

ANGRY CHARITY

by
 PETER ANNEREAU

FEW PEOPLE who watched the "Challenge Aneka" programme on television just before Christmas, when the story of a four-day blitz to refurbish an orphanage in northern Romania was told, could have remained dry-eyed. Aneka was herself reduced to tears when she saw the children lying in damp rags in rusting cots in a cellar smelling "like a stable".

At the end she revealed that, bad though the conditions were, the home was not unique but there are hundreds of others like it — and in some the conditions were even worse.

For many such children help is on its way — from two attic rooms in Prospect Street, Caversham. It is here, at the Caversham Business Centre at No. 23, that the charity FEED THE CHILDREN is based.

This international Christian relief agency was founded in America eleven years ago, since when it has been active in relieving poverty in twenty-seven countries. The European charity was set up a few months ago following the revelation of appalling conditions in institutions for children in Romania, and it is to this country that FEED THE CHILDREN (Europe) is firstly directing its attention.

In November a lorry loaded with \$88,000 worth of goods — mostly donated — left Reading for Constanta, a Black Sea port where problems of poverty have been compounded by the prevalence of AIDS.

Initially, six institutions were helped by FEED THE CHILDREN, including a school for mentally handicapped children and a soup kitchen, but the principal focus of attention are two large orphanages and the municipal hospital of Constants, and these will continue to receive aid from the charity for three to four years.

At the hospital, medical supplies are

welcomed as life-savers. As well as the usual conditions one might expect to find being treated, the children's department has one hundred children suffering from AIDS and the remarkable doctor in charge — with whom FEED THE CHILDREN is in constant touch, has another five hundred such cases in her care in the district.

Conditions in the orphanages can only be described as grim. Imagine two hundred and twenty handicapped "irrecoverables" aged from four to twenty lying in rags in wet and soiled cots, seldom being picked up, never cuddled. Disinterested staff fed them all by bottle, because it was easier and quicker. Only when foreigners appeared did the staff start feeding the handicapped children with solid foods — and then they used one spoon, going from cot to cot with a spoonful for each in turn. At wash time all the children were taken to one room — the only one with a light bulb.

With aid being delivered by a number of agencies, and volunteers from Britain and other countries giving their time and using their skills to provide the homes with basic amenities and to motivate and train staff, conditions are

improving, but these homes will need assistance for some time to come, says FEED THE CHILDREN'S European director Mr David Grubb.

"We are building relationships with the Romanian people, working very closely with them and providing precisely the help they require."

A central feature of FEED THE CHILDREN'S policy is that aid should be carefully targetted and its use monitored. The charity transports the goods itself and supervises distribution to ensure that none of it goes astray or leeches into the active Black Market for the many goods unobtainable in Romanian shops.

FEED THE CHILDREN is not sending out random goods but is identifying need and then seeking the required items through approaches to manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and the public at large.

Warehouse space has recently been found in Reading enabling the charity to sort and pack donated goods and to build up a stock of certain items, such as blankets, plastic sheeting, tentage and warm clothes for disaster relief, when the charity may need to "hit the road" at a few hours' notice to assist people made



Feed the Children Emergency Director David Grubb with an orphan suffering from AIDS at an institution in Cernavoda, Southern Romania.

homeless by a sudden natural or man-made disaster.

Meanwhile, preparations are in hand for the next delivery of aid to Romania scheduled for the end of February.

Project officer Jeff Alderson has just returned from visiting the institutions around Constanta with a new "needs" list and is particularly keen to obtain a good supply of tinned fruit to supplement the orphans' meagre rations and baby food for the youngest inmates and hospital patients.

"Can you imagine ten and even fifteen-year-old children who have rarely, if

ever, eaten fruit?" he asks. "Fruit is not served as it is expensive and takes too long to prepare. Yet these children are desperately in need of nutritious food. They are mostly weak, anaemic and sick."

Jeff adds "We are fortunate to have reliable local contacts in Romania as the security and effective use of the goods supplied are crucial. Theft and the Black Market are rampant and that is why I have been back there just before Christmas to check on the items we delivered and to confirm the list for our next delivery."

"But taking goods there is only one

part. We are preparing a long term plan to assist with playgroup and related activities for the 'irrecoverables', of whom it is estimated that one-third can be rehabilitated and should never have been put in the orphanage in the first place.

"The plan includes professional training for the Romanian staff. If they are not motivated, trained and better paid, our other efforts will be of no lasting value. Similarly, we are designing a health education programme on AIDS through the municipal hospital for schools, social clubs etc.

"We are an angry charity. All this would never have happened if it had not been for the outrageous edicts of the late President Ceausescu. Along with others, we are determined that these children no longer suffer needlessly."

In addition to cash donations and offers of goods — particularly tinned fruit — FEED THE CHILDREN would welcome people forming small support groups for fundraising and collection of goods.

FEED THE CHILDREN'S office at 23 Prospect Street, Caversham, is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (Tel. 0734-461611).

TALKING POINT

by MRS JUNE HARDCASTLE wife of Vicar of St. Barnabas:

An Anglican lay Reader, a Methodist Deaconess
and an Emmer Green teacher.

STANDARD ASSESSMENT TASKS

DID YOU go round the sales? I stood mesmerized in the Gas showrooms — a cooker large and splendid was before me, with controls like the cockpit of Concorde. I read recently that in spite of all the technology of our age most cooks still dip their fingers in to test the temperature and decide whether or not the food is cooked by actually looking in the oven. What a triumph for humanity! — all those sophisticated dials and switches and thermometers staring dully into space like blind electronic eyes. We humans resist most attempts at making us more efficient.

We are most fortunate in Caversham to have first rate schools. I teach an Infant class in one of them.

Recently we did some measuring of my six year olds as part of a maths exercise. This was an education in itself — such difference of height, such differences in waist measurements. Some had long arms and some short. Did you know that some six year olds wear jumpers sporting the label "aged 4 — 5" and others "aged 6 — 7" and some others (3 in my group) "aged 9 — 10". What a triumph for humanity! — what untidy creatures we are, growing at different paces, our genes laughing in the faces of those who would have a tidy "average child".

The testing for the National Curriculum will soon be upon us. At the time of writing, those of us who will be called upon to implement the tests are still in the dark as to their exact nature, except to say that the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) will consist of a series of activities and, for the 7 year olds, will be cross curricular. The content of the National Curriculum for this age group is very akin to what Infant teachers have been doing for years. Also, the challenges to the teacher are the same — to provide systematic schemes of learning, to give continuing encouragement to the slower developers and to give further stimulus to those quick to understand concepts. The differences are in the record keeping and in the testing. In the idea of testing at 7 is a fallacy so dire that I am amazed that it continues to be so unchallenged. BY WHAT AUTHORITY AND BY WHOSE CALCULATIONS DO WE DECIDE WHAT IS NORMAL DEVELOPMENT FOR A 7 YEAR OLD? (bear in mind that on the days of the testing some children will have been 7 for several months and

others NOT YET seven) All Infant teachers can tell you stories of children who they despaired of and then, suddenly, the child blossomed, and stories of others who made a flying start and then marked time before going on to the next stage. This is nothing to do with "good teaching" or "indifferent teaching" — human development is an untidy, variable process with peaks and troughs and plateaux. Further, in addition to the accumulation of knowledge there is much to learn. The solitary child has to learn co-operative investigation, the boisterous child has to learn to take turns; they must all develop skills in observation, questioning, recording, reasoning and prediction. What, too, of kindness? self control? And...may I say it.... of developing as an individual — an untidy individual interested in Turtles and pterosaurs, mini beasts and monsters, Skipits and Sindy, football and fighting, giggling over rude words and made up rhymes, crying when the hamster dies and getting excited at your birthday.

