

OUR BACKYARD

A crystal ball would be a useful piece of equipment for a columnist whose words do not appear in print until some three weeks after they have been written. This is particularly the case this month over Bugs Bottom. A lot is about to happen which, by the time this article appears, will be old news but about which at the time of writing it is only possible to guess.

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A party of Bugs Bottom campaigners will have gone to London to attend the Annual Meeting of Higgs & Hill, the construction firm intending to build the houses. A minimum number of shares was bought in order to give the right to attend the meeting, and the intention was to put questions about the firm's policy regarding building on sensitive sites against the wishes of the local community.

However, it is not possible at this point to report on what actually happened.

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Similarly, in June, a public meeting is to be held shortly before the date fixed for the Court of Appeal hearing. John Mortimer has promised to speak. As a resident of the Chilterns, he is only too aware of how their character is constantly under threat from unsuitable development. The organisers of the meeting were delighted that such an eminent person with so many demands on his time was willing to come along and support this cause.

□ □

The court case itself will still not have taken place by the time this article is being read. It has always been known that the chance of winning has been very slim, but it seemed worth taking as there was no other way open of saving this valley. Unfortunately a

House of Lords ruling appears to have reduced the chances even more and as I write legal advice is being taken about the best course to pursue. If it were possible to challenge the Secretary of State's decision on planning rather than legal grounds, the chances of winning would be very much higher. Unfortunately this is no longer possible.

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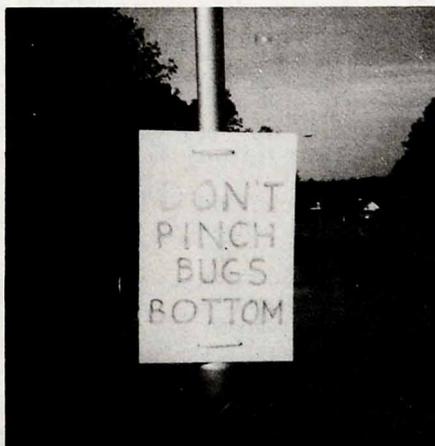
The Channel 4 film on Bugs Bottom will be shown on Tuesday 9th July at 8.00 p.m. as part of a series which started on 4th June entitled Our Backyard. Familiar local scenes, familiar local faces and a matter of far more than local importance will be gripping the nation's attention, but the final outcome of the Tale of Bugs Bottom, as this programme is called, will at that point still not be known.

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT BY WATCHDOG — LATE NEWS EXTRA

Although the Editors were unable to produce a crystal ball, they came to the rescue by extending the date line so it is possible to add to the information already given.

The sorti into the lions' den, in other words the annual meeting of Higgs & Hill plc, certainly succeeded in its aim of alerting major shareholders about the way in which some of their investments are being used. The plan was for each of the ten people from Caversham who attended to ask at least one question about the firm's policy, particularly as it related to Bugs Bottom, ranging from ethical investment, regard for the local community, to low cost housing.

Setting out from Reading dressed to look like habitual attenders of public companies' annual meetings, the group's image was somewhat dented by arriving at the plush hotel in which the meeting was held in a rented mini-coach rather than a glossy Mercedes or such like, which the doorman managed to imply he was more in the custom of garaging. Once inside it was equally clear that their carefully chosen garb was still not that of a city boardroom and senior directors soon spotted the recent purchasers of a small number of shares which, although by no means all from Caversham addresses, had nevertheless roused their suspicions. Reassured that these people had no intention of disrupting the meeting but merely wished to ask questions, Sir Brian Hill went as far as



allotting a special place on the agenda for a spokesman to put their views on Bugs Bottom.

At the end there was no doubt that the message had been got over, namely that an environmentally damaging development that flew in the face of all local views was being carried out with investors' money. Higgs &

Hill for their part insisted that all the correct channels had been followed to gain planning permission, that they had no intention of withdrawing, that the project was environmentally friendly (!!) and anyhow their prime duty was to their shareholders. In other words, where money and the interests of the local community come into conflict, Mammon will always win. Perhaps as a result of what they heard, some of the shareholding firms who make a point of declaring that they only invest in environmentally sound concerns, might have second thoughts about how their money is being used.

BAD NEWS

Unfortunately hard on the heels of this came news that the Borough, on legal advice, had felt compelled to withdraw from the Appeal Court case. This has come too late for further comment in this issue, apart from saying that this does NOT mark the end of the campaign to Save Bugs Bottom. Higgs & Hill are not intending to build for some considerable time.

