



METHODISM IN CAVERSHAM

In congratulating the Methodist Church on 250 glorious years, a large part of this edition is devoted to its history and activities, particularly locally. Reports on the special services to be held in May will appear later.

THE COMING OF THE RAILWAY TO READING in the early mid 1800s not only brought about the growth of Reading. It also led to the growth of Caversham and particularly the streets and cottages of Lower Caversham. Methodist cottage meetings are known to have begun in the mid nineteenth century. The Wesleyan Methodist Society in Lower Caversham was supported by the members of the Methodist Church in Oxford Road, Reading. In 1881 the foundation stone of the first church building in Gosbrook Road was laid. That building was an iron chapel. It was replaced by the present building which was opened almost free of debt in January 1899. The Church was built with a steeple which became unsafe and had to be removed in 1958. More recently substantial remedial work had to be done to the structure because the weight of the roof was causing the walls to bulge. Today Gosbrook Road Church is a light and attractive worship centre.

In the very early days it was not uncommon for the congregations to hold its services in fine weather in the open air. In the 1890s the special mission services, prayer meetings and the Sunday School work were of great influence. At that time the music for worship was provided by a string band and it was not until 1903 that an organ was installed in the Church.

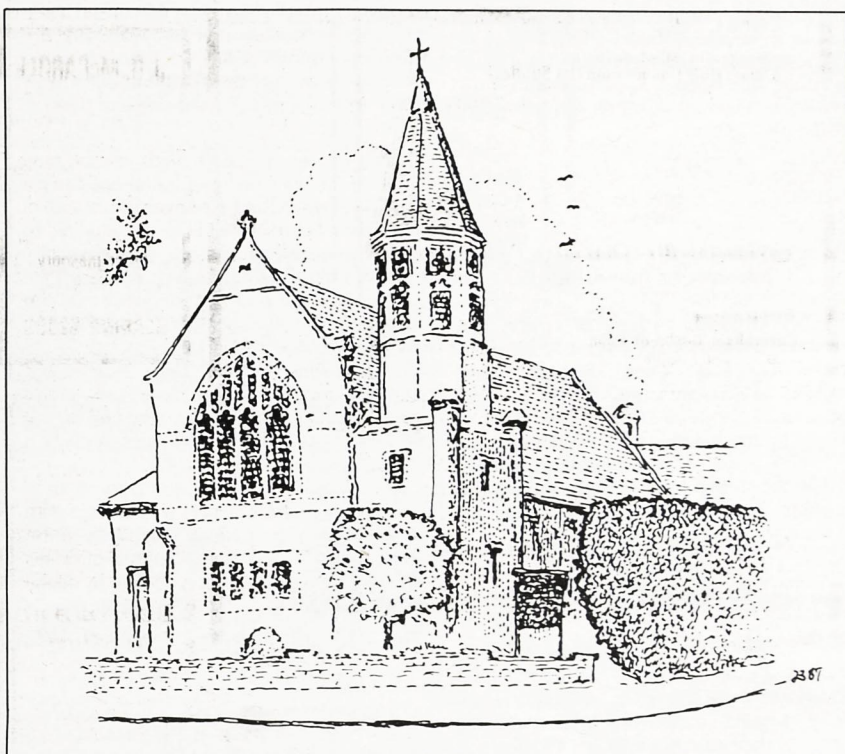
Today the Church is well known for its work among young people, particularly through its very active Boys and Girls Brigades and the Sunday School.

It is worth noting that the Methodist Churches in Caversham are not situated in the centre of the village but in the heart of the communities they were built to serve.

It was in 1900 that the Reading Wesleyan Methodist Circuit saw the need for a church to be built in Caversham Heights. They had a vision of future need for at that time the Heights was just beginning to develop as a residential area. It had many unmade roads and very few street lights. (The whole of Caversham at that time had a population of six and a half thousand and was an Urban District Council in Oxfordshire). A scheme was launched in Reading in 1903 and soon £1,100 had been collected. The land for the building was given by Mr J.C. Fidler. It was however not until 1909 that the church costing £2,000 was opened. In 1913 the American organ used for music in worship was replaced on the purchase of the organ from Trinity Congregational Church in Reading for £100. That organ is still in place, having been completely rebuilt in 1981. The Heights congregation are justifiably proud of their instrument which is one of the finest in the area. As the work at Caversham Heights grew more accommodation was needed. A Lecture Hall was built in 1929 at the rear of the Church and further meeting rooms were added in 1959 and 1974. In 1986 the kitchen was enlarged and refurbished.

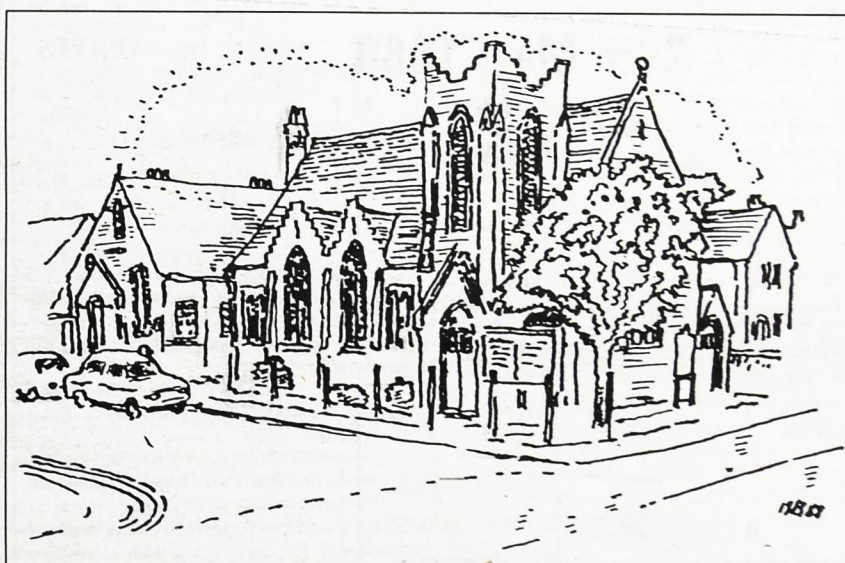
When the Church was opened it had a membership of twenty-five which increased gradually. In the last twenty years the church has 'mushroomed' and now has a membership of two hundred and seventy-five and a wide range of activities including Sunday School and Youth meetings, Boys and Girls Brigade, playgroups and toddlers groups. Women's Meetings and Clubs for the elderly and housebound, the Caversham Heights Society, prayer and fellowship groups.

Caversham Heights is the only Free Church in the area and has developed as a friendly, caring, neighbourhood church conscious of its call to witness and service in its locality.



Caversham Heights Methodist Church

Drawn by Martin Beek



Gosbrook Road Methodist Church

Drawn by Martin Beek



In addition to the two present Methodist Churches there was for a time a Methodist presence

in Emmer Green, fostered not by the Wesleyans, but by the Primitive Methodists. The first known services were held in 1855. There were moves to

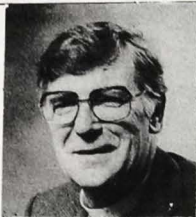
build a chapel there and land was given for this purpose in 1883. The stone laying ceremony was arranged in November 1883. However it appears that the cause

did not prosper and the church premises were sold in 1893. Unfortunately little is known of the Emmer Green Chapel and its location has not been identified.

TALKING POINT

By Rev. KEITH SANDERS

Minister at Caversham Heights Methodist Church



THROUGHOUT THIS NEXT MONTH THE GROWING NUMBER OF MORE THAN FIFTY-FOUR MILLION METHODISTS are celebrating the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the conversion of John and Charles Wesley. Here in Caversham you are invited to an Open Air Celebration at Caversham Court on Whit Sunday, 22nd May at 3pm. Then on Tuesday, 24th May we are privileged that the Revd Lord Soper will preach at a United Service at Christ Church, Christchurch Road, Reading at 4pm and at the Wesley Methodist Church, Queens Road, Reading at 7.30pm.