I was asked recently if I had made any New Year resolutions. I said no, but, reflecting on it, YES. In 1991 I resolve to continue my untidy growth as an individual. Thank God there are no SATs for 43 year olds — I am only too aware that many areas of my humanness remain undeveloped. My only Attainment Target is to be open to change and to embrace friendship whenever it is offered to me. (I think that's something of what I mean when I pray "Thy will be done")

To those of you who have young children in Caversham schools, I say — be very grateful that your youngsters are in hands of hardworking teachers who really care about your sons and daughters as individuals. To all of you I say this — the world doesn't operate by strict transactions whereby the good reap rewards and the bad 'uns get the nasties. Human life is an untidy collection of different sorts of experiences; of unexpected growing, of frustrating plateaux, of setbacks, of illness and good health. Be your individual self that God has intended you to be. His National Curriculum is embraced in this "to all who receive Him, who believed in His Name, he gave them the power to become the children of God" What a triumph for humanity when we are joined to Him!

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN CAVERSHAM

To all who have loved ones out in the Gulf:

Those who wish to be put in touch with a Christian minister, or who would appreciate a sympathetic ear, please feel free to ring either

Brian Ebbs 474747
Norman Kent 475472, or 479378 (daytime)
Carol Clark 843999

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 March issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 6 Feb.

All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 4 Feb.

The dates for April will be Monday 4 March and Wednesday 6 March.

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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SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's

8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am Parish Communion
11.15am Matins
6.30pm Evensong

St John's

8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am Family Eucharist
11.00am Children's Service

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
9.30am Family Communion (apart from 2nd Sunday)
9.30am Family Service (2nd Sunday only)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

8.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
11.00am Parish Communion

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

10.30am and 6.30pm

CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH (Caversham Park Primary School)

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Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)
Family Service (5th Sunday)

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

10.30am (in Chapel)
6.30pm (in Chapel)

CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

10.45am Worship at Mapledurham Pavilion

METHODIST

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Caversham Heights

9.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)
11.00am and 6.30pm

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THE VEN. D.I.T. EASTMAN
PLEASE SEE NOTICE ON PAGE 11

POST BAG

Dear Editors,

I was saddened to read "Watchdog's" soft approach to the proposed development of Chazey Court in the January issue. It read as though the development had virtually been approved and that it would be pointless to object to it. Perhaps "Watchdog" would like to know that it is being opposed and opposed fiercely by those obviously more affected by the proposal and who are more aware of the disastrous affect it would have upon the Warren.

Yours etc
Ivan W.J. Warren
1 Warren Court
The Warren
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KATY IN CAVERSHAM

I CAN hear some of my readers saying "Oh no, not Christmas again", for it's a fact that the beginning of my February column almost always contains something about the festive season in Caversham, publishing dates being what they are. But, on second thoughts, is this really a reason for not saying thank-you yet again to all the Caversham people who served us so well in the run-up to Christmas. Much as I do deplore supermarket shopping, I can never praise sufficiently the lads and lassies who work in them; heaven knows how they keep so cool when the shops are literally packed and the check-out queues miles long. But this year they really excelled themselves to the extent that one seldom came away without a 'Happy Christmas' or 'Happy New Year' floating after one.

The Prospect Street Post Office

(and I have no doubt others in Caversham) has always coped admirably with the many hundreds who arrived with parcels and packages and even found time to advise on the best and sometimes the cheapest way of posting. And it wouldn't be fair to miss out those in the smaller shops who gave us such admirable service.

I was pleased to see that so many old and house-bound folk were being well looked after, often by neighbours. But the lass who really took the prize as far as I was concerned was the young professional lady who, when asked what she was doing at Christmas, simply said that she and her assistant were going to spend the holiday at a London Crisis centre giving their professional help where it

was most needed. I should very much like to mention her by name, but am not at all sure she would approve, so I'll simply say that though she has only been working here for about a year and doesn't actually live in Caversham, she has already made herself a firm favourite with those she meets in the course of her work.



GUY BROWN

This has been a very happy season for the Brown family who run the pet shop in Prospect Street. A week or so ago Jerry told me that young Guy was now understudying the lead in "42nd Street" currently running Edinburgh, adding that he probably wouldn't ever really play the part.

Suddenly by an amazing stroke of good luck for him and, alas, bad luck for the lead himself, the part became his for a few weeks at least while the unfortunate lead found himself in hospital having an operation, not, I understand, a serious one. So for a short time at least Guy will find himself at the top of the tree, having only started about 16 months ago as the lowest chorus boy in the show. A party of us went to see him when the company was appearing on the South coast about a year ago. Needless to say, his entire family made the journey to Edinburgh to see him in the lead part. They are a specially nice family, so we were all delighted at the news.

ELLEN CROOK

Sad news, alas, for the friends and

neighbours of Ellen Crook, who died late in November; she was a very popular friend and neighbour, who had lived in Hampden Road nearly all her life and came from an old Caversham family. Known as Crookie to the staff at Jacksons, for whom she supplied knitted and crocheted goods, as she did for Vera Fletcher who once ran a fancy goods shop in Prospect Street, she was also remembered by many as the lady who provided such marvellous cakes and other refreshments for the children's parties at Elliotts, where her husband worked. She was one of those people who took a keen interest in everyone she met and never missed a chance to greet somebody and perhaps pass on news of other Caversham people. She leaves a

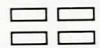
daughter, Valerie, and a son, Derek, together with four grandchildren who, though not living in Caversham themselves will be well known to Ellen's friends and neighbours, for she was always anxious to pass on news of them. She will be much missed.



PAVEMENTS AGAIN

And now can something please be done about Caversham pavements which have been the cause of falls to many local people this winter. Calls to the local authority have been very courteously met and for weeks now we have had a new rush of yellow markings in the district. But this hasn't solved the problem and if something isn't done soon it will get

worse. I hardly like to blame the local authority — we all know how they are being forced to cut back so much and probably more so in the future, but I sometimes think it's lucky for them they aren't in the US. The last time I was there I became only too well aware that the cry of 'Sue' was frequently heard — and most of them do, which is probably why on the whole their roads and pavements tend to be better kept than ours. And now I'll sit back and wait for somebody to tell me this isn't the case — after all I do only know part of that vast continent.



HAPPY NEW YEAR

And now belated New Year greetings to everyone, and in your resolutions don't forget the one about keeping the 'Bridge' editors briefed on bits of local news.

SINGING FOR SOUP AND SHELTER

EACH DECEMBER the South Chiltern Choral Society gives two Christmas concerts at Chiltern Edge School, and the audiences are invited to contribute during the intervals to a charity which the Society has chosen.

One of the members of the

choir, Mrs Kate Hobson, who is also the secretary of the World Service, Mission and Neighbourhood Committee at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, proposed that the 1990 collection should be given to the Churches in the Reading Drop-in-Centre for the

Homeless. Her proposal was warmly supported, and equally warm was the generosity of those who attended the concerts: no less than £954.08 was given. This splendid sum was a very welcome New Year present for the Reading Council of Churches which set up and runs the Drop-in-Centre.

E.M.A.