CROSS TOWN ROUTE

The Public Inquiry arising from the compulsory purchase order for part of Kings meadow will take place on 13th September. Letters of protest should be sent to the Department of Transport (North Regional Office) Local Authorities Orders Section, Room 1303, Wellbar House, Gallowgate, Newcastle on Tyne.

TALKING POINT

By the Rev. Richard Kingsbury
RECTOR OF ST PETER AND ST MARGARET IN THE
CAVERSHAM GROUP MINISTRY



THE CRISIS

One 1964 evening I spent £980 in an hour, I sent telegrams to every known living recipient of a Nobel Prize. That was big money 27 years ago. It was a gamble, on the eve of a major United Nations debate, to urge as many distinguished people as possible worldwide to pressurise their UN delegates.

I was information Officer and spending the limited money of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. I was young. I was frightened. We had 'discovered' the POPULATION CRISIS.... The crisis grows *even more starkly threatening human survival*, according to latest UN reports.



Huge losses of life by famines, the spread of Aids, disasters such as hit Bangladesh in May, will have no real impact on population growth rates in countries least able to cope with extra hungry bodies.

It has taken from the year dot to now to reach the present world population of 5.4 billion. One hundred years from now the world's population *will double*.

This is not scaremongering. It is a fact. In the next ten years alone, a billion more children of God will be with us. Chronic food shortages, rising infant mortality rates, massive refugee migrations look inevitable. Africa alone will have 250 million extra people in ten years.



We campaign for Bugs Bottom, better roads in Reading, more interesting church worship, and all with good intentions. All this is overshadowed by The Crisis of the population explosion. Sure, Britain's population will grow by a gentle two million over a quarter century or more. Of course 'we can cope'... 'What is local is real'. Only, this international crisis will increasingly affect us.

We know the ideal: 'Every child a wanted child with a right to adult dignity..' But what can we do?

At least, behind the famines, in the queues of refugees at feeding stations, behind the bloody struggles fuelled by the arms trade, see the hungry CHILDREN with a right to live...



They are the immediate victims. The world infant mortality rate will soar, as surely as night follows day. Children of God, dying — though they did not ask to be born.

With resolute political will and commitment, lives can be saved, a measure of control restored over birth and death rates. But it will take time. And millions more dead children.

I am, by God's grace, fortunate to enjoy four growing children in our family. I do not believe it was wrong to beget them, knowing of the population explosion. It would be wrong, though, if they grow up ignorant of the facts which will affect them in their future.



The 'facts' are PEOPLE. As our children become more consciously 'European' from 1992, we — their parents — must put prayer into action, must understand what the 'facts' mean and, with enlightened self-interest, work on HM's Government. Urgent education on God's one world is long overdue for those in the privileged one third of the world who have a measure of freedom of choice denied to two thirds of the world.

In 1964 I was young and frightened. Now I'm just frightened. If I had been born to impoverished parents in Surinam, Chad, Goa, Mali, I would be lucky still to be alive today, 50 years on.

Do we even know where these countries *are*?

VISIT TO READING OF DUSSELDORF'S ANGLO-GERMAN CLUB

The ten guests arrived at Reading on Friday at 1pm. Their hosts then whisked them off for a quick lunch before re-assembling at the Civic Centre for the Mayoral Reception at 3pm which was followed by a short walk through the town to the Old Town Hall to see the Reading-Dusseldorf Link Exhibition, after which came a flying visit to Reading's main shopping streets before returning to the homes of the hosts for the rest of the day.

Saturday was taken up with a visit to Portsmouth to see HMS Victory and the Mary Rose Exhibition interspersed with a pub lunch. On returning to Reading the day's events were finalised with an excellent evening meal at the Ship Hotel.

Most of the guests expressed a wish to see London on Sunday, and the group split up with some making a tour of the famous landmarks. My two guests took the return river trip from Westminster Pier to the Thames Barrier. The river trip took one and a quarter hours and two hours were spent at the Barrier for lunch

and a visit to the Barrier Exhibition. After a short journey on the Underground Circle Line back to Paddington a twenty-five minute journey on BR's 125 brought us back to Reading, the day's festivities being completed with dinner at the Grosvenor House Restaurant in Caversham.