In an ecumenical paper such as The Bridge it isn't my intention to sound the praises of Methodism, but to tell you some of the reasons why I believe that the conversion of the Wesley Brothers has something significant to say to the whole Church and to society today. They were Anglican priests when they were converted and remained so all their long lives, yet they brought to this country in the eighteenth century such a revival of Christianity and a renewal of hope which had repercussions throughout the whole of society and eventually throughout the world.



Two words can be used regarding their conversion, EXPERIENCE and EXPRESSION. John and Charles were converted when they came into a personal experience with the living Christ. As they read their Bibles and were in conversation with some Moravian Christians they realised their need of God, they knew that their sins had to be forgiven and that the Holy Spirit was to bring them into a new relationship with Christ. John wrote down his experience of that night of 24th May 1738, 'I felt my heart strangely warmed...I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation.' The same had happened to Charles three days earlier. From this heart-warming and life-changing experience the Wesleys set the world aflame with the burning mission which, I believe, saved England from the kind of revolution which was to take place in France.



Today's vital message of the Christian Church is the good news that all people can be saved from their sins and can enter into a new relationship with their Father God through Jesus Christ. We can only change society and the world when we as individuals experience a change of heart and have a personal encounter with the Christ who is the Saviour of the world.

My second word is EXPRESSION. Once the Wesley brothers had found this new ex-

perience of Christ's love — then they expressed their new found faith in their love and concern for others. John travelled more than two hundred and fifty thousand miles throughout the land to tell people of Christ's love and at the same time to give them the hope of a better life. He opened an orphanage in Newcastle, a school for miners' children at Bristol and a free clinic together with a home for widows in London. He supported William Wilberforce in the abolition of slavery, he regularly visited those in prison and championed the work of Sunday Schools.

They expressed their faith in a new understanding of worship. Charles had the gift of writing hymns, almost seven thousand of them, from 'Love divine, all loves excelling' to 'Hark, the herald angels sing.' There was the warm-hearted worship in which the congregation could share, in comparison to the cold and formal liturgy. The 'societies,' not churches, which developed met regularly together for prayer and Bible study in 'classes.' John urged his people to go regularly to Holy Communion in their Parish Churches. The laity had an important part in the shared ministry, especially in its preaching and administration.

All this was the Wesleys' expression of their faith in positive and practical ways. Just as with Jesus, there was no defined line between the spiritual and the social gospel. John wrote to his followers, "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."



What God did through the Wesleys two hundred and fifty years ago He can do today. The heritage in each of our denominations is traced back to the one Church of Jesus Christ. Our united task is to proclaim the message of Christ's transforming love to all people, and the united mission to go into all the world to save and to heal. John Wesley's last words before he died, can be our assurance and challenge, "THE BEST OF ALL, GOD IS WITH US."

* * * * *

A book 'As Stupid as Oxen' has been written by May Ayres and Keith Sanders, and is now available price £2.50. It develops the history of Methodism in Reading and surrounding areas and issues a call to the Church today. It contains drawings of all the Methodist Churches in Reading and Silchester Circuit by Martin Beek.

It can be obtained from Caversham Bookshop, Reading Central Library or Revd Keith Sanders.

There is an exhibition, 'Aspects of Wesley' open now in the Reading Central Library from April 19th to May 13th. It traces the history of Methodism and has some interesting items of Methodism in this area. There is also a display at the Records Office at Shire Hall.

DRAW ON LAY EXPERIENCE, URGES REPORT

BY
JOHN MADELEY

"A prime role of lay people is to listen attentively to the language that people speak, gain from their experience, and then bring that experience into the gathered church so as to share it with others," the Revd. Keith Lamdin, Oxford Diocesan adult education officer, told a gathering of lay ministers of different denominations at a day conference.

He went on "the clergy get only a 'filtered' experience. Yet where in our worship do we give lay people to share their experience — their technology?"

Housegroups, said Keith Lamdin, gave Christians the chance to share their theology of the world. "We need to open up more windows on each other."

These challenging ideas are in line with a

publication, issued late last year, "Called To Be Adult Disciples". This report — from the General Synod's Board of Education — aims to encourage a climate "in which the laity's gifts are valued and developed."

It says that a parish needs to provide opportunities for theological reflection and spiritual formation and recommends that every parish finds ways of affirming lay vocation in its worship — which can take place in homes as well as "church" buildings.

The report is a challenge to our existing way of doing things. We should not forget that the clergy are involved at many

"sharp ends" of life, dealing with people at times of crisis in their lives.

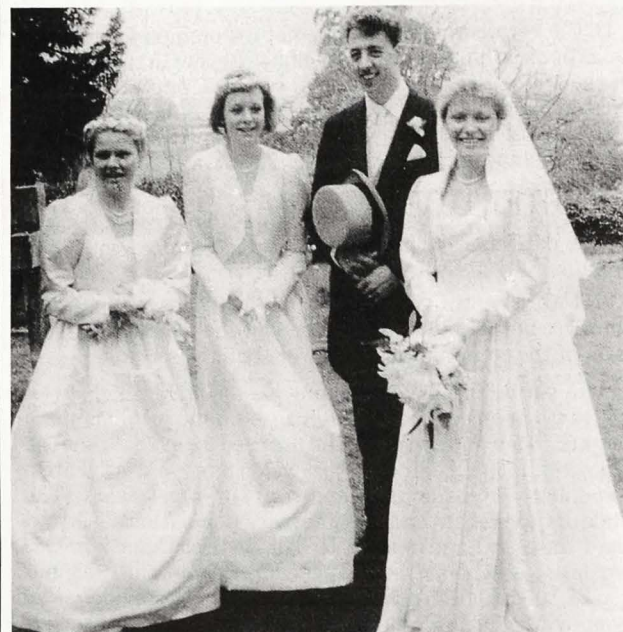
Nonetheless within the laity there is a wide range of knowledge and experience about different aspects of life and of the problems that face people. The laity can bring the "nature" of their worlds, their everyday life, into the church. That is likely to mean changes in the way, many if not most, churches operate.

The clergy, said Keith Lamdin, are generally agreed that this is the way we need to go.

Some reports gather dust on shelves; this one is too important to be lost.

"Called To Be Adult Disciples", price £1.25 from Church House Bookshop, Great Smith St., London S.W.1.

WEDDING AT ST PETER'S CHURCH



Miss Joy Holbrook and Dr Clifford Mann, who were married at St Peter's Church on Saturday, 19th March. Joy is the middle daughter of Mr Peter Holbrook, who is a Reader at Caversham Park Church.

The bridesmaids were the bride's sister Lynn, and the bridegroom's sister Lisa.

E.S. Archer

ONE PERCENT FOR WORLD DEVELOPMENT

The Church of England has launched a nationwide appeal to urge worshippers to give 1% of their annual net income to the world's poor. The Oxford Diocese is now trying to ensure that all of know about the appeal — and act!

It's up to each individual to decide which organisation receives their 1% slice. People might, for example, give it to Christian Aid, the World

Development Movement or to the development work of missionary societies. Again you can, if you wish, give part of it to a development education fund which is run by the Oxford Diocese — this helps the diocese to spread knowledge of the nature of the world poverty problem.

Leaflets explaining the appeal have already appeared in some churches in

Caversham and Mapledurham; others are likely to have them soon. To explain the scheme a meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 25th May at St Barnabas Church, starting at 8.00pm. A film showing the plight of some of the world's poor will also be shown.

All welcome! Further details from Margaret Brown, tel: 479628, or John Madeley, tel: 476063.

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 June issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday May 4. All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham, by Friday April 29. The dates for July are June 1 and May 27.

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

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

WOMEN'S DAY OF PRAYER

One of the harbingers of Spring in Caversham, along with crocuses and the hazel catkins, is the annual Women's Day of Prayer service on the first Friday of March. This year Gosbrook Road Methodist, with its warm, bright interior, opened its doors to welcome women (and some men) from churches all over Caversham. The simple but deeply moving service, on the theme of Open Doors, had been prepared this year by the women of Brazil and was being celebrated world-wide that evening.

