct, where he also performed his famous Guillotine effect and the Linking Rings. Meanwhile the May Fair which included a "Marmalade Market" raised £300 for the Fund.



— Courtesy Evening Post

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The members have a cup of tea and biscuits and spend their time at the club having a sing-song, bingo, beetle drives and talks of interest etc. They have a couple of outings a year by bus.

We have a leader but very badly need a Treasurer, although our leader says she would not mind becoming treasurer if someone felt they were better able to become a leader.

I should be most grateful if anyone who thinks that they could help us would ring me at home, tel: 712237.

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■ Traffic lights and the new layout at the junction of Caversham Park Road and Henley Road have done much to improve traffic flow and add to safety.

— Photo Peter Sear

OBITUARY**CHARLES ERNEST HAYES**

JUST before going to print we heard of the death, after a long illness, of Charles Hayes of Cromwell Road. It is hoped to publish a fuller account of this much loved and respected gentleman in our next issue, but in the meanwhile we would like to extend our very sincere sympathy to his wife, Ethel, his daughter Janet and son-in-law, Brian.

JULY BOOKS**BEYOND MY GARDEN HEDGE**

MANY people have inquired about Peter Shock's last publication, "Beyond My Garden Hedge". We are happy to report that Peter's sister, Mrs Bowden, has given the remaining copies to be

sold in aid of St Peter's. They can be obtained from the church, from Mrs M. Baily at 15 Peppard Road, Caversham (471032) and from the Caversham Bookshop, Prospect Street. The cost per copy is 60p.

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READING 473588**THE STORY OF
HEMDEAN HOUSE**

HOW fortunate it was that Mr Knighton, principal of Caversham House Academy for boys from 1849-1883, had four intelligent daughters, that his school was a flourishing and lucrative concern and that he had brought up his daughters in the family tradition of teaching, for otherwise undoubtedly Hemdean House School for girls would never have come into existence. Molly Casey has written the story of Caversham's most successful and long-established school in a most readable vein. She had produced an attractive little book which tells the fortunes of Hemdean House from its beginnings as Verona Lodge in 1859 until the present. It will be of interest to many local people whether or not they have past or present connections with Caversham's oldest private school, for it also gives the early history of Mr Knighton's Academy and contains some fascinating pictures which have never been published before.

The cost of this informative little publication is £1.80 and at the moment it is obtainable at Hemdean House School, and at the Caversham Bookshop.

8014

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT BY WATCHDOG

Killing Trees

THE HORSE chestnut trees, covered with their white candles in the early summer bring beauty to what would otherwise be the drabness of St Martin's shopping precinct, and the two Holm oaks stand as a reminder that this was once the garden of Caversham House, the home of country gentlemen and later of Mr Knight's Academy. Between them they make St Martin's other shortcomings tolerable.

But what has happened now? St Martin's Property Corporation, deciding that they had better improve their image now that the Waitrose Supermarket is taking shape, sent workmen to give the place a bit of a face lift. They didn't do what everyone would like and remove those wretched bollards but they did send workmen to fill in the worst of the pot holes, put some irrelevant paving where sycamores which had been chopped about and used as lamp-posts had finally succumbed and replaced the uneven paving slabs in the forecourt. Then, whether acting on their own initiative or on instructions is not clear, they poured surplus concrete into the landscaped beds round the trees, except for those where they set brick paving right up to the trunks. The concreting is a

crude and ugly job and the reason for doing it remains obscure, but worse than that, it is a guaranteed way of killing trees by damaging the trunks and depriving the root system of water.

There was an immediate outcry and without delay Caversham Residents' Association contacted the Borough Arboricultural Officer and the Planning Office, both of whom were perturbed at the news and agreed to follow it up as a matter of urgency. The trees, they found, were the subject of Tree Preservation Orders dating from May 1966, in addition to their preservation being a condition of the original planning condition, so St Martin's were immediately contacted and asked to remove the concrete and re-set the brick pavings.

Other organisa-

tions and individuals as well as the Reading Chronicle have contacted them and all have received the same bland reply: "We don't wish to kill trees", and a somewhat half-hearted promise to come and look at the situation. Since then, the Borough Planning Office has had an on-site meeting with representatives of St Martin's, who are not prepared to accept that the trees are in any danger until they have consulted an independent arboriculturalist.