After a hectic two days some of the guests spent a more leisurely day on Monday in Reading but my guests went to Windsor where they saw the Queen Mary's Dolls House, the Royal Apartments, and St George's Chapel before another pub lunch after which they were able to make a quick visit to Eton College to see the Chapel and Exhibition. Despite two hold-ups on the A4 on the way back because of road works we arrived back in Reading at 4 o'clock in time for afternoon tea before taking the guests back to Reading Station to catch the 5.15 Rail-Air Coach back to London Airport.

ter part of the weekend. However the sun finally broke through for Monday afternoon. The high point of the visit was the unexpected presentation at the Mayoral Reception by the Chairperson of the Anglo-German Club, Margaret Benningshoff on behalf of the Lord Mayor of Dusseldorf of a solid gold medal to Martyn Allies, the Chairman of the Reading Dusseldorf Association in recognition of his services over the years to the Reading Dusseldorf Link. Only one such medal is presented each year by Dusseldorf's Lord Mayor, and Martyn must be congratulated on receiving this reward, which in the writer's opinion was well-deserved. Indeed I have heard it said that Martyn IS the Reading Dusseldorf Association!

Like all good things the time our guests spent with us passed all too quickly. However a number of old friendships were further cemented and new friendships formed thus strengthening the Reading Dusseldorf Link.

Pete Littlewood

CAVERSHAM CHRISTIAN AID WEEK RESULT

The total amount collected during the week was £6250. This includes all street collections and amounts received from other events/donations etc., and represents an increase of 33% on the 1990 figure. Grateful thanks were expressed by the Caversham Committee to all who took part, in either collecting or giving, in achieving this excellent result.

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

EDITORS: Mrs Margaret Baily, Mr Eric Chappell, Mr John Mullaney, Mr Bernard Miller, c/o Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham. Tel: 471703.

ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham, RG4 7PE. Tel: 471816.

CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mr R. Kitcher, 5A Church Road, Caversham, RG4 7AA. Tel: 472660.

COMPANY SECRETARY: Mr H. Pilgrim, 64 Highmoor Road, Caversham, RG4 7BG. Tel: 474017.

POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER: Miss E. Stark, 36 Auburn Court, Caversham, Tel: 473045.

All contributions for August issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday 3 July. All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs E. Maule, 18 Albert Road, Caversham by 1 July. The dates for September will be Monday 29 July and Wednesday 31 July.

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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RECOLLECTIONS OF A MAYORAL YEAR

At 7.20pm. on May 22, 1990, the strains of "Floreant Redingensis" reverberated around the Reading Hexagon — a rousing finale to the musical programme presented by the Reading School orchestra, supported by the musicians of Highdown School, prior to last year's Mayor-making ceremony. In view of my almost lifelong association with Reading School and my Governorship of Highdown it seemed more than appropriate to invite the Musical Directors of both Schools to provide the music as those attending the ceremony were arriving at the theatre. 15 minutes later I was being sworn in as the town's first citizen for what was to become an intensely interesting and action packed year.

The following morning the Mayoress and I were at Palmer Park by 10.30 am attending an annual gathering of Pre-School Play Groups. By 1.00 pm. we were back at the Hexagon to join a full house commemorating the 50th anniversary of *Age Concern* at which a "Sing along with Max" was top of the bill. That same evening we hosted a dinner for the retiring Mayor at the Town Hall. Thus did day 1 of our term of office set the tempo for

the year that lay ahead.

It is customary, as soon as it can most conveniently be arranged following mayoral installation, for Mayor's Sunday to be held at a place of worship of the incumbent's choice. So it was that, on Trinity Sunday at St. Andrews, I chose Festal Evensong as my preference. This was a memorable service and occasion; a church completely full, an augmented choir doing more than justice to "Zadok" and singable hymns an opportunity for me to compete with the choir (for a change) from the row of the congregation, and all presided over by Bill Carpenter who had kindly agreed to be Mayor's Chaplain for the year.

As the year unfolded we visited other churches in the town — St. Marks, St. Lukes, St. Laurence, All Saints, St. Marys (Butts and Castle Street), Wesley Queens Road, Abbey Baptist, St. Andrew London Road, Park United Reform, Caversham Baptist, Caversham Methodist, Southcote Mission, the Synagogue Goldsmid Road, Salvation Army Anstey Road and the Jewish Festival of Lights.