The speaker, Mrs King Fisher, from

Carey Baptist Church, shared her thoughts on three Doors, the first being the blood-stained door of the Exodus which for us symbolises Christ as the Door of Salvation. From the New Testament she recalled the ever open door of reconciliation through which the prodigal son's father came out to greet him on his return. Finally we were reminded of the two-way door to prayer, which can become jammed by the weeds of grief, anger or resentment if we let them grow up around it.

All those who attended the service felt

the great warmth and fellowship which inevitably accompany shared prayer and inspiration. I know that many Christian women of Caversham who perhaps through family commitments did not manage to get to the service this year, would have found the experience very worthwhile.

Why not make a date for your diary in '89 — the last Friday in March. Get your husband 'booked up' to look after the children for the evening, or even better, bring him and them along. The Women's Day of Prayer is for everyone — if we take 'Open Door' seriously.

ST JOHN'S CENTENARY ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION

This is St John's centenary year and we are celebrating one hundred years of Christian life and worship centred on St John's Church. To celebrate the creative ability which is all around us, we are holding an exhibition to show one hundred years of arts and crafts in East Caversham, in St John's Church, from Saturday, July 2nd, to Wednesday July 6th 1988.

Now, as in the past, there is a great deal of creative work being done, for use and relaxation. So we hope to display a wide variety of arts and crafts, both old and new. If you have a family treasure made by someone who lived in, or had connections with East Caversham during

the past one hundred years, please let us share your pleasure by offering it for exhibition. To cover insurance costs we need to ask for a "display fee," of 50p per article — unless you are an old age pensioner, and then there is no charge. This 50p is payable when you collect your exhibit after the exhibition closes.

Part of the exhibition will show the history of the building, and something of the people who did the work. Several local firms are going to lend exhibits of work from past and present craftsmen.

To offer an article for display, please fill in the form that is printed in this issue of the Bridge, and send it to Miss K.

Harris, 4 Valentine Crescent, Caversham, Reading RG4 0JJ.

All entry forms will be acknowledged.

We need you to bring your exhibit to St John's Church on Thursday 30th June between 10am and 8pm. We shall set up the exhibition on Friday 1st July and open at 10am on Saturday 2nd July.

What do we want you to offer? Well anything East Caversham people have made during the past one hundred years, or in the present day, with pleasure and pride

in their achievement. Perhaps Grandad's wood carving, the embroidery Mother worked for her 'bottom drawer', paintings, sketches, (all pictures and photographs must be mounted, cardboard will do very well). Or perhaps your own creative work that you have only just done.

We do have to reserve the right to select the articles we display on the grounds of available space, and suitability.

Other entry forms will be available in your Churches, and at the Library.

Opening Times in St John's Church

Saturday	2nd July 1988	10am-7pm
Sunday	3rd July 1988	11am-5pm
Monday	4th July 1988	3pm-7pm
Tuesday	5th July 1988	3pm-7pm
Wednesday	6th July 1988	3pm-7pm

BAPTIST NEWS

Since the retirement of Bernard Miller (reported in the last Bridge), we now have a new church secretary — Keith Stephen-Evans. At our recent Annual General Meeting, three members were elected to the diaconate for their first term. Special recognition for these four was made during a Communion Service in March.

On Palm Sunday, morning

worship was assisted by the Gospel Singers. Three young women were baptised on Easter Sunday Morning and one of them gave an account of how and when she became a Christian, and what the Lord Jesus means to her personally. At evening worship on Easter Sunday, a family of five were received into membership of the church.

ST PETER TIDE FESTIVAL 29 JUNE—2 JULY 1988

Many of you will remember the Mystery plays which were performed in Caversham Court as part of St Peter's festival in 1982.

If you do, you will also remember the magnificent flower displays in St Peter's Church. This year you will be able to enjoy flower displays based on the life of St Peter as part of the special St

Petertide celebrations. Instead of mystery plays there will be mystery music and entertainment. Please watch out for further announcements and book the dates in your diary now.

PS. It was suggested that we call it a "Rock Festival" (Peter — the rock) but this was abandoned as possibly misleading!



Saint Andrew's Church Caversham Heights recently handed a cheque for £1,000 to the Kidney Research Aid Fund. This was raised by the Church's Working Party who chose to support the Fund because one of the Church's children suffers from the Nephrotic Syndrome, a rare kidney complaint, and has received much care and attention at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Receiving the cheque Michael Flegg said that his own wife had suffered kidney problems from childhood

and indeed would have attended but was now in hospital receiving treatment for her failing kidney transplant. He emphasised the need to recognise and be able to find a cure for such problems in childhood. One of the main aims of the Fund is to support vital kidney research at the Institute of Child Health and the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street. Anyone interested in helping support the Fund is invited to telephone 476402 for further information.

The Rector of Caversham and Mapledurham looks on as Mrs Sylvia Cooper presents the cheque to Michael Flegg the Chairman of the Trustees of the Kidney Research Aid Fund.

FAURE REQUIEM

A moving performance of Faure's Requiem was given in St Peter's Church on Palm Sunday by a joint choir of members of St Andrew's and St Peter's churches. The lyrical singing of the pious work reflected the mood of the occasion. Colin Anthony from Spencers Wood sang the baritone solo with verve and it was good to hear this strong voice. He is a semi-

professional singer and we wish him well in his career. The well-known "Pie Jesu" was sung with great authority and confidence and with a full strong voice by Kathryn Cutts, a junior member of St Peter's choir. Ian May conducted firmly and the organist, Andrew Bosely, all helped to make this a memorable evening.

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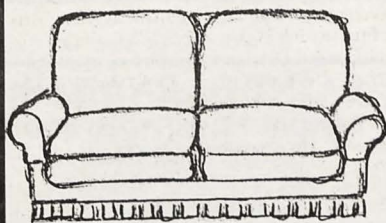
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ROUND THE CHURCHES**CARNIVAL OF PRAISE**

Saturday, 21st May 1988

This year's Carnival of Praise is fast approaching and preparations are well advanced for this joyful witness in song through the streets of Caversham on the 21st May. During the morning it is also intended to present an open air witness in drama on the route in the St Martins Precinct area — many will have seen and ap-

preciated this outreach witness on a recent Saturday morning in the Precinct.

The final practice will be on Saturday 14th May at 7.30pm at Caversham Baptist Centre. Please come along then to learn new songs from Make Way II and to meet friends from last year in a joint expression of praise, prayer and preparation.

The Carnival will start from St Peter's at 11.00am and assembly will be at 10.00am also at St Peter's. If it is not possible to come to the final practice please come along on the Carnival Day and witness by joining in our sacrifice of praise and declaring with our lips that: 'JESUS IS LORD.'

LINK GROUP

In place of the usual monthly meeting, on Monday, 28th March the Link Group, with friends, were entertained at the Sue Ryder Home, Nettlebed. Apart from coffee served and the opportunity to see Joyce Grove, the Edwardian mansion where the Home is based, the Link were given and inspiring talk by the Matron, and came away with a much deeper understanding of the work which is done there. Although members had tended to think of it as a 'Hospice' for cancer patients, it was pointed out that it is indeed a 'Home' — somewhere people can go for respite, treatment and counselling, long before the end may have to be faced, and where they can have the warmth of a home atmosphere — the caring and the comfort, with visits from friends and relatives to enjoy in a beautiful background.

Member gave thanks, adding that she wished such a place had been available for her relatives — so many there must have felt the same. We are indeed fortunate to have such a marvellous place in our area, and we hope it will survive for many years to come. Of course, running costs are a problem, and with a threatened cut in the relatively small proportion now donated by the Government there is a need for even greater support to come through voluntary work. Much assistance is needed — driving, gardening, sorting goods for sales, as well as financial help. The Link Group, perhaps, felt that anything they could offer would be a drop in the ocean, but then many drips, and much prayer, obviously go to perform the annual miracle and keep the Sue Ryder home alive. May it, and the worldwide work of the Sue Ryder Foundation, go on for ever.