CAVERSHAM INNER WHEEL CLUB

INNER WHEEL members are the wives of Rotarians. They enjoy a great deal of fun and fellowship in fundraising and giving personal service for charities and supporting Rotary projects when required.

Help to overseas includes collecting toiletries for Romania, collecting stamps and coins for Sahara project, knitting squares to make blankets for Mother Teresa, sending clothes for the Miriam Dean Trust.

With local charities they have helped sort clothes at the Sue Ryder home, prepared food for a Rotary Christmas party for under-privileged children, given Christmas tokens to teenagers at

Reading Family Aid centre and Women's refuge, sent men's clothes to R.E.A.P. (Reading Emergency Accommodation Project) and held a tea party for elderly people.

Fund raising ranges from fashion shows, flower displays, gardeners' question time and, latterly, a Gala evening at the Progress Theatre with supper. The profit from this last fund raising will go to the President's chosen charity, C.A.R.E., providing long term village community homes for mentally handicapped people.

A donation has also been sent to the district Chairman's charity which is Abbeylefield Home for the elderly.

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WEDDING AT HOME PASSPORT

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT

By Watchdog

NO SURRENDER ON BUGS BOTTOM

THE RUN up to Christmas, very short notice and, thrown in for good measure, the coldest night to date of the winter, would generally be recognised as the worst possible ingredients to ensure a successful public meeting, but in spite of all that, a couple of hundred people gathered in the hall of Caversham Primary School for a cause that was stronger than all the reasons for not turning out. This was Bugs Bottom which, after nearly seven years of campaign, still commands as much support as ever it did.

Michael Devereux, Principal Planning Officer for North and West Reading, was the first speaker. He was there to present the detailed plans for the first phase of building in the valley, and he reminded his listeners that the task of the Planning Committee in relation to detailed plans is simply to consider the plans in front of them on the site itself, and not their repercussions on surrounding areas. As details of the plans and objections to them were dealt with in the November issue of this newspaper, there is not need to repeat them here, beyond saying that the more letters of objection to them that the Planning Committee receives, the greater it strengthens their hand. For most people the objection is not so much about what the houses will look like as to their being there at all, and no doubt there were many comments to that effect even though they are irrelevant to a detailed application.

Following on Mike Devereux, Mr. Clive Williams, speaking about the imminent Court of Appeal case, said a key issue was that changes to the County Structure Plan were confirmed on the very day that the Secretary of State also signed permission for development in Bugs Bottom. He felt the defenders of the valley had a good case even though the strength of the opposition was formidable.

Dr. Christina Hill of Sane Planning in the South East (SPISE) reiterated the arguments she had put at an earlier Bugs Bottom meeting that Bugs Bot-

tom is part of a whole movement to prevent the over development of the South-East which had already reached a critical stage and she congratulated local campaigners on their work.

Sir Gerard Vaughan also saw it as a strength that there was far more environmental concern now than there was when Michael Heseltine was formerly Secretary of State for the Environment. Here it must, however, be remembered that although Michael Heseltine is the first Secretary of State concerned with Bug Bottom (there have been three others) actually to know the Chilterns countryside, he also was the progenitor of the notorious 'Heseltown' to the south of Reading.

Brian Wright of Common Land Cause said further research was indicating that the nineteenth century Enclosure Awards could still be used to save the valley.

Molly Casey of Caversham and District Residents' Association, reminded those present of the importance of individual letters to the Secretary of State. It was that that brought about the first delay in confirming the decision to build in the valley, on which all the succeeding delays have been able to build. Letters should ask Michael Heseltine to review the whole matter and withdraw permission. Write to him at the House of Commons.

After that, Peter Watsham auctioned a number of items sent in by celebrities who supported the fight to save Bugs Bottom. There were several signed books and photographs, a couple of ties and even a signed tee-shirt from Jimmy Saville. Peter himself clearly had his eye on Simon Rattle's signed programmes but even though he had himself obtained them from Simon Rattle whilst disguised as a rabbit, it cost him to get them back.

Catherine Ratcliffe then sang a folk song specially composed for the campaign, with its refrain taken up by the audience,

Shall bricks and mortar blight our land?

O no, it shall not be,

and in with a final reminder to people to turn out the next morning to send off the petition on its journey to London, the meeting dispersed into the cold night.

A SNOWY JOURNEY

The following morning at 9.30 a.m. a goodly crowd had gathered in driving snow and a bitter wind at the Bugs Bottom end of Hemdean Road to give a send-off to the poster push to London. There were several rabbits there, glad of the costumes that had made them uncomfortably warm back in the summer, whilst rabbit hats were gratefully donned by others to shield ears from the cold wind. Beneath two such hats it was possible to discern the Mayor, because he was wearing his chain, and the M.P. because the rest of him was dressed for an appointment later that morning.

The petition, numbering nearly 20,000 signatures, was loaded into a mini-bus lent by Rabbit Vehicle Hire, whose logo is the same as the Bugs Bottom Action Group, whilst a huge trailer was drawn up covered with a giant poster bearing the legend, 'Bugs Bottom. Nicholas Ridley said "Yes". Reading says "No"'. Muscular members of Dave French's gymnasium who had offered their services for the task were also there, attaching tow ropes to it in order to pull the whole thing to London.

The whole procession finally moved off along Hemdean Road to start its cold journey to Westminster; which it reached on Sunday afternoon. Michael Heseltine, newly installed at the Department of the Environment, was unable to be present to receive it, but Sir Gerard was there and undertook to present it to him.

Throughout all this, the film crew was there, taking shots for Channel 4. The national media also took it up. The importance of this is that both Michael Heseltine and the Judge in the Appeal Court case will know in advance that the issue they are looking at is of major importance and not just one more item in 'the daily

round, the common task'.

THE CAMPAIGN CONTINUES

Australian Steve Fuzesi, even before he came to England to marry Katrina Collett, found his imagination so stirred by the strangely named Bugs Bottom and the struggle to save it from the greedy developer that he composed a song with the refrain 'Save Bugs Bottom; it's the only one he's got' which has now been taped and also heard on Radio 210. Perhaps Bugs Bottom will one day even feature in 'Top of the Pops'.

Although the petition to the secretary of State is now closed, signatures are still being collected to a statement expressing concern that detailed planning permission can be applied for when outline is still the subject of legal proceedings. A change in law could not be brought about in time to save Bugs Bottom, if that indeed is what is

required, but it could prevent this kind of thing from happening again in the future.

The Bugs Bottom Action Group now meets on the first Friday of every month in Church House, Church Street, at 8.00 p.m. when anyone who feels able to help in any way will be very welcome. At its last meeting, plans were announced for an exhibition to be held in the public library, showing what the valley looks like. Further plans for using the support that already exists in the villages of South Oxfordshire for saving Bugs Bottom are also being worked out. It is also hoped to produce a postcard for sale in aid of the Appeal Court Fund which now stands at over £16,000. Another barn dance and a disco are also planned. Look out for details.

A LIFE OF CRIME

I am not cut out to make a successful criminal. My road-fund

Turn to page 5

CAVERSHAM CLERGY

ANGLICAN

The Rev Richard Kingsbury, Caversham Rectory, Church Road. Tel: 479130.
(Parish Office: Monday-Thursday 9.30-12.30 Tel: 471703)
The Rev Alan Wilson, St John's House, 9 South View Avenue. Tel: 471814.
Rev Bill Carpenter, St Andrews House, Harrogate Rd. Tel: 472788.
The Rev Nigel Harcastle, 20 St. Barnabas Road. Tel: 478239.