Parties from Caversham Schools were

specially invited to visit the Mayor's Parlour where they were given a short talk on the history of Reading Mayoralty and explanations of the civic regalia. Our experience was that pupils in the third year of primary schools were the most attentive and seemed to derive most benefit from these visits so we welcomed such groups each about 30 strong from Micklands, Caversham Park, Caversham Primary, Emmer Green, Thameside, St. Martins and Hemdean House.

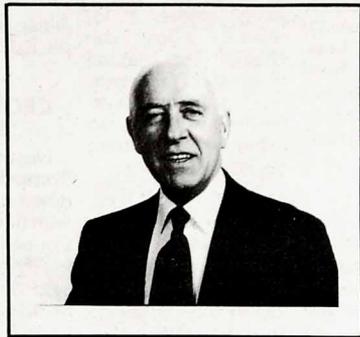
Overseas students visiting Reading are all athirst for knowledge of the British Mayoralty and similar sessions in the Parlour were arranged for tourists from Russia, America, Turkey, Japan, France, Germany, Italy and Holland.

A particular highlight of the year was our second visit to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party on July 24. Tony Durant had advised us that he had been

selected for duty as one of the Ushers on that day and suggested we should look out for him when we arrived. Emerging into glorious sunshine on to the terrace at the rear of the Palace the second person we saw was Tony. He informed us he would be ushering on the line of invitees through which the Queen would pass and would do his best to see if he could arrange for us to be presented. True to his word, we were duly extracted from the vast crowd and, via the official hands of the Lord Chamberlain, became one of only some twenty couples privileged to have an interesting exchange of views with Her Majesty.

Two major events which occurred during the year were the 1st World Renewable Energy Congress held at Reading University from September 24-28. It was my privilege to join Lord Sheffield, the Chancellor, in officially opening the Congress in the Hexagon on the morning of the 24th and to host a Civic

by



Geoff Canning

vice in St. Mary's Church; and much enjoyed a joint performance by Reading and Dusseldorf choirs of Elgar's "Dream of Gerontius" at the Hexagon.

We were able to participate in a number of anniversary celebrations of several organisations in the town, viz:

- Abbey Baptist Church 350 years
- Lloyds Bank, Market Place 200 years
- Reading Football Club 120 years
- Park Lane Primary School, Tilehurst 100 years
- Diocesan Mothers' Union 50 years
- 381 Squadron Air Training Corps 50 years
- Reading Horticultural Federation 50 years
- Reading Operatic Society 40 years
- Caversham Rotary Club 25 years
- Reading Lions 25 years
- Reading Evening Post 25 years
- Caversham Park Village Association 25 years

in addition to which we visited Mrs. Crook in Kidmore Road who was 103 on October 8; the Duke of Wellington was 75 in July; and enjoyed our own Ruby Wedding on March 3.

Most enjoyable Civic receptions were held by the Mayors of Basingstoke, Slough, Bracknell Forest, Windsor & Maidenhead, Oxford; and by the Chairmen of Berkshire County Council, Newbury District Council and Wokingham District Council.

Specific sporting and outdoor events we found of particular interest were the Reading Regatta and Water Carnival on the Thames; the WOMAD and Rock Festivals, National Disabled Table Tennis Championships and International Ladies Netball at Rivermead; Reading Racers at Smallmead; the Variety Club of Great Britain Golf Classic at Calcot; Rothmans' Snooker at the Hexagon; and the 9th Reading Half Marathon.

These then were some of the highlights. In addition there were many occasions when other visitors came to the Parlour; cheques were presented and received; sporting and other awards were handed to winners; annual meetings were presided over; and numerous groups visited. A most energetic but rewarding year has unfortunately now come to an end but we are now so much wiser on what goes on in our town and we would like to think there has been mutual benefit from our interface with so many people and organisations.

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CAVERSHAM DIARY

Saturday, 2pm St Peter's and St Margaret's Fete in Caversham Court

Sunday, 3pm-5pm Free Fun Afternoon at Mapledurham Playing Fields. Fun and Games for all the Family. Drama from Keybunch

Saturday, 2.00pm St Anne's Summer Fete

Friday, 7.30pm Caversham Horticultural Society Arthur Legge Centre: Guest Speaker Ron Smith: "The Lazy Gardener".