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Reading RG4 8RE**CHRISTIAN AID**

Christian Aid Week this year is from 16-21 May. The Caversham Christian Aid Committee is now fully operational with most of the Caversham churches involved. The Committee ask for support for your own representative by

taking part as a collector or assisting and encouraging other events or activities that may be held, and of course when face to face at the door with the 'Envelope Collectors.'

The Christian Aid

Walk is on Saturday 14th May over the same route as in previous years starting at Henley. Full details together with posters and entry forms are available from all church representatives.



Jackie Grey presenting St John's Christian aid cheque for £570.78 to Keith Stephen-Evans.

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SATURDAY MAY 7in the Church Hall, Grove Road,
Emmer Green

PROFILE

Recently I have had the pleasure and privilege of meeting the oldest member of the Caversham Heights Methodist Church. Mrs Lillian Calvert has been a Methodist all her life, which reaches as far back as 1889. Mrs Calvert is a fascinating lady to talk to and she kindly gave me some glimpses of her life in Reading and Caversham over the last ninety-eight years.

Mrs Calvert was born in Reading and was christened at Greyfriars church. Her parents were originally Anglicans but later became Methodists. After leaving the Kendrick School at the age of seventeen Lillian and her parents moved to Clifton Park Road in Caversham.

Caversham Heights as we know it did not exist in those days. I am afraid Mrs Calvert's memories were so fascinating I found myself asking numerous questions about the development of Caversham. Mrs Calvert can remember St Anne's Road being cut and the layout of the roads on the Heights being planned.

Before the first world war building on the Heights was restricted to one house per acre. The first

houses to be built after the roads were cut were the ones on the corners. Since then some gardens have been partly sold off but it is still obvious that many corner properties still have their original quota of land.

After 1914 the land restriction was withdrawn and houses were permitted with less land. It is almost impossible to imagine the Heights as farmland but that is how far back Mrs Calvert can remember. In 1912 Lillian married her first husband, Edwin Kinchington, and was the first bride to be married at Elm Park Hall. Edwin's family had moved from the New Forest to the Oxford Road and he and Lillian met at the Oxford Road Wesleyan Church Sunday School when they were barely ten years old.

They had a daughter, Joyce, who lives with her mother now, although Edwin sadly died in 1931. During their married life they were both constantly active Methodists. They lived in a variety of houses in Reading so consequently had many friends in the area.

Lillian later married again and became Mrs Frederick Calvert. Mr Calvert was part owner of the drapers

shop, Calvert and Tilley's. This was a shop selling goods to the country folk who came in to Reading and was situated in St Mary's Butts where



Mrs Lillian Calvert, 18 Highmoor Road

—courtesy Oxford Mail

Barclays Bank is now.

The Caversham Heights Methodist Church is a very active and out-going church. The church directory has astounded me by the range of activities the members are involved in. The philosophy of the church going out to the people seems to be followed wonderfully by this church. Mrs Calvert and her daughter Joyce Kinchington are still actively involved members of the church.

Mrs Calvert has a great love of music and it is not surprising to hear that at one time she was an enthusiastic member of the choir. In fact she has held every office in the Caversham Heights church including Communion and Church Steward. One of her

for many years.

Her involvement in the church throughout her life is partly due to her parents and their love for it. They had an ever-open door to people in need and felt particularly for the Salvation Army and their works. Lillian's eldest sister, Mary, went to America with her husband in about 1910. They were both Methodists but in America Mary's husband was greatly drawn to the Salvation Army and both finally became officers. Lillian spent a year with them in Texas shortly after the war and has since visited the USA several times.

While in America her love for music was well satisfied — she even saw the first production out of New York of the musical

Oklahoma! So she brought back many happy memories of America.

Mrs Calvert is a remarkable lady. She is fascinating to talk

to and has a lovely sense of humour. Her faith and sense of humour have carried her through life and rewarded her with good health and happiness. As with many good Christian people Mrs Calvert's life has not been one of dramatic events but a long one of caring for other people. Her door has always been open and help never refused to any who need it. She is held in great respect and affection by all who know her.

The photograph of Mrs Calvert is on her ninety-fifth birthday just before she was taken for a helicopter ride over Woodstock and Oxford and she thoroughly enjoyed it. What amazing changes she has seen in her life since 1889. We wish her many more happy years.

Mrs Lillian Calvert — Caversham's oldest Methodist by Frances

METHODISM — An Historical note

The Caversham Bridge is glad to be able to share with local Methodists the celebrations of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the conversion of their founders, John and Charles Wesley. Keith Sanders in his Talking Point has referred to the spiritual impact this had on England of that day. But what is Methodism today, what is its place in history and how did it come to Reading and Caversham? Brief answers to these questions are given below. For much more detailed information readers are referred to "As Stupid as Oxen," a book of the history of Methodism in Reading. (This book has been

used as the main source of the following notes by kind permission of the Revd K. Sanders).



Its place in history
Religious revival is a recurring feature of the life of the Church. Down the ages there have been dedicated men and women who have been convinced that the Church had deviated from its true path and needed to be called back to its mission to win souls for Christ and to serve their fellow men. One needs only to think of people such as

Wycliffe, Bunyan, George Fox in England, St Francis of Assisi, Jan Hus, Martin Luther on the continent, to see how men have clashed with authority in their attempts to bring the Christian faith to the people.

John Wesley appeared on the scene at a time when the Anglican Church was part of the Establishment and had lost its zeal and when the Dissenting communities were becoming respectable and less enthusiastic. Among the educated classes enthusiasm was not popular. On one occa-

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Turn to page 11

PILGRIMS' PROGRESS THROUGH

By Jackie

IT is the desire of most Jews and many Christians to visit the Holy Land, scene of so many of the incidents and lives which have formed and nurtured the faith which they practise. Therefore it was with tremendous excitement and a strong

handed" tactics used by Israeli troops in quelling such disturbances. But these would not have been the only source of concern. For those whose first trip to the

turn out to be a disappointing anti-climax?

For all of us this trip proved to be a deeply moving experience in our own personal lives and a wonderful illustration of Jesus' own words, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there will I be in the midst". One of the dearest memories of all members of the party will be the deepening of the fellowship which we shared.



On our arrival at Tel Aviv the tour organiser informed us that Israel was experiencing unusual weather for the time of year. "The tour company give the sunshine," he smiled, "but the Good Lord sends the rain". During our stay the Good Lord also sent sufficient snow for some members of our party

to build a modest snowman in the forecourt of our Jerusalem hotel! We were assured that a few snow flurries were usual during a Jerusalem winter but it never laid. Well this year it did! The water flowing down from the heights of Jerusalem to the Dead Sea area well below sea level made it impossible for us to reach Masada, site of the heroic suicide of the last vestige of Jewish resistance against the Romans. However we were able to see the waterfalls flowing down the wadis of the Judean desert and to see how the wilderness bloomed with tiny flowers under such circumstances. For many of us the Book of Psalms will take on a new meaning as we remember singing Psalm 23 as we looked at the deeply cut valley in the wilderness which

modern standards. The Old City today is surrounded not by the original walls of Jesus' day but by those built by the Turkish ruler Suleiman the Magnificent in 1542 AD.