The Rev Christine Allsopp, 25 Ilkley Road. Tel: 472070.

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PROJECT
The Rev. Philip Abrey, 51 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village. Tel: 475152.

BAPTIST

The Rev Dennis Weller, 80 Balmore Drive. Tel: 478668.

METHODIST

The Rev Keith Sanders, 72 Highmoor Road. Tel: 472223.
The Rev John Boakes, 9 Woodlands Grove, Caversham. Tel: 482530.

UNITED REFORMED

The Rev David Clark, 41 Highmoor Road. Tel: 471909.

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL

The Rev Chris Justice, 119 Peppard Road. Tel: 474529.
The Rev Michael Holmes, 8 Southview Avenue. Tel: 474138.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

The Rev Thomas Meagher, The Presbytery, 2 South View Avenue. Tel: 471787.
(For Caversham Park Village)
The Rev J. Ellis, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common. Tel: 723418.

CAVERSHAM DIARY

Friday, 15th Feb 7.30pm Arthur Legge Centre: Caversham Horticultural Society: Elizabeth Farrar on Pansies, Violas and Sweet Violets.

Thursday, 21st Feb A Cookery Demonstration in aid of BARNADOS will be held at the Gas Board Showrooms, 159 Friar Street, Reading at 7.30pm. For tickets price £3 including refreshments and raffle, Phone Reading 474272.

Friday, 1st March Women's World Day of Prayer, 2pm Salvation Army Citadel, Reading. 8pm New Testament Church of God, Caversham.

READING EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION PROJECT

EVERYONE is aware that homelessness is on the increase, particularly in this area where the high level of employment inflates the price of housing beyond the reach of people on even average incomes.

Reading Emergency Accommodation Project provides emergency housing for homeless people in the ground floor of a Victorian Barracks in Reading. The Keep has only thirteen beds and has to balance the demand for a bed, as a brief respite from sleeping rough, with the need to hold people long enough to enable them to secure accommodation. It can take weeks to obtain a benefit payment and understandably landlords will not rent a room without payment in advance.

Many homeless people have special needs, including mental health problems and learning difficulties. Without support these people are unable to maintain and sustain independent living.

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to house people who become homeless if they have children, are elderly, disabled or "vulnerable". If you are single, therefore, you have no chance of being accepted by the council unless you are able to argue successfully that you are "less able

to cope than an ordinary person".

REAP has eight years' experience of working with homeless people and has concluded that the only positive approach to this serious problem is the provision of resettlement services to help more homeless people find and keep accommodation in the com-

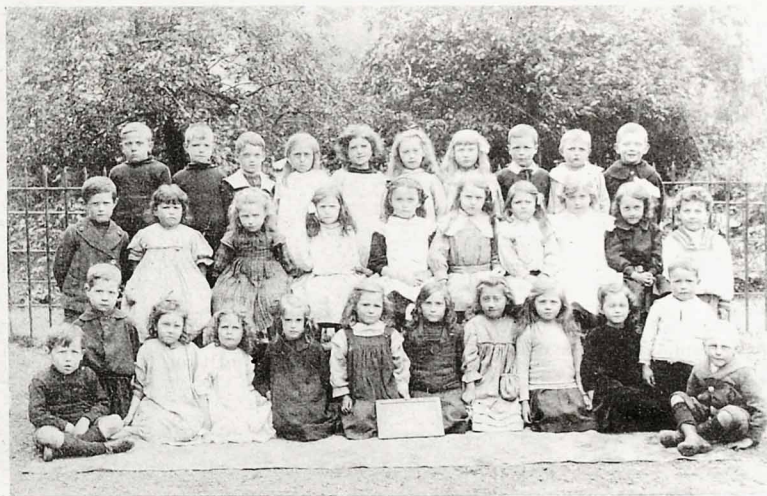
munity. Although a small amount of social housing is provided by the local authority and Housing Associations, it does not include the level of support which people with special needs require if they are to develop the skills necessary to sustain independent living.

REAP is developing

a new service which will provide a solution to homelessness for some of the people for whom the only current relief is an occasional night's stay in a hostel.

REAP receives its principal funding from Reading Borough Council but each year this local charity has to raise at least \$12,000 to cover basic costs. If you are able to offer a donation, or would like to know more about REAP's work, please telephone staff at the keep, Reading 574020.

WERE YOU THERE?



THIS Photograph was taken around 1910 and has been lent to us by Gertrude Waterman, who is fifth from the right in the front row. This is Class I of St. Peter's Church School - the building that now houses the Adult Education Centre. We are always interested to publish clear photographs of life in old Caversham, we hope we may have some of Miss Waterman's reminiscences in a later issue.

WATCHDOG

From page 4

licence is due on 1st January, a difficult time as the Post Office is not one of the easiest places to visit in the preceding fortnight. However, I did manage to buy it right at the end of the year, but

forgot to put it on my windscreen straight away. Fair cop, and that is just what happened on 2nd January, when as I was dropping off visitors at the railway station, the arm of the law descended and pointed out the error of my ways. I suppose what really made it rankle was that only that evening I had

picked a perilous way down the twists and bends of Clifton Park Road between several unlicensed Jaguars that have obstructed the way for several months, apparently with impunity.

There is more than one case in Caversham where several unlicensed cars stand out in the road and the person responsible says that he repairs cars for a hobby and they don't belong to him anyway. Caversham Residents' Association has taken up these matters, which are partly the responsibility of the local Planning authority and partly that of the police. The law tends, in these cases, to assume in favour of the person who in the eyes of most people, is the one who is infringing it, so it takes a long time to bring a case..... unless of course it should be your columnist. Take, for instance, the first time I parked in desperation on double yellow lines, after a blameless driving career of many

years..... but I will not bore readers with details of my incursions into a life of crime. Clearly the straight and narrow is the only path for me.

CORRECTION

A missing line in the tribute to W.H. Tee in this column in the December issue could have given the impression that he was a member of Caversham Residents' Association. This would of course have been improper for a person occupying his position. It should have read that he was 'a resident of Caversham and often came to speak at meetings organised by Caversham and District Residents' Association'.

DIARY DATE

Thursday 21st March 8.00 p.m. Caversham and District Residents' Association A.G.M. Free Church Hall, Prospect Street. After the formal business a talk on Food Safety by an officer of Reading Borough Council.

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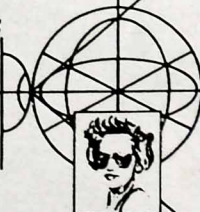
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ROUND THE CHURCHES

CHRISTMAS DRAMA IN CAVERSHAM

FOLLOWING the success of the schools tour last Easter, the drama group from Caversham Hill Chapel, Keybunch, took to the road again in December, covering all the schools in Caversham with a gospel message for Christmas.

The group, consisting of Marion Hedley-Lewis, Mark Hatcher, Chris Justice and Mike Holmes, con-

ducted twenty assemblies meeting over three thousand children. An allegorical pantomime was performed in the local primary schools and a variety of Christmas sketches were done at the secondary schools. The schools visited were The Hill Primary, Caversham Park, Emmer Green, Caversham Primary, Micklands, Thameside, The Avenue, High-

down, Chiltern Edge and Langtree Comprehensive.