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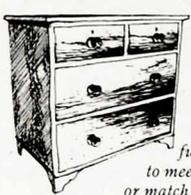
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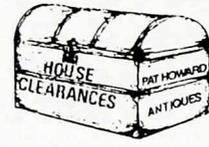
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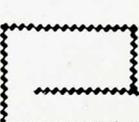
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Plans to construct a marina along the Warren on the banks of the Thames have been withdrawn, as have the plans for the massive re-development of Dean's Farm. Both of these were completely unsuitable and would certainly have been turned down at local level. Both these sites should be allowed to retain their rural character.

In South Oxfordshire, permission has been given for a golf course north of Shepherds Lane, stretching out to Tokers Green. This is not one of the best pieces of South Oxfordshire and a golf course will at least ensure that it remains green, but a proliferation of golf courses, and the District Council has

RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT by WATCHDOG

plans before it for several more, can change the natural character of the area as much as, if in a less offensive way than, an extensive building development.

In the case of these particular plans there is to be quite a lot of new mixed tree planting and the plans have been carefully drawn up, so it would have been difficult to refuse permission. Perhaps I run the risk of being sycophantic for making such a comment, but planning decisions are made in accordance with planning regulations and not in accor-

dance with what people like or dislike.

CROSS TOWN ROUTE

Now that Reading Borough Council has opted out of its conflict with Berkshire County Council by withdrawing its objection to the land swap of King's Meadow for Scours Lane (sold down the river or a sensible decision, according to taste) the way is now open for the Cross Town Route to go ahead. At the cost of destroying the riverside and of many millions of pounds, this might bring a temporary improvement to Reading's traffic flow.

On the other hand, it might not.

As far as Caversham is concerned, the view across the river will be spoilt and the noise will carry across it, Reading Bridge and the roundabout will take the impact of the extra traffic, Caversham Road with its small shops and houses will suffer even more and Caversham Bridge will have more, rather than fewer, problems. The final phase of the CTR is still to be worked out, but when it presses on towards Norcot Junction, it is anyone's guess as to

whether Battle Hospital or the riverside meadows, or even both, will be the next victims of its noise and pollution.

A number of organisations has got together to oppose this scheme. Caversham Residents' Association is among them. A public meeting was held on Wednesday, 19th June at the Kennet Room in the Civic Centre to air views and to work out a plan of campaign.

This is another event which will be taking place between writing and its appearing in print. There should be plenty to report on in the next issue.

KATY IN CAVERSHAM

Just when I'm absolutely determined to stop being 'Katy' — it has been far too long and I'm sure at times this column must be incredibly boring — I meet people who make me think it has probably been well worth while. Recently, at a coffee morning for Queen Anne's retired teachers to which I was kindly invited, I met several enthusiastic readers of the 'Bridge' who were very kind about 'Katy', but especially Mabel Powell, who lives with her daughter and son-in-law in Grosvenor Road, and who in spite of her age and ill health is a great lady, not able to get out now but all the same interested in what is going on.

Then I ran into Liz Chaney, who works at the ARMS centre in Patrick Road, who tells me they had a record 'haul' at the last quarterly event. She says they owe much of it to the 'Bridge' which has given their cause

a lot of publicity. And why not — that's what we're here for.

JOANNA CLIFT

And I never can separate Katy in my mind with Joanna's mother Mary who, with her journalistic expertise did much to get the 'Bridge' off the ground a quarter of a century ago. As most people will know, Joanna's mother died shortly after they left Caversham, but David made a happy marriage with an old friend until disaster struck again and David himself died a couple of years ago, but not before contributing to the 'Bridge' with the story of his trip to Lourdes. Most of us only remember Joanna as a lovely little girl of, I think, three years. So it was with delight that some of us heard of her return to this area to work at the Hexagon, I think as some kind of artistic adviser, and was looking for accommodation in the area. Everything is so rushed this

month that I've not been able to follow this up, but isn't it always a delight to have news of the many youngsters who have lived with us, often many years ago.

HILARY AND MATTHEW COOMBE

Our young people don't always leave us. I had heard of this couple's sad loss of a stillborn son in 1989 and of the subsequent arrival of the twins, Eleanor and An-nabel. It would be hard to find a nicer couple so I suppose it was no surprise to read in the local paper that they had become involved in the Reading Branch of SANDS — the Stillbirth and Neo Natal Death Society, which has recently set up a small unit at the local hospital to help to ease the suffering of such parents. You'd think with twins to cope with they'd be too busy to get involved in anything like that — but then you wouldn't know Hilary and Matthew.

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.
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The Rev J. Ellis, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common. Tel: 723418.