One area which we may be certain was within the city walls in Jesus' day was Mt Moriah, the Temple Mount, where Herod's Temple, built on the site of the Temple of Solomon, destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC, once stood. There is nothing left of Herod's Temple today for it was destroyed in AD 70 when the Romans crushed the Jewish Revolt. Today Orthodox Jews will not walk on the top of Mt Moriah, for it is impossible to identify with any certainty where the Holy of

was, after all, about tracing one's spiritual roots and here, in ancient Judaism, lie the roots of Christianity. One feels also a certain sympathy for those Jews who were never able to come to this sacred

ascended to heaven for a visit of a night's duration. Guide books say what while the El Aska mosque at the eastern end of the Temple Mount is used for group prayers, the



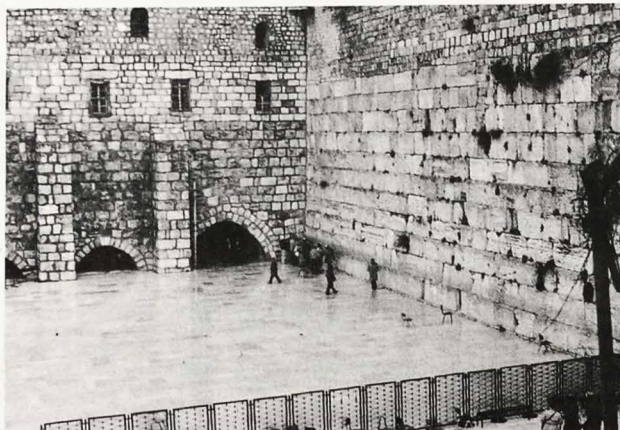
Tomb of Lazarus.

sense of privilege that nearly fifty Christian pilgrims set off from Caversham on February 21st.



No doubt many of the group had misgivings. In the weeks preceding our departure the media had given daily reports of unrest among the Palestinians and rather "heavy-

Holy Land this was, who had longed for this opportunity and now had the goal in sight, would it be the deeply spiritual experience of renewal they hoped or might it turn out to be just another hectic week of touring and sightseeing? For those, who like myself, were returning to Israel, would it be as wonderful as the previous trip or might a second visit



Wailing Wall.

many believe inspired David's picture of walking through "the Valley of the Shadow of Death".



The city of Jerusalem where the first part of our pilgrimage was spent is indeed magical in its drawing power. It is a holy city for Jews, Christians and Muslims. Built on an ancient site settled by a Canaanite tribe, the Jebusites, whom King David conquered in 10th century BC, it is a bustling modern city with an old city at its heart. The exact location of King David's City is debatable, but it would have been extremely small by

Holies was situated, and thus avoid walking on this taboo spot.

All that remains of Herod's building work is one portion of the wall which originally enclosed the Temple platform. This is the Western or Wailing Wall where, at the left-hand end men wearing prayer shawls and fur-trimmed hats may be seen rocking gently backwards and forwards as they pray. At the right-hand end women, heads covered, will pray and some place tiny written prayers in the cracks between the stones of this ancient wall. For several members of our party going down to the wall to pray was a particularly moving experience. This trip

site, for until the Six Day War this area lay within the Muslim sector and was inaccessible to them, except as a view from their distant roof tops.



On the Temple Mount itself stands the octagonal blue and gold mosque, known as the Dome of the Rock, third most holy mosque in the Muslim world. Here, according to the Qu'ran, Abraham would have sacrificed Ishmael, his son, (according to the Bible it was Isaac) if it had not been for the intervention of God. Muslims also believe that it was from this rock that Muhammad

Dome of the Rock is used for individual devotions. Unfortunately there seems to have been a relaxation of the rules of conduct since my previous visit and it would be difficult to imagine any Muslim performing devotions here amidst the noise and the crowds. On Friday, our guide told us, when both mosque and gold mosque, prayers the worshippers make a bridge of planks from the foundation where they perform their ritual ablutions and by entering the mosque via this pathway symbolise its cleansing from defilement during the rest of the week. My own feeling was a deep sense of regret. A place of worship is more than splendid



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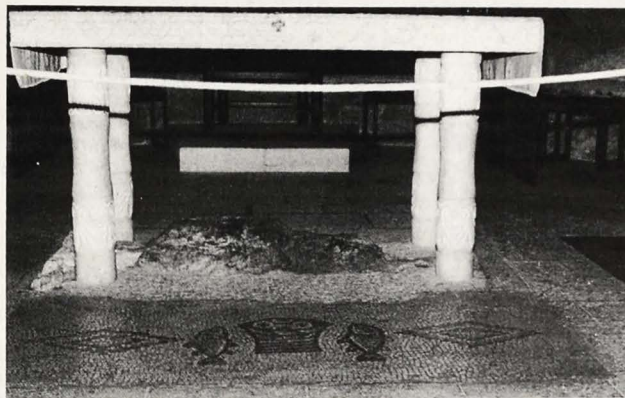
UGH THE HOLY LAND

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architecture and I hope that the prayerful atmosphere which I once experienced in this place will one day be returned.



In talking of the many Christian sites visited in and around Jerusalem it must be remembered that very little of the city and villages which Jesus knew remains. In the majority of sites where churches have been built they are Byzantine and stem from the places which St Helena, mother of the Emperor Constantine, believed to be holy, or they are crusader churches built on the sites of Byzantine ruins or Muslim buildings. Such buildings have been added to over the centuries by various denominations, all keen to share



Byzantine mosaic of the loaves and fishes in church by the Sea of Galilee.

elaborate altar, and the tomb she identified as Christ's. As one stands within this church, the scent of incense strong in one's nostrils, it is possible to see clergy of Armenian, Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholic and many other denominations going about their duties independently of each other within the same building.

There are of course

rigated garden, a rarity in first century Jerusalem was clearly the garden of a rich man. It was here that many of our party found themselves deeply moved by a simple communion of bread and wine beneath the trees. If this is not the actual garden where Jesus rose from the dead it is very like it; if not the actual tomb, then one similar. And so we found the key to our

their off duty moments. Some scholars suggest that they might have used living prisoners as human pawns in this game, and it was in the playing of this game that Jesus received his purple robe and crown of thorns. Similarly the dungeons beneath what is believed to have been Caiaphas' house had an air of authenticity about them. It is worthy of note that it was in the least grand of the places which we visited that many of us received the greatest sense of excitement in coming close to our Lord.



The journey north towards Galilee reveals further contrasts of scenery in this tiny country, little larger than Wales. Gradually it becomes greener and the rolling hillsides reveal the Palestine of Jesus' parables. The grass was dotted with a multitude of wild flowers, poppies, anemones, daisies, the "lilies of the field" which Jesus had grown up with. It was easy to imagine him wandering the hillsides as a boy learning about nature and drawing from it the lessons he would later teach to his disciples. Here it was easier to feel oneself tracing Jesus' steps for the hillsides and the Sea of Galilee must be little changed since he looked upon them. It is easy to imagine, as one stands on the peaceful balcony of the Church of the Beatitudes, Jesus teaching crowds of local people on this hillside, looking down to the sea.

pilgrimage. Whether or not these are the actual sites, this is the area where all the things we commemorated had happened. So too in Bethlehem, where we prayed in the cave beneath the Church of the Nativity, or in Bethany where we saw a first century house like Mary and Martha's and a tomb which might have been Lazarus. If not here, somewhere near here; if not this one, something like this one."



There were some places however where we could dare to feel fairly sure. The pavement below the "Ecce Homo" Convent clearly shows the marks of where the Roman guards would play the "King's game" in

Photographs by Frank Neale

For all of us one of the high spots of the week must have been the service we held on a boat on the Sea of Galilee. It was a windy day, but by no means stormy, and yet the wind lashing

whilst we had a powerful engine to pull us to shore.

Nazareth and Tiberias are busy modern towns, but Capernaum no longer has inhabitants except for the many tourists who come to

sitory, they come and go. It is in the land itself and what has happened on it and in its history which makes it the object of such yearning for so many people from such different backgrounds,



Members of the party collecting water from the River Jordan for use in baptism.

at one's face and hair made it difficult to hear all that was being said. No wonder the seasoned fishermen who were Jesus' disciples were so afraid when they were caught out here in a storm. They had only a sail and oars

view the archaeological discoveries made there. But the Holy Land is not to be found in towns and cities or in buildings however magnificent the architecture or craftsmanship, for these things are trans-

nomadic tribesmen, conquering warriors such as the Philistines, Babylonians, Romans, those on holy war such as the Turks and the Crusaders, those seeking a home like modern Jews and Palestinians.



Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem.