The photographs are scenes from the pantomime. The plot was as follows: Professor Perfect (Mike Holmes) lived in Perfect Place, only doing perfect things. Down the road in Dingyville lived a nasty character called Bad D (Mark Hatcher) who only did despicable things. The Prof invents a

person called Petite Pru (Marion Hedley-Lewis) who begins to learn how to do perfect things in Perfect Place. While Professor Perfect is away making Pru the perfect plum pudding Bad D tempts her into eating his pudding. This spelled tragedy for Pru because she had previously promis-

ed not to eat anything other than the Professor's pudding and he had no alternative but to banish Pru from Perfect Place for doing something that was wrong. The Professor begins to think of a perfect plan to allow her to come back. He has a son (Chris Justice), who is also perfect and is therefore 'the perfect man for the perfect

plan'. The son helps Pru to get back to Perfect Place, but not without a struggle with Bad D.

Just in case you are wondering what all that has to do with gospel... God who is perfect, made a world which was perfect. Tempted by Satan, man messed things up, However, God had the perfect plant to get people

like you and me back to him. He sent Jesus into the world to rescue us from Satan's grip and help us to live life as God first intended it to be. He was the 'perfect man for the perfect plan'.

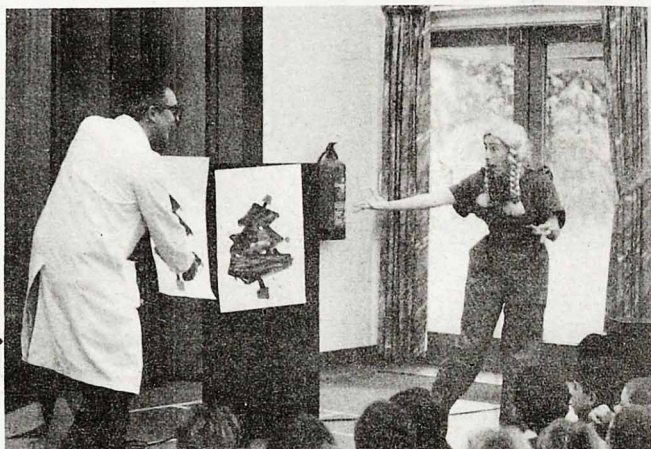
In the play Pru was so happy to get back to Perfect Place. May you find happiness in God's presence in 1991.

Mike Holmes

PHOTOS BY PAUL GRICE



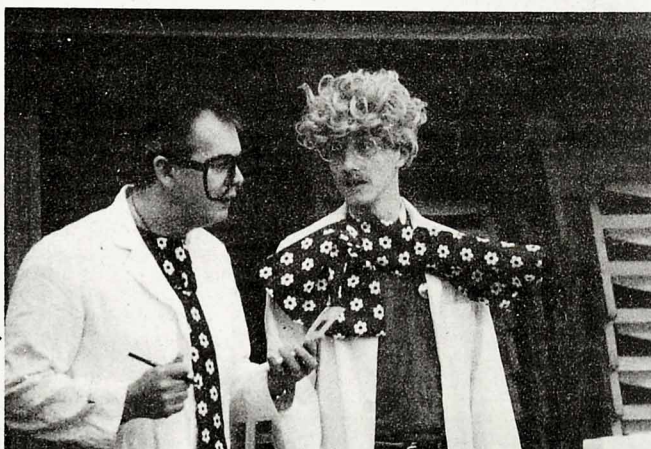
An attentive audience (Micklands Primary)



Pru meets Prof Perfect's son (Chris Justice, Marion Hedley-Lewis)



Teaching a Christmas song



Prof Perfect explains his plan to the Son (Chris Justice, Mike Holmes)



The narrator (Marion Hedley-Lewis)



Bad D tempts Pru with his pudding (Marion Hedley-Lewis, Mark Hatcher)

ROUND THE CHURCHES

GOSBROOK ROAD REVIEW

FIRST OF all, friends at Caversham Methodist Church, Gosbrook Road wish all the 'Bridge' readers a happy and hopefully peaceful new year. By the time you read this, Jan 15th will have come and gone, and we all pray for a peaceful outcome.

Christmas is always a joyous time, and this year's times of fellowship lived up to those of previous years. There were different

highlights Toy service and Children's Nativity Service were both times of joy and fellowship.

Catherine Hackman and Sarah Lavington organised

well, especially as eight girls were ill on 'the night'. Joy and Dennis Tutty undertook all the musical accompaniment, and thanks should be recorded to them for

the passing of John Clark just before Christmas. John had been a fine upstanding Christian all his life. He was a very good preacher, teacher, listener and confidant. John was involved in the Methodist Church to the full, and also in the much newer Ecumenical movement. His witness at Caversham Park Village, will always be remembered. John was occupied outside the Church



Methodist Sunshine Girls and Baptist Sunday School singing carols for Romania. Eunice Cooper

for different people, but for me as usual Christmas Eve united communion at Caversham Heights, is always a moving occasion. The children enjoyed parties and carol services, and we were pleased to be host this year, to the Boy's Brigade Battalion Junior Section Carol Service. The

a special service of Christmas celebration during which many members of our Church family took part.

The Sunshine Girls Singing Group gave an end of term Christmas Concert and performed the musical Nativity Play "Neddy the Donkey". The girls did exceptionally

their continuing support. \$48 was raised at the concert for the Romanian orphans. Added to this was \$18 which was raised during carol singing at St. Martin's precinct in Caversham, when the Sunshine Girls joined with the Baptist Sunday School. After the singing all the children were entertained at Caversham Baptist Church with a Christmas video, tea and games. A great time was had by all.

So the New Year has arrived and a family new year party was organised by Doreen Boakes. Keith Churcher entertained with his magic, and games and lovely food were enjoyed. It was also a pleasure to be able to include four friends from Borocourt hospital, who were able to enjoy the company and the fun.

On a more sombre note it is with much

regret that we record in politics and through the Samaritan organisation. John was also a family man, being a dedicated father, husband, and grandfather, and over the past few years a loving carer of his wife Violet. Indeed as a family man, is the way I first knew John, as Superintendent of the Sunday School, when I was a good few years younger. John put his heart and soul into all he did. His love of his Lord and his conviction never faltered. A truly Christian man, who will be sadly missed by all. John leaves his wife Violet, and sons Peter and Jeremy and their families.

We also record our sympathy to Mrs. Violet John on the loss of her niece on Christmas eve. We know Mrs. John will have a lost a very loving companion and we assure her of our love and prayers.

Advent at ST BARNABAS

ADVENT is always a lovely time at any church and no less at St Barnabas, where the beginning of The Church's year and the coming of the Christ Child was celebrated with enthusiasm.

Celebrations began with the Family Service which falls on the second Sunday of the month and coincides with Bible Sunday. A team from the congregation planned and presented the service, which centred around the story of Mary Jones, whose desperate need for a Bible and whose determination to acquire one heralded the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Various parallels were drawn from this story and members of the congregation were

challenged to think about them, both at a personal and world-wide level. Members of the team gave personal witness as regards the meaning of the Bible for them and appropriate hymns and choruses were given added impetus from the spirited playing of the music group. Prayers were sensitively chosen.

The music group and choir worked hard to produce some lovely carols for the Sunday afternoon Carol Service, and the Midnight Mass was memorable for the dramatic presentation in lieu of sermon, presented by June Hardcastle and Wendy Stormont, vividly reminding those present that the gift of Christmas is not all tinsel and wrapping paper, but lies much

deeper, in the birth and death of Christ himself.