So far nothing more has happened. It is the growing season and unless something is done soon those trees are doomed. Direct action by irate citizens cannot be ruled out, but this would be difficult as removing the concrete will require special equipment and careful treatment if the trees aren't to be damaged. If the concrete is still there when this article appears, a flood of letters to St Martin's Property Corporation, Adelaide House, London Bridge, EC4 R 9DT might just do the trick.

Unfortunately, only a week before the concrete

appeared, the Arboricultural Officer happened to be in St Martin's Precinct and had observed that three of the horse chestnuts appeared to be decaying. Further inspection has confirmed this and St Martin's have been told they must be felled (They'll probably enjoy doing that), and have been offered advice on replanting. When those chestnuts go it will indeed be a sad day, but for once St Martin's won't be the villains, but only Father Time. Fortunately the one at the front of the precinct is sound.

Salve Atque Vale

Mapledurham Area Resident Association has now merged with Caversham and District Residents' Association, whose membership and funds have been considerably boosted by this transfer. To even matters out a bit, former members of M.A.R.A. have been given three years' free membership of C.D.R.A. which has a system of 40p per annum or £1 for three years' membership.

Meanwhile, another small residents' association has sprung up, this time in the north west corner of Emmer Green. Inspired first by a desire to spring to the defence of Hemdean Valley when massive building plans were leaked, it proposes to give its attention to other problems in that area.

A.O.N.B.

Hemdean Valley is one of the attractive rural spots in Reading Borough boundary. It is not the only one, particularly in Caversham. Blagrave Farm is another. None of them is free from threat, being in an urban area where rich pickings await the developer.

When the Chilterns Standing Conference sought local authorities' views on extending the Chil-

terns' Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which goes up to but does not include Mapledurham parish, Reading Borough Planning Officer expressed the hope that Blagrave Farm, Chazey Farm, The Chase, part of the Warren escarpment, and Hemdean Bottom should be included in this extension. This would greatly increase the protection of this area, as well as attracting some grant aid for such things as tree planting. The Council added land between Henley Road and the river to this recommendation, which was perhaps pushing it a bit, as although attractive to us, and certainly vulnerable, it is scarcely of outstanding natural beauty.



However, the whole scheme has had to go into abeyance as the Countryside Commission is now reviewing the whole question of A.O.N.B.'s. The groundwork having been done, the ideas may be implemented at a later date so that what gives us delight will still be there for our successors to enjoy.

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Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

THE Guild charity for 1984 is the NSPCC and the first of many fund raising events for this very worthy cause was a Bring and Buy coffee morning at the home of Mrs B. King. This was much enjoyed by all and raised £12. A very encouraging start to the fund. The speaker at the April meeting was Sister Muncaster from the Royal Berkshire Hospital Special Care Baby Unit. She gave a great insight into the problems and also the heart warming rewards of running such a Unit. Mrs A. Deane, the Guild Treasurer presented Sister Muncaster with a cheque for £100 towards the cost of a rest room for the parents of the sick babies.

AT THE May meeting of Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild in St Andrew's Hall members heard that the National Union of Townswomen's Guilds is urging the government to introduce safeguards against the release of poisonous substances into the atmosphere which fall as acid rain on forests in Europe.

An outing to Littlecote Manor was taking place, a coffee evening in aid of a children's ward and plant sale in aid of the Sue Ryder Home.

Mr R. C. Kent, a retired schoolmaster, said that he had volunteered just before retiring to become a speaker to help raise money for the Mary Rose Trust.

The Mary Rose was a purpose-built wooden warship

with a "castle" made of larch. The battle was lost when the castle on the ship was captured. Henry VIII who came to the throne in 1509 continued the shipbuilding his father had begun and built some three ships in 1512 including the flagship the Mary Rose. After two fights with the French it was laid up in 1526 and the crew paid off. In 1536 it was due for refitting and new, heavier guns could not still be in the castle but were replaced between the decks with gun portholes. Thus the Mary Rose became the first battleship to be able to fire a broadside. When a French armada attempted to invade England in 1545 Henry ordered the 60 English ships to remain protected by Southsea and Portsmouth castles

and not to attack. When finally involved the Mary Rose carried 700 men instead of the normal 500 and too many skilled sailors who only gave orders. The ship's side was turned to the French and it heeled over in the wind, sinking in possibly two minutes and soon to be covered and protected by the sea bed. So Henry's favourite battleship was lost without firing a shot and with comparatively few survivors. Among

the many exhibits shown on slides by Mrs Kent was an interesting picture painted at the time of the sinking.