The Dome of the Rock.

in the care of such precious holy sites. There is no better example of this than the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which contains the last few stations of the cross, including the spot St Helena believed to be where Jesus was crucified, now marked by a hole in the rock beneath an

several possible sites for the crucifixion and resurrection. Near a busy, modern Arab bus station, set back from the Jerusalem to Jericho road stands a skull-like cliff face, a possible Golgotha, overlooked by a peaceful garden complete with wine-press and first century rock hewn tomb. This ir-

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STAND UP AND SING

by
KAREN THOMPSON

"Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him
in His mighty heavens.
Praise Him with the sounding of the
trumpet, praise Him with the harp
and the lyre,
Praise Him with the tambourine and
dancing,
Praise Him with the strings and flute."

PSALM 150 vv1,3-4

"AND now Squash will sing us a song that they have written themselves". The first time we heard these words was in May 1987. Since then we have become much more used to them but at the time we were all rather nervous. The church was unusually full, in fact it was packed to overflowing. This was not, unfortunately, to witness our singing debut, but because we had invited about 40 young people from Methodist youth groups in Haslemere, Chislehurst and Yatton to spend the weekend with us.

The song in question was "The Lord Of Love", the first song written by Peter Dulborough, Squash's resident musician. Our nerves began to disappear as he played the first chords on the piano, and by the end of the song we were all enjoying ourselves immensely. That took place almost a year ago now, and it's hard to believe that what has happened since then had such humble beginnings.

(Squash is the young people's group of the Caversham Heights Methodist church, so named because of our habit of squashing into each other's front rooms on Sunday evenings.)

"The Lord of Love" was well received, however, and encouraged by this, Pete

sat down to write another song. Within three months he had written 9 songs, surprising us all with their catchiness and yet very meaningful lyrics. He took his inspiration for the songs from things happening around him and for one particular song, "Change of Heart", from the conversion of John Wesley. The songs all reflect God's great love for us and the amazing difference He can make to a person's life. "Change of Heart" was entered into a national competition to commemorate the 250th anniversary of John Wesley's conversion.



The next development was that Freda Thompson, a church member, suggested that her son Peter might lend us his recording studio and production talents so that we could produce a tape of songs to sell for charity. We were all very excited by this idea, as none of us had ever done any recording before. We were initially baffled and amazed by the banks of knobs and dials, input and output leads, headphones, microphones and drum machines but soon we were all talking about output levels and noise gates as though we had been in the recording business all our lives.

In about 8 weeks the tape was finished. It contained 8 of Pete's songs and one by Helen Garforth, all of which had been transformed beyond recognition from those we had rehearsed on the church piano! We owe a great debt of thanks to Peter Thompson, who put up with us all invading his house at regular intervals, and also donated his services free of charge.

Finally, a name for the tape was decided upon, "Stand Up and Sing", and a decision was taken about how many to order. It was thought prudent to order 100 copies so we took a deep breath,

crossed our fingers and ordered 300! At present there are only 20 copies unsold. It was also decided that the proceeds of the tape would be donated to "Go for Ghana", a charity raising money for youth work there. A competition was held within Squash to design the cover and inlay. The completed tape was launched at the November Church Bazaar, where we sold 60 copies in 1½ hours.



Since November a number of exciting developments have occurred. The first in December, was the making of a video to show in one of the Caversham banks during Christmas week. It was the idea of the bank manager, who had shown some considerable interest in our project when we had opened our account with his bank, and had then stunned us all by asking if we had made a video yet! The video was made in the Heights church and contained 5 songs and brief explanations of "Go for Ghana", and Squash. For a while it was difficult to get intelligent conversation out of many of us on any other topic! The video was apparently received well by all who saw it, and was another exciting experience to add to our growing lists.

Next, Pete and two other Squash members took part in John Stevens' programme on Radio 210. Pete was interviewed and one of the songs, "The Greatest Friend Of All", was played. This was almost as exciting for those of us tuning in at home as it was for those in the studio. Then, in January came an invitation to appear in "Teenscene", a production organised by Methodist Youth Clubs in the Reading area. This show took place from the 17th to the 20th of March.

Squash performed four of Pete's songs, with a small group providing the music and a larger group performing expressive dance. This too was a new venture for us and provided a great deal of laughter in rehearsal, but was a very effective

way of helping convey the message within the songs. Finally, and most excitingly, we have been accepted to perform in "Impact", one of the many events that makes up "London Weekend", to be held in May when young Methodists from all over Great Britain congregate in London to discuss current topics, watch live theatre, play sport, go on boat trips down the Thames, have fun together and praise God.

Squash have been given a ten minute spot where we plan to perform three or four songs. Currently rehearsals are taking

place, and ambitious staging plans about dry ice, helium balloons, heart-shaped confetti and string quartets are being made. No one knows exactly what's going to happen at "Impact" yet, but we all know that it's going to be lots of fun!

So far we have raised over £450 for "Go for Ghana" and expect to raise another £100 by the sales of the remaining tapes.

(Anyone who would like to know more or who would like to buy a copy of the tape can contact Karen Thompson on 483224 or Sally Garforth on 472157. "Stand Up And Sing" costs £3.50 and comes complete with a booklet containing all the song lyrics.)

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The Editors regret that because of the special Methodist issue and the amount of material received, they have had to omit the Club reports for this month.

CLICKETY-CLACK

The Abbeyfield Society is helping to create a new world record which will raise funds for the ITV Telethon during the Spring Bank Holiday Weekend, 29th/30th May. The challenge is that of creating the world's longest scarf — hopefully 20,000 feet long. The elderly residents of the Abbeyfield House in St Peter's Avenue, Caversham and their friends have joined forces with others throughout the United Kingdom to knit 12 inch squares which will be joined together to form a scarf. The measuring of the finished scarf will take place at the

National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, on 29th May during the Homes '88 Exhibition and will be overseen by the Guinness Book of Records following which it will be broken down and offered to other charities to make into blankets for the needy. The Reading Society has been asked by Abbeyfield Headquarters to produce at least 40 feet of scarf and £500 in sponsorship money.

It is hoped that this project will capture the imagination of television viewers and the public at large thereby bringing publicity to the work of Abbeyfield. The

Society nationally, together with other charities, will also benefit financially from the Telethon and to this end sponsorship is being sought. Any reader of the 'Caversham Bridge' who wishes to be associated with this venture is invited to send a donation to the Society's Treasurer, Mr Jim Pilgrim, 64, Highmoor Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7BG, who will be pleased to acknowledge such gifts, cheques being made payable to Abbeyfield (Reading) Society.

Our picture, by courtesy of the Reading Chronicle, shows, from left to right, three of the



Caversham residents, Mrs Doris Pritchard, Mrs Violet Ashington, with their section of the scarf.

ANY OLD SPECTACLES ?

There must be many people who read the Caversham Bridge who have old pairs of spectacles lying around in drawers and who wonder what to do with them. There is an answer. Take them down to Robin James, the opticians in Church Street opposite Waitrose. Every year they send a collection of them to those in need in the Third World. However, in your enthusiasm don't give every single old pair, remember to keep your next best in case of an emergency, but do help — it would be doing someone else a very good turn.

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OBITUARIES

ERNIE DRECHSLER

Ernie Drechsler and his wife, Laura, have lived in Reading and Caversham ever since they escaped from Nazi Austria, shortly before the outbreak of War. His work as a skilful barber brought him into touch with a wide circle of folk, many of whom became firm friends. Indeed, having lived all his life with the nightmare of remembering those members of his and Laura's families who perished in the Holocaust, and with others of his family scattered into three continents, he has

valued all his local friends that much more dearly.

His familiar figure was to be seen almost daily around the shops of Caversham and Reading. He was also a talented portrait painter, and enjoyed playing his clarinet and saxophone, and tending his garden. During the last few years, he has devotedly and lovingly cared for his ailing wife, right up to the time, six months ago, when he had to go

into hospital himself for surgery. And ever since then, he has visited her almost daily in Fairmile Hospital, not merely to visit, but to engage actively in feeding her and in walking her about for exercise.

He lived in hope that eventually they would both be strong enough for her to return home, but this was not to be. He was called to his final rest, while at home in bed, one night in late March, having cheerfully and lovingly carried out his duty to the end.