Offerings made in the Christmas Services were divided equally between the Southampton Street Hostel for the homeless in Reading and Christian Aid for Famine Relief and came to a very respectable £850.

During December St Barnabas also held its annual Christmas Fair, which this year raised over £600 for charity, rather less than last year, but not surprising bearing in mind that blizzards and snow storms kept many people at home.

At the time of writing St Barnabas looks forward to playing its part during the Decade of Evangelism, coming together with other churches in the Parish to join in the prayers for Christian Unity and looking forward already to Lent. It would seem that 1991 is already half over!

St. Andrew's Fellowship

MEMBERS of the Fellowship turned out in force for their Christmas party on December 13th. They were not disappointed. A very enjoyable entertainment had again been arranged by Eric Aspden in which his family, Philip and James, and friends, Elizabeth Field and Jo Hodson, both took part. Philip started off with a medley of carols on the keyboard, and did all the

necessary accompanying for the rest of the show, which included poetry readings, a very amusing except from The Diary of Adrian Mole, song duets, an unusual version of the twelve days of Christmas and ended up with carols by all.

After the concert a festive supper with hot punch and coffee was provided by the Committee. The following evening,

under the aegis of the Fellowship, a party of nineteen members and friends braved the freezing fog to go to Aldermaston to see the York Mystery Play, which the people of the village have been producing every Christmas for nearly forty years. To go to this play is the most wonderful experience as it provides a peaceful interlude in the hurly-burly of Christmas preparations. It is most reverently performed in a lovely church magnificently decorated with frescos, costumed in medieval style and accompanied by beautiful singing.

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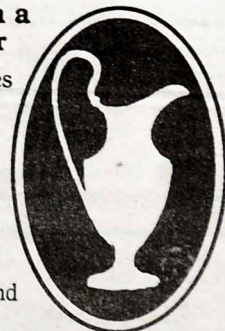
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ROUND THE CHURCHES

ST. ANDREW'S AUTUMN FAYRE

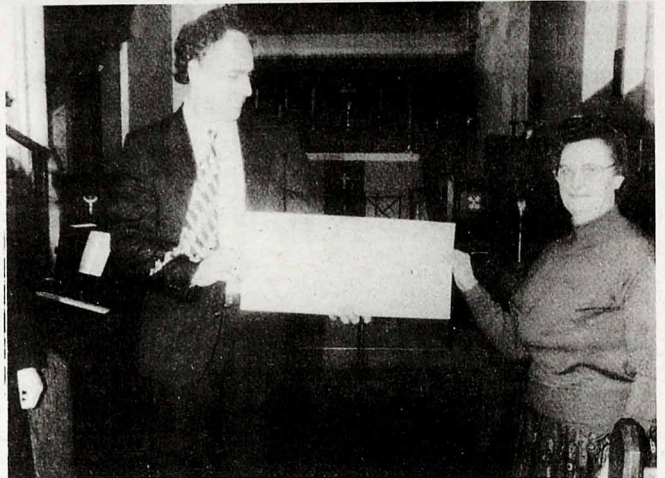
ST ANDREW'S Church Working Party held their Autumn Fayre this year on 24th November in aid of the Heathcroft Home for handicapped children at Emmer Green.

There were plenty of gifts to buy and refreshments were served throughout enabling Mums and Dads to enjoy a cup of tea while the children watched the puppet show and had a chat with Father Christmas.

At the end of the day the proceeds were found to amount to £1137, a result which certainly made the effort very worthwhile.

To round off the Heathcroft project a

concert was presented in Church by David Sidwell on December 15th. Angela Francis and David performed a most interesting programme of works by Mozart, Faure, Strauss and Handel, which was very much appreciated by the audience. The concert added a further £138 to the fund, and at the end of the evening a cheque was presented to the manager of Heathcroft, Mr Guppy, by Mrs Sylvia Cooper, who received warmest thanks for her organisation and unflagging efforts. The splendid amount of £1560 was given to Heathcroft, including the Mary



Mrs Sylvia Cooper presenting the cheque on behalf of the Working Party to Mr Guppy from Heathcroft.
E.S. Archer

Cheer memorial fund. (Mary had great talent in craft and needlework and had contributed in many ways to the Working Party's efforts). Mr Guppy expressed his sincere appreciation and said that the money would be used for making a soft play area for the children.

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH

MEMBERSHIP of his local Church for 73 years including office as a Deacon, the loving oversight of the small country cause at Brimpton for more than 50 years, a noted Lay Preacher and wider interests which included representing his Church on many Inter Church bodies — these are just some of the many aspects of the life of Leslie Wyeth, member of the Caversham Baptist Free Church from the time of his baptism in 1916 until his death in December 1989.

OBITUARY

MORRICE HUTT

ON DECEMBER 23rd the Church of St Margaret's, Mapledurham suffered the loss of a faithful member of its congregation. Morrice Hutt had served the church there for many years as a member of the PCC, a churchwarden and sidesman, and was always ready to help in any way he could. His assistance with advice over the Quinquennial Reports on the church fabric was invaluable.

St Margaret's will be the poorer with his loss. We remember with gratitude his life of Christian witness.

In the secular life of the community Morrice also gave freely of his time and

talents. For very many years he was secretary of the Round Table No. 6. He was a member of the Reading Forty One Club and a Rotarian and for many years he was President of the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Architects' Society. He did indeed live a full and complete life.

To his wife Joan and their family we extend our deep and heartfelt sympathy.

Such a record of continuous personal service should be recorded, and the members of his Church gave much thought as to the most suitable way of marking his life. Finally it was decided to name the Church Lounge "The Leslie Wyeth Lounge", and at a simple ceremony which followed the morning service on December 16th a photograph of Leslie, suitably inscribed, was unveiled and the Minister, Rev. Dennis Weller, conducted an act of Dedication in the presence of many members including his widow Mrs. Eva Wyeth.

In age of constant change future generations meeting in the Lounge will see and reflect on the life of one who loved his Lord and worshipped faithfully in the Church for more than three score years and ten. The photograph which now has a place of honour in the lounge was taken just shortly before he died at a meeting of the Ecumenical Bible Study Group which he had conducted for many years.

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

AFTERMATH OF ST ANDREW'S FLOWER FESTIVAL

THERE WERE many memorable events at St Andrew's in 1990, but one especially to be remembered was the ecumenical Flower Festival in September with all its beauty and symbolism. After the deduction of expenses, the proceeds amounted to the magnificent total of \$1257 to be given to Cancer charities. Accordingly, cheques for \$419 each were presented after the 9.15 Eucharist on December 16th to Mrs Phyllis Burton on

behalf of the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund, Mrs Barbara Lethem on behalf of the Breast Cancer Campaign and Mrs Molly Sidwell on behalf of Cancer Research. The Vicar took this opportunity of thanking again all those who had contributed in any way to the success of the Festival, especially Mrs Ann Gray and her group of flower ladies. Letters of warm thanks have been received from each of the three Cancer charities.



Three ladies receive cheques from Mrs Ann Gray as their share of the proceeds of the Flower Festival towards their Cancer Charities. Left to right Mrs Lethem, Mrs Molly Sidwell, Mrs Ann Gray, Mrs Phyllis Burton.

ST PETER CAVERSHAM AND ST MARGARET MAPLEDURHAM CHILDRENS PARTY

IN SPITE of snow and ice, some seventy-six children of St Peter's and St Margaret's gathered at Mapledurham Pavilion on Saturday 8th December 1990 for a party!