The Trust was formed many years after the first searches were made in 1960 and much work has been done by volunteers. A new museum is being opened in July. An outing to the beautiful Pusey Gardens near Faringdon in Oxfordshire was much enjoyed by the Social Studies group.

Caversham Ladies Club

THE MAY meeting was held at the Baptist Church Centre with Mrs Harwood in the Chair, Mrs Hazeltine was the speaker who illustrated her talk on Australia, especially her journey to Alice Rock with

some beautiful slides.

Later in the month most of the members joined a coach tour of the Cotswolds, ending with tea at Bourton-on-the-Water.

Blagrove WI

AT THE May meeting Mrs J. Finch VCO explained in detail the four resolutions for the Annual General Meeting of the NFWI to be held at the Albert Hall in London in June. Mrs Fisher, the Institute's delegate from Whitchurch Hill, recorded the voting.



Plans are ahead for outings to be held during the summer. Mrs Popplewell, President, welcomed Mrs Durie and members from the Linked Groups to a meeting held later in the month, where Miss Marie Pickaver, actress, entertained with an amusing programme of songs and sketches.

Darby and Joan Club

THE CLUB held their usual meeting with a visit from Mrs Rankin who gave a talk and also asked the members if they would knit some little woollen vests for the orphan children at Mother Teresa's. They willingly agreed to do so and up to the moment have made a number. A member of the Police gave a talk on security and what to do in cases of emergency. Mrs Burnden gave a lovely piano session which everyone enjoys and the month finished with a visit from June and her "girls" who always are very entertaining; also the members had an afternoon drive finishing with a high tea at the "Three Swans" at Hungerford, which was enjoyed by all.

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ROUND THE CLUBS

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

THE Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild held their April meeting at St Barnabas Church Hall. Mr N. Pearce spoke on the making and judging of home-made wine and the history of wine in this country. The decline of English wine began when Eleanor of Aquitaine brought some vines to England as part of her dowry in 1152. Mr Pearce gave some tips on presenting wines and the members sampled some of his wine.

Mrs Jepson, who had raised enough funds, with the assistance of the Guild, to set up an eye clinic in Bangladesh, had received a letter giving details of the clinic, named after Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild. Nearly three hundred people

were treated for eye disorders, with some having their sight restored and others, their sight saved by the excellent treatment made available, by Mrs Jepson's efforts.

A very successful jumble sale was held and £106 was raised. A donation had been sent to the Guide Dogs for the Blind.

At the May meeting motions were discussed for the yearly Conference at the Albert Hall, ranging from seat belts in coaches, the problems of acid rain and the labelling of Mail Order goods.

The Guild would enter the competition for the WI Cup at the Reading Show. The theme would be "Far Away Places".

Caversham Community Association

AS TWO Mondays in May were Bank Holidays there were only two meetings during the month. The first occasion was on May 14 when the guest speaker was Mr David Vasey of St John's Ambulance Brigade. Much useful information on the correct treatment of people hurt in accidents at home etc was given to the members. Volunteers from the audience acted as patients for Mr Vasey to demonstrate the correct procedure in

emergencies. The members appreciated the very helpful talk.

The Whist-drive held the following week was well attended. Mrs Doreen Crawley was there in charge of the procedure and ready to help the less experienced players. George Feast and Hilda Hunt had the highest points and were joint first prize winners. Other prizewinners were Nancy Nelhams, Betty Janieson, Freda Haines and Ann Seymour.

Caversham WI

MRS Christine Harvey from Chazey, the group's delegate to the annual conference, was present at the May meeting when Mrs Joan Parkes, VCO, led an interesting discussion on the conference resolutions which, among other things, showed the Institute's extreme concern for battered children and for the elderly in need.