JEAN TREVIS

Jean Trevis was well known in Caversham especially through her work with children at Caversham Methodist Church and also for sometime at St John's Church. Jean moved to Reading from London after her marriage to Geoffrey in 1962. Jean had several jobs in Reading and from each one she gained a circle of friends. She especially enjoyed her last job at The Deaf Centre, where she was in the role that suited her best, dealing with and helping people.

Jean had a lovely singing voice which was a pleasure to listen to. The joy of singing

shone through as your watched and listened. She was also a talented pianist, able to pick up any tune she heard. This was of great help and pleasure to the folk at Gosbrook Road where she shared in many concerts.

Jean had a love of animals and always had a few furry friends around at her home.

During her illness Jean was an example to

us all. She had no fear of death and her home was filled with feeling of composure, assurance and above all, Love. Comments made after a bedside Communion with 10 friends were 'Now I know the meaning of saintly' and 'Jean is all Love' — what better epitaph.

Jean died on March 17th and will be sadly missed but joyously remembered, especially by her husband Geoffrey and sisters Dorothy and Kathleen.

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Age if under 16.....
Category of exhibit(s)
Description 1..... Approx size.....
Description 2..... Approx size.....
Description 3..... Approx size.....
Description 4..... Approx size.....

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Categories of exhibits: A broad definition is required, such as oil painting, watercolour, embroidery, photograph, woodcarving, furniture etc.

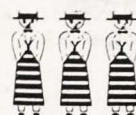
Description of exhibits. This can be a title, such as "Sonning Mill" (for a painting) or "Horses in a field at Mapledurham." For embroidery it might be "Tablecloth with flower embroidery at corners and centre."

For full details about the exhibition, please read the article elsewhere in this issue.

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The organisers reserve the right to select the articles which are to be exhibited.

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

STOP THIS SPRAWL

"DON'T PINCH OUR BOTTOM" proclaimed a familiar poster held by a shivering, but none the less determined, protestor outside Parliament in the cold March wind. It was one of the many eye catching placards carried by demonstrators standing outside the Palace of Westminster and the nearby Department of the Environment, to press home the point that Nicholas Ridley's aim of adding 7,000 houses to the 36,500 that was the maximum Berkshire had said they could accept was totally unacceptable to the people of Berkshire.

□□

Bugs Bottom, admittedly, is not one of the sites he has his eye on for this particular purpose, but it is under a similar threat and the opportunity to plead its cause was not one to miss. Most of the people taking part in the mass lobby had never done anything like this in their lives before, but so strong is the opposition that it overcame their natural reluctance to take to the streets in support of their cause.

□□

Andrew Mackay, the MP for East Berkshire, and Sir Gerard Vaughan came out to speak to the lobbyists and a number of passing MP's paused to look at the notices. Lord Knutsford, on seeing the Caversham and District Residents' Association posters, came over for a chat, explaining that he was a former resident of Caversham and had fond memories of Bugs Bottom. One group went in to see William Waldegrave and reported being given sympathetic hearing, but William Waldegrave isn't Nicholas Ridley.

□□

Later on, a meeting was held in the Grand Committee Room (and grand indeed it is, compared with the meeting rooms where local groups normally gather) to which Tony Durant looked in to give his support, Andrew Mackay emphasised that a hard struggle lay ahead. Housebuilders preferred green sites to inner cities and with government policy supporting them as far as Berkshire is concerned it was not going to be an easy ride. The organisers reiterated their determination to carry on and returned to their homes just in time to see

themselves on their TV screens. It was an encouraging first step in what is going to be a long campaign.

NEW CONSERVATION AREA

It's all systems go for the designation of the new conservation area of St Peter's. D.V. Greenway, of Reading Borough Planning Department, speaking at Caversham and District Residents' Association A.G.M., said the public consultation exercise had produced a number of suggestions for the enhancement of the area, all of which would be carefully considered. The idea of a conservation area was generally warmly welcomed though some felt it was a futile gesture as long as lorries continued to hurtle through it and periodically smash it up. Mr Greenway said that it was a matter largely beyond Reading's control as the lorries largely emanated from Oxfordshire County Council controlled territory.

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One suggestion that looks as if it might get taken on board is to extend the boundary to include the attractive Edwardian houses on the north side of Church Road. They are, remarkably, so far unaltered in their external appearance. It was in fact pleasing to see that the garden wall of one, knocked down by an errant lorry, was replaced in its original form so that the pattern of the four garden walls remained unbroken. If any new owners of any of only one of the houses were to replace doors or windows, the unity of the whole group would be destroyed, and being so close to the proposed conservation area it would detract from it as much as their present appearance adds to it.

□□

These houses do not have listed protection. The old cottages in Church Street, which, because of the road junction would have been difficult, do, so their appearance cannot be changed without special permission.

□□

There had been comments as to whether the proposed new buildings for the churchyard would have been permitted had the area been designated at the time, but as Mr Greenway reminded his audience, permission had been given on appeal and not at Planning Committee level.

Another suggestion concerned the steps that lead from Caversham Court to St Peter's churchyard and which end on grass and lead to the grassed part of the churchyard before the footpath is reached. It has resulted in the grass being worn out, particularly in the churchyard, and in wet weather it is muddy and slippery. Strategically placed paving stones would both improve the appearance and be safer. The less agile would also like to see a handrail beside the steps.

□□

The flint and brick walls which are a characteristic feature of the area are also badly in need of repair. There is some query as to who is actually responsible for them. The ground beside the flint walls of Caversham Court and beneath its brick wall in the Warren would also benefit from some tidying up.

□□

In Caversham Court itself, it was felt that it was about time the Borough Council put its own house in order by repairing the Gazebo, and the public loos also, it was suggested, stood in need of more care and attention. There was also a comment to the effect that recent enhancements in the gardens had gone far enough. Those poles, up which roses are presumably meant to climb, seem universally unpopular, but those apart, there was a feeling amongst some that the whole place was being "prettified."

□□

The ugly street lights will presumably have to remain as long as St Peter's Hill is a lorry route, but although this must count as a serious disadvantage, it did not prevent this pleasing spot becoming a conservation area.

TASK FORCE SETS TO WORK

The Task Force of the Cleaner Reading Sub-Committee, itself an offshoot of the Environmental Health Committee, has been hard at work in Caversham. It operates in conjunction with the Manpower Services Commission. Through the autumn and winter they were engaged in improvement work on the open space that lies between Stuart Close and Surley Row. After clearing trees damaged by the October storm they set to work on the footpath which for half the year used to be impassable because of mud and water. In

the event it had to be drained before it could be resurfaced, but now a footpath usable all the year round has been established. Landscaping, fencing and the planting of trees and shrubs is also being carried out and what was a rather neglected site is being turned into an attractive amenity.

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They are next turning their attention to the Rotherfield Way copse and the Emmer Green Pond, but before they do that they are going to consult with residents. A place that looks as if it is cared for is less likely to be used as a tip.

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Bottle Banks also contribute to keeping Reading tidy, and such has been their success that more are to be installed. In Caversham we are likely to see some at the Hemdean Road, Donkin Hill and Emmer Green shopping areas. In total, £85,800 has been donated to the Renal Dialysis Unit and in October Reading was awarded an engraved crystal rose bowl by the Glass Manufacturers' Federation for its part in the glass recycling scheme.

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

As a result of questions asked at the October public meeting on traffic and taken up again by Cllr A Page when he attended a committee meeting of C.D.R.A., he has sent the Association news of the latest position with regard to three major traffic junctions. The Church Street-Church Road provision of a right hand turn phase is to be looked at again, though it has been rejected before on the grounds that it could interfere with traffic flow from Caversham Bridge, particularly during the evening peak hour.

□□

The green filter light at Gosbrook Road-George Street is traffic operated, which is why it sometimes seems not to be working. A car has to wait three seconds before it responds, and if it moves before that, the demand is cancelled. So it's working O.K., but nevertheless can give a nasty turn to drivers waiting to turn right.