Anoraks and boots were shed, red button noses shone and cold hands gradually thawed in the warmth. Spirits were high in anticipation of pleasures to come. Some of the younger ones stayed close to parents, the boys developed their customary boisterous games and the girls enjoyed themselves in rather more demure fashion.

John Kavanagh aided by Andrew Hill brought order out of apparent chaos and led the

children in games for the first hour. Team games were conducted with the minimum of cheating, great good humour and maximum decibel levels.

Keith Churcher followed and held the children captivated by his magical skills as he converted black, white or single coloured handkerchiefs into multi-coloured pictures; persuaded members of the audience to assist him and, as a final touch, introduced a live rabbit which demonstrated its mastery of unsynchronised obedience to instructions. How refreshing to discover that children in the last decade of the twentieth century with all its commercial gadgetry can enjoy to the full simple pleasures with the

help of a superb showman.

Food and drink — buffet style — followed. Parents and helpers managed to ensure relatively equal distribution of goodies and fizz with the minimum of spillage or tears. Mary Plank and her exuberant fiancée, Dean, master-minded the provision and distribution of the food and gauged quantities with great precision.



Once order had been (more or less) restored Father Christmas appeared! There is some mystery about his origin with competing claims from Finland, Denmark and Sweden. He observed a discreet silence about this and concentrated upon the distribution of gifts (each wrapped and labelled thanks to the superb effort made by Les Coward and helpers).

Five o'clock saw the dispersal of all the guests into the cold night. On balance the children voted the afternoon a great success and that their parents had been well behaved.

Thanks to all involved in the party on the day, including The Rector, Christine Allsop, Bo Coward, Janet Perham, Helen Dunn, Michael Crosbie, John Meston, Catharine Harris, Alexandra Thwaite, and many others who gave so much behind the scenes.

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER March 1st 1991

ON THE journey together is the theme chosen by the women of Kenya, who invite us to come on safari with them, in this year's Women's World Day of Prayer. Their country, diverse and beautiful, gained its independence in 1963. Since then its inhabitants, from forty-one different ethnic groups, together with their European and Asian compatriots, have been following their motto "Harambee", or pulling together, trying to build a better future for their country.

Much still needs to be done. The rapid growth in population is putting a strain on the country's resources. The Government is trying to combat high unemployment by encouraging technical and vocational education, and by creating new industries. Opportunities for women, especially in rural areas, are few, but thousands of self-help groups have been formed.

The Church in Kenya has always been deeply involved in education, health and social issues, and the different denominations often work and worship together. But for many, life is hard, as the influence of the old pagan customs and traditions is still felt.

From many parts of the world, on March 1st, countless people will be joining the women of Kenya in prayers for support on their journey, and of

thanksgiving for what has been achieved. Let us in this area take part in the special Services here.

In Reading, the main afternoon Service will be at the Salvation Army Citadel at 2 o'clock.

Here in Caversham we are very happy to have our Service at the New Testament Church of God, in Church Street, by kind permission of the Revd A.N. Lawrence. This will be at 8 o'clock, and, as in the afternoon, all — women and men — will be welcome.

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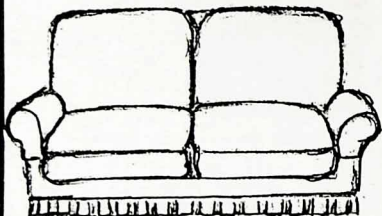
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the CLUBS

Maplewood W.I.

AT MAPLEWOOD'S Christmas Party members were greeted with a glass of punch before sitting down to a lunch of chicken casserole followed by some delicious desserts, coffee and mints.

The entertainment afterwards was also truly seasonal with the Henley Handbell Ringers playing their Christmas Musical Miscellany.

After the business was disposed of cups of tea and mince pies rounded off the afternoon.

Caversham Heights T.G.

THE DECEMBER meeting took the form of a party, when the business was kept as brief as possible. A collection is being made towards the cost of a new tree close to St Andrew's hall.

In the December edition of this paper an editor wrote that Christmas sees the beginning of the Christian pilgrimage through year, stating that faith offers a new beginning and a chance to throw off the burden of the old

life, while welcoming the freshness of the new. At a service on Christmas Eve in the north a deaconess pointed out that a baby Jesus can be "grown up with" all over again, and this is the chance that is offered. Perhaps members of Caversham Heights Townswomen's guild were mindful of this

when they sang carols at the party, it was in any case a happy gathering, with food and an excellent punch provided by members, and a cake made by another excellent member. Friends who were brought along enjoyed themselves, and an amusing mix-up of two fairy stories "Red Riding Hood" and "Puss in Boots" was performed by the drama group. There was another party at Betty Smith's house for the social studies group, again with contributions from members. Brains were racked while guessing names of films, books, etc., and poetry readings concluded the evening.

Rosehill W.I.

The December meeting was held on the 5th and Christmas was the theme for the afternoon. Entering the hall ladies put small presents into a "Lucky Dip", to collect one for themselves before leaving. Mrs Weller gave particulars of various dates, then there was an hour or so of entertainment by the Twyford Palm Court Players, who played music on violins, cello, flute and piano by Strauss and others which brought back memories. Members then had tea, with mincepies and Christmas cake, all home made by themselves.

The competition for a Christmas table decoration was won by Mrs Gillings, Mrs Martin second, Mrs Smith third.

The January meeting was held on the 2nd. Mrs Weller welcomed everyone and then arrangements were made to start up some of the activities for 1991. The speaker had cancelled his talk because of 'flu,

so Mrs Weller asked for volunteers to fill in the gap. Mrs Tomlin told about a course at Denman College that she had recently attended, "Wondrous Water Colour Painting", which she found very interesting. Then another six or so members recounted their experiences, making it a very successful afternoon. There was also an exhibition of unusual milk or cream jugs.

Caversham Afternoon T. G.

FOR THEIR November meeting the members were taken on a journey by bus, through parts of Southern Australia by means of slides, with a talk by Mrs Russell. The views and the beautiful plants and flowers that flourish there were spectacular.

In December the Annual Birthday dinner was held at Reading Technical College. The decor and tables were very festive and the meal, washed down with a glass of wine, was very enjoyable. Later in the month the Christmas party was held. Well organised by the committee, they also supplied the tea for the members who were entertained at the piano by Mr Terry, with a lady singer accompanist. Mrs Grey made the birthday cake, which was iced by Mrs Adair. Each member was given a slice, also a small gift nicely wrapped to end an enjoyable afternoon.

The meetings in the New Year are held in Church House, Caversham, every third Thursday in the month at 2.15pm. New members made welcome.

Caversham Ladies Club

IT WAS A very happy atmosphere for the Club's Christmas party with plenty of smiling faced members and attractive tables laden with plenty of goodies. A lovely Christmas cake made by Mrs Harwood and decorated by Mrs. Q. Strong, was the centre of attraction. Then it was time for Mrs Harwood, the Chairman, to open the meeting with her usual warm welcome to

all the members and to thank them for their generosity always given so freely. A competition was for a table decoration of a Christmas scene. Mrs Suter kindly offered to judge the entries. There were quite a number to choose from, and she stated afterwards it was not an easy task choosing the winners as they were all so delightful. The winners were Mrs Nelhams first, Mrs Queenie Strong, second and Mrs Brenda Strong, third. Mrs Suter was warmly thanked and a small gift was presented to her in appreciation of her help.