The competition for the month was a flower arrangement in a saucer; some strikingly attractive entries were received. Jane Stockhill being the winner and Lily Hensley and Kathy Fullbrook taking second and third places.

Chazey WI

AT THE meeting in May the President, Mrs Marjorie McCombe welcomed members to the second birthday party, and thanked Mrs Sue Searle for making and decorating the splendid birthday cake.

Mrs Hill, VCO, led a discussion about the resolutions to be put to the AGM at the Royal Albert Hall in June. The resolutions covered a wide range of subjects such as development of wastelands, before green fields, increase in the incidence of child abuse, provision of psycho-geriatric

hospital care and investment by the NFWI. All received support.

The members then enjoyed a buffet supper with wine and the cake was cut and passed around.

On May 22 Chazey's Open Evening was a great success and several new members were enrolled. Exhibitions were imaginatively set up showing the wide range of interest groups and courses taking place and the evening ended with a make-up demonstration.

OBITUARY

Senior Major Gertrude Bunker

ON MARCH 20, 1984, Caversham lost one of its oldest, most loved and respected residents. After more than thirty years in retirement at 306 Kidmore Road, Senior Major Gertrude Bunker died in the Battle Hospital in her ninety-second year after a short illness of two days.

Gertrude Bunker was born in London on November 3, 1892. In September 1917, she decided to leave home and train as a Salvation Army Officer in the garrison at Clapton. She was commissioned in 1918 and served in a number of British Corps. In 1934 she transferred to the

Women's Social Work Division devoting her life to caring for mothers with babies, teenage girls and the elderly in many places throughout Britain. In 1949 she became Warden of the Eventide Home in Wokingham, Berkshire and it was from this position she retired to Caversham in 1952. All her duties were carried out with deep Christian commitment and devotion and she was a wonderfully dedicated and caring officer.

From Caversham she remained actively engaged in good works for many years, helping at the Eventide Home at Medmenham, the Caversham Home League and many charities. It was quickly apparent Caversham had acquired a wonderful Christian lady devoting her life to the service of the Lord and others, always putting herself last. She was forever cheerful, kind and gentle.

In old age she never failed to attend Sunday worship until a fall and broken hip at the age of ninety, necessitated a very long operation. She surprised everyone by making an amazing recovery, being quickly out of bed and cheering everyone around her in hospital. She was back home in record time and was able to visit neighbours and walk around her garden which she loved so much. In her last year, she was often in great pain but

remarkably cheerful taking delight at solving crosswords and other puzzles. When visitors called and asked how she was, her quick reply was typically, "all the better for seeing you" showing her usual concern for others and lack of concern for herself.

The funeral service at the Salvation Army Citadel in Reading on March 26 gave an opportunity for many tributes to be paid to her life of service. Thanks were given for the life of a wonderful lady who deeply loved her Lord and neighbour; many will long remember with great joy this truly Christian lady.

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SUNDAY SERVICES IN JULY

ANGLICAN

St Peter's

8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am PARISH COMMUNION
11.15am Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Sundays)
11.15am Matins (2nd, 4th and 5th 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)
6.30pm 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

11.00am Morning Service
6.30pm Evening Service

ROMAN CATHOLIC

St Anne's

9.00am, 11.00am (also Saturdays 5.30pm)

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St Martin's School

9.15am Mass

Mapledurham House

6.00pm Mass (last Sunday)

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WE RECORD

BAPTISED

St Peter's

May 13 — Philippa Susan Pearson

St John's

May 13 — Clare Sturgess, Neil Douglas, Ian Douglas
May 27 — Richard Barter

Caversham Park

April 29 — Vicki and Liam Shanly
May 27 — Katrina Weatherhead



MARRIED

St Peter's

May 5 — Anthony Paxton and Janet Angel

May 12 — Trevor Murphy and Lindsey Coles, Colin Gibbs and Sandra Farrow

May 19 — Jonathan Craig and Susan Dale

May 26 — Michael Upton and Christine Goodworth

St John's

May 12 — David Smillie and Lesley Hopkins

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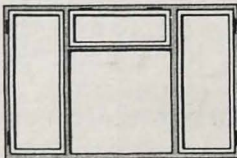
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