□□

At Peppard Road, the traffic lights are due for renewal and the opportunity will probably be taken to introduce a filter facility at the time, from

Prospect Street to Peppard Road. A yellow box has also been approved, and could appear at any time.

THE WILD WEST

Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickok rode again when Hemdean House Drama Club put on its annual show with a lively performance of the wild west musical. Six schoolgirls gave an uninhibited can-can display, but who were those six stage door Johnnies? Surely not members of staff swinging the shapely and glamorous music hall actress? Well, a lot of unsuspected talent was revealed and Nancy Quinell, whose first production it was, is to be congratulated on having tapped it, from whatever source.

PATTERNED BRICKWORK

It is good to know that the Department of the Environment has agreed to empower Reading Borough Council to take steps to protect the town's patterned brickwork. Many of Reading's terraced houses contain excellent examples of this, which together with their doors and windows are a distinctive feature of the town's older streets. However, until recently, this has all been very much undervalued and the fashion for replacing windows and doors, adding dormer windows and porches and painting or cladding walls means that it is now difficult, if not impossible, to find a street that retains its homogeneity.

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From now on, in certain streets these changes will require planning permission, so that where maintenance may necessitate some alteration, owners will be required to carry it out without destroying the characteristic features of their own house and in doing so that of the whole terrace.

□□

It has come too late for most of Caversham's terraces. West View was a perfect example until comparatively recently, when the rot set in there too. However, included in the roads is Rectory Road, though the order applies only to part of it. It may encourage other owners of other older properties to think carefully before giving their house a "face-lift" I will refrain from mentioning some of the particularly gruesome examples that have recently been burst on the scene. We all have our favourites. At least it can be said that some are good for a laugh.

METHODISM — An Historical Note

From page 5

sion Jane Austen was moved to write to her sister that she did not like a certain parson's sermons since they were "fuller of Regeneration and Conversion than ever." Wesley's preaching was shunned by the Established Church but taken up enthusiastically by the working classes such as the Cornish tin miners and the coal miners of Bristol.

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How did it come about

Wesley's life as a preacher did not start at his conversion. His father was rector of Epworth in Lincolnshire. His education took him to Charterhouse School and Christchurch at Oxford. While he was at that university he was joined by his brother Charles. They and a gifted preacher, George Whitfield, formed a Holy Club

which gained the nickname 'Methodist' because of their methodical way of prayer and bible study. After being ordained as Anglican priests both John and Charles went to Georgia in America. On the boat journey out they travelled with a group of Moravian Protestants who after persecution in Germany were going to settle in America. The Moravians stressed conversion as a sudden personal assurance of salvation, bringing new birth and dominion over sin. This association with the Moravians was to have a profound influence on the Wesleys for within two years they returned to England because John felt that his work as a Missionary to the Indians had failed. He had preached conversion without being converted himself.

On his return to England John met with some English Moravians in London. Their leader Peter Bohler told John to 'preach faith until you have it

and then because you have it you will preach faith.' John Wesley then saw that Christian faith was a matter of personal experience. It was while he was attending a fellowship meeting at the Moravian meeting room in Fetter Lane London on 24 May 1738 — that he felt his heart strangely warmed. This was John's conversion experience. He was a new man.

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How Methodism developed

Following his conversion Wesley felt that God was calling him to preach salvation and recall the established Church to the missionary task. The established Church did not like his message and he was prevented from preaching from its pulpits so he preached in the open air and attracted a mainly working class following. Wesley was an itinerant preacher regarding the world as his parish. Although he remained an Anglican priest all his life and wanted to keep his movement within its fold, Methodism grew to be recognised as a separate religious movement and split from the Anglican Church not long after his death in 1791. It is estimated that, while not many regarded themselves as Methodists during Wesley's lifetime, there were seventy seven thousand Methodist members in 1796.

As the movement grew it needed to be organised. Converts were organised into societies (a term which Methodists still use for a local church) and societies were grouped into circuits. The ultimate authority of

Methodism lies in its annual Conference. Methodism during the nineteenth century splintered into various groups — Wesleyan, Bible, Christian Primitive and others but they finally were reunited as one Methodist Church in 1933. These divisions reflected differing theological stances and the nature and class of the people involved. Since the Union of 1933 it has taken the better part of fifty years for remains of the old divisions to die out. Today Methodism is moving towards a closer unity not only with its Free Church brethren but also with the Anglican Church through joint ministries in new areas and through the uniting of congregations of differing denominations in older areas.

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Methodism in Reading

Wesley paid a number of visits to Reading but it is clear that his initial reception was not encouraging. He wrote "How many years were we beating the air at this town stretching out our hands to a people as stupid as oxen." However one of his converts in Reading was John Cennick who became one of his lay helpers. Cennick who later joined the Moravian church, is chiefly remembered as a hymn writer. (Most hymn books still include his 'Ere I sleep, for every favour').

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There was a small band of Methodists worshipping in a meeting room in London Street at the end of

the eighteenth century. They later moved to a site in Church Street and then to Queens Road where the present Wesley Church, the mother Church of Reading Methodism, stands. Other societies were formed in Whitley, Wokingham, Tilehurst, Oxford Road and other places around. These societies all remained within the Wesleyan tradition. Primitive Methodism came to Reading in the 1830s. A society was formed which took over the Room in London Street which years before had been used by the first Methodists in Reading. As the congregation grew it has to move to Salem Chapel in Minster Street but eventually returned to London Street (the Church building, next to Wm Smith's bookshop, still exists, being used as offices). Eventually further churches were opened in other parts of the town and the surrounding areas.

There remained two separate circuits in Reading, Wesleyan and Primitive until 1940 when they joined to become the Reading Methodist Circuit. Since then there has been much amalgamation, entrenchment and advance with new Churches being opened to meet the needs of the new developments in the town and others being closed when it was clear that the work could not be sustained in a particular area.

Reading circuit which is one of the biggest in Methodism includes many outlying areas and extends from Henley in the North to Three Mile Cross in the South, Wokingham in the East to the outskirts of Newbury and Andover in the West.

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The Council must be congratulated for their gift of daffodils, which grace the bank at the lower end of Peppard Road. They have given much pleasure to all who walk past and to those drivers who have time to notice. Local residents, however, were understandably annoyed when the accumulated litter almost outdid the show of blooms. Letters and phone calls to the department concerned resulted in a good clear out before the lovely show was over. It is understandable that for one reason or another some street cleaning may be missed, but why all the litter in the first place? Much is produced from the takeaway foodshops in Prospect Street — by the time the meals have been eaten on the walk up the road there is only one very small bin for rubbish. A LARGE

bin on the bankside of the wall of the Prince of Wales, if they'd give permission, would help. Motorists too, waiting for the lights to change, will throw out cans, cigarette packets and sweet wrappers. We must all be much more responsible for our own rubbish. If everyone kept their own front pavement free of litter and weeds, that would help. And talking of responsibilities, what do you think about a couple, walking their dog on Balmore Common and passing the bank of daffodils, who picked a bunch? Fortunately they were spotted by a local who chased after them and roundly castigated them for their vandalism, for that is just what it was. How can you expect the young to behave decently when they see adults acting in this way. It's up to you, Caversham.

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HIGHDOWN SHOW

Spring Bank Holiday Sunday

29th May, 1988

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a great day with four bouncers attending the Show, including the British Telecom telephone, and the Chronicle dragon.

Other attractions include mini motorbike rides, horse rides, street market — thirty bookings already, charity stalls, trade stands, Punch and Judy, model boats, South Oxon archers, juggling show, vintage fire engines, swing boats, Reading Fun Bus and Action Van.



Outside broadcast from the Show will be by Radio 210 for the third year running.

Sun Alliance Assurance have printed the Draw tickets — first

prize £100. The new Caversham Hotel have donated "Dinner for two" which will be raffled on Show day. Prudential Assurance are printing twelve thousand programmes for a third year. T.A. Printers are collating the programmes. Many Trade Stands are already booked.



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