Carols were then sung by the members which made them realise they were celebrating not only the Club but the birth of a baby born on Christmas Day long, long ago. Then Mrs Harwood said grace and the Committee went around with those very welcome cuppas. A special prize of a basket of groceries was won by Mrs Hayes. Tables by now were looking very forlorn so it was time for members to receive a Christmas card and a gift before the meeting closed amidst warm Christmas messages passed around amongst members. It was a lovely finish to a very enjoyable afternoon.

theme was Christmas and many varied questions were set by the members of the committee. Prizes were awarded to the winners of the various quizzes and the evening ended with a musical team game.

A Carol evening was arranged for the meeting on the 10th December. Some of the members formed a choir, with Nancy Nelhams at the piano. The carols were interspersed with readings and poems. Alan Osborne read a poem by John Betjeman and also told the story of the origin of the carol 'Silent Night'. Later, Betty Petherbridge and Muriel Waite sang this carol as a duet and Maida Feast recited the well loved poem 'The Night before Christmas'. At the interval mincepies were provided by the hardworking committee and appreciated by the members. After the refreshments George Feast read an amusing Pam Ayres poem on Christmas preparations. The members were then asked to choose their favourite carols and the concert ended with Monica Suggett reading a poem on the meaning of Christmas and giving a closing prayer. A happy evening much enjoyed by the members.

The next meeting had been anticipated with pleasure. The members arrived for the Christmas party and found the attractively arranged table with a meal prepared for them. The supper of pork pie, ham and salad,

Caversham Community Association

THE FIRST meeting in December was for a Quiz evening. The

Turn to page 11

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JANUARY 6th AT CAVERSHAM PARK CHURCH

ON JANUARY 6th Caversham Park Church held a Service of Thanksgiving to mark the Agreement of their Ecumenical Constitution — at last! When we became an 'official' L.E.P. (Local Ecumenical Project) three years ago, we had no idea of the problems and delays we would encounter when trying to draw up a constitution. Many thanks must go to Phil Abrey who really took this problem by the horns as soon as he came here, and worked at it, with all the denominational representatives, until it was approved by everybody.

At the Service all the denominations were represented, Reverend Gordon Thomas for the Baptists, Reverend Keith Sanders for the Methodists and the Bishop of Reading, John Bone, for the Anglicans, plus several other clergy of Caversham. Also there were David Cawte and Father Patrick Murphy-O'Connor, who were on the

Berkshire Ecumenical Council — our sponsoring body. During the service, the congregation members of Caversham Park Church, their staff and representatives of Christians Together in Berkshire affirmed their promise — with God's help and by His Grace — to support Caversham Park Ecumenical Project (our 'proper' name), in its work and ministry. We then shared the Peace together.

Bishop John gave a very stirring, moving sermon on the Servant hood of Christ, and so our servanthood to others if we truly follow him. He also reminded us of St Paul's words, that we are all parts of one body, with Christ as the head, and all the parts as equal and necessary members. We are all doing God's will, but in differing ways.

After the service there was a time of socializing over tea and biscuits.

PERHAPS it was a mere coincidence, perhaps not, that on the afternoon of Friday, January 11th, just after 2pm I turned up to buy a few items from Mr Johnson at Woodcote Way Stores. I was very probably his last customer for as I entered the shop it was just changing hands and the till being altered for the new owners.

Mr Johnson came to the business as a lad in 1938 and has been there ever since, much of the time with his good lady wife, and both have served the

local public with much thought and consideration for all those years, especially the elderly and housebound who were able to have a delivery of grocery every week, a real lifeline for them.

People will indeed be grateful for all the help they have received and I know they will want me to thank the Johnsons on their behalf for all they have done for them over more than half a century. This is a long time and they full deserve a well earned rest and retirement. Mr and Mrs Johnson we thank you

very much indeed. We wish you well and hope that you will have many years enjoying a new chapter in your lives.

In writing this little piece it would only be right to welcome the new owners of the store. We wish them well, too, and hope they will settle in happily, and I, for one, most sincerely hope they will find it in their power to continue delivering grocery to the many local elderly and housebound who find it so difficult to survive without this invaluable service. M.K.

WOODCOTE WAY STORES THE JOHNSONS RETIRE

LENT 1991

EASTER IS early this year and ASH WEDNESDAY falls on 13th February. Caversham Churches have agreed to use the Oxford Diocese course — "FIRST STEPS IN

EVANGELISM" as the basis of the Lent groups. These will again be ecumenical. Look in your local church for information and please try to join a housegroup, especial-

ly if you have not done so before. It is a good way not only of making new friends but also of finding out more about what other churches think and teach.

OBITUARY

THE VEN. D.I.T. EASTMAN MC

We report with regret the death of Derek Eastman, one time curate at St. Andrew's from 1951-56. He

served at Headington for 8 years and for 6 years in Banbury. He was appointed Archdeacon of Buckingham and was at St. George's Windsor before retiring to Dorset. He celebrated

the Epiphany and died suddenly and peacefully on 7th January. We offer our condolences to his family. A thanksgiving Eucharist will be held at St. George's Windsor 4th February at 5.15pm.

the CLUBS

From page 10

followed by trifles, gateaux etc. was partaken and, later in the evening, Christmas cake was served with a choice of wine or fruit juice. Entertainment was provided by the concert party Enterprise

ll who sang and performed sketches for the members. The costumes were excellent and the singers were versatile and talented and deserved the hearty applause. The competition for the best handmade Christmas cracker was judged by two of the members of the concert party. They chose Joan Tarrant as first prize-winner and Daisy Heath the runner up. Everyone agreed it had been a good party and Mrs Evelyn Cook, a club member thanked the committee, for preparing the food and raffle prizes, and anyone else who had helped make the evening a successful occasion.

many of which were of the artists themselves. Guild members joined in all the choruses. Just a few well known names heard were Marie Lloyd, who in spite of professional success had a very unhappy domestic life, Harry Dacre, Harry Champion, Nelly Wallace and Florrie Ford, an Australian who like audience participation. All were household names and in their heyday brought colour and gaiety into the lives of everyone, rich and poor.

Miss B. Brann gave the vote of thanks. The flowers were arranged by Mrs N. Hooper and received by Mrs M. Johnson. Mrs J. Miles organised a highly successful raffle with several lovely prizes and guild members enjoyed mince pies, courtesy of the committee, in the tea break.

the Minutes of the last AGM and a report by the Secretary, Mrs Jean Pugh on the previous year's programme. The Treasurer, Mrs Jean Crosbie, then gave her financial report and this was followed by the election of three new Committee members.

The group then suggested items for the programme which were gladly accepted. This was followed by coffee and a photographic competition of holiday snaps which was won by Mrs K. Fulbrook. The December meeting was the Christmas Party. Food was brought by members and games organised by members of the Committee. The meeting ended with carol singing by the group in preparation for the Carol Singing expedition in aid of the Sue Ryder Home at which over £10.00 was collected.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

THE DECEMBER meeting of the Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild took place on a very cold, wet evening, so Mr Sands' talk about "The Old Tyme Music Hall" was the very medicine to cheer everyone. He accompanied some fascinating anecdotes about music hall personalities with slides and recordings,

St Peter's Wives

THE NOVEMBER meeting was the Annual General Meeting which was well attended. The Rector, the Revd Richard Kingsbury, was in the chair and began the meeting with prayer. The members received

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