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CAVERSHAM CARAVANETTES

When asked to 'give a blurb to a camper business in Ardler Road, I was quite pleased. It's always nicer to respond to a request of this kind rather than having to scout around myself, and anyway, though I've never owned one, I'm rather attached to campers, or whatever they call them these days. On the roads they don't wobble around like so many caravans, they are compact and convenient and have given a lot of pleasure to many friends. But I never thought I was going to spend several delightful hours discussing so many things, not least old Caversham friends. And I certainly didn't think I was going to meet such a delightful family or make new friends. How could I?

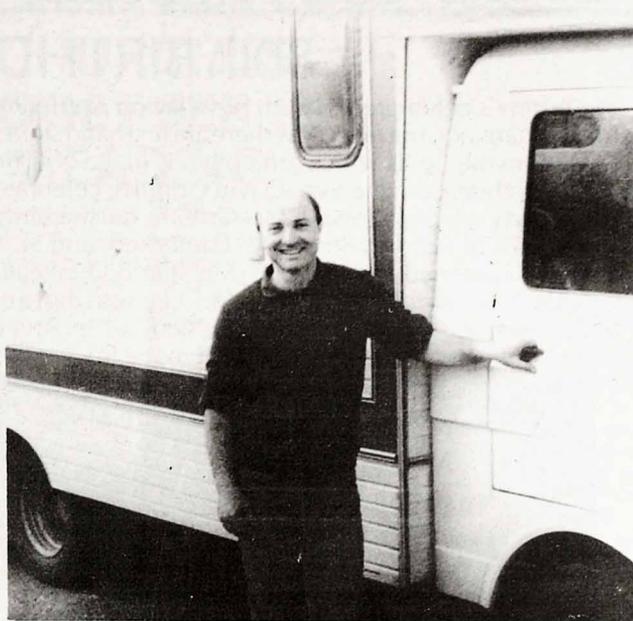
But to begin at the beginning, when the Scicluna family, of Maltese extraction but British citizens, were expelled from Egypt at the time of the Suez crisis. As Gabriel says, it could not have been easy for his parents with no, or very little English, or for his brother who was training to be a monk, but for the younger ones, five children, it was a bit easier. They actually arrived in Caversham in 1958, when his father got work at Elliots and they found a home next door to Elsie and Peter South in Priest Hill, and made their Caversham friends. It is a friendship which is maintained to this day, and when asked Elsie was anxious to say that the Sciclunas were a very delightful and caring family — it is a testimony to be repeated many times in the next few days.

Gabriel started

school at St. Anne's, and I was delighted to hear that his first teacher was Sister Joseph — long-term 'Bridge' readers will probably remember an interview I had with her on her 'anniversary' many years ago. Born to be a teacher, with a great love of children, straight out of 'The Sound of Music' she was a very great character. His days at St. Anne's must have been very happy and he still talks with enthusiasm of people like Mrs. Fry, who worked at Howards and used to provide cakes for the children after early mass, while Mr. Dalton, the school caretaker, brought along an enormous kettle and provided drinks. Gabriel tells me he actually wrote a story about Mr. Dalton's kettle — what a pity we didn't have it for the 'Bridge'.

From St. Anne's he went, with the others to Hugh Faringdon Secondary School, where he is still an enthusiastic member of the school's Promotion Group Committee. After leaving school he was apprenticed with Robert Cort's manufacturing firm for the next 15 years, only leaving in 1986 when, like many others, he was made redundant. For a long while he had wanted to own his own business but, as he said, it was difficult to consider giving up a well paid job, particularly as he had married Sarah, a Reading lass who worked at one time at Lloyds Bank in Caversham, and they now had a growing family of four.

However he had become interested in Campers some years previously and the family had spent several holidays in one, so he



Gabriel Scicluna

E.S. Archer

decided to launch out. Far and away his biggest problem was finding accommodation and it's not for nothing that he lists perseverance as one of the most important assets for an aspiring business person, for he canvassed practically everybody he could think of including the local MP and councillors, but with very little success. Christmas 1989 found him 'lodging' his campers in Blackhorse Wood, Checkendon, where they were vandalised. Finally he acquired the lease of a yard in Ardler Road, where he now has an assortment of campers which he is putting in order for a range of prices, from a few hundreds to several thousand. His 'pet' at the moment is a Bedford Pioneer 1305, at £7,500, where most of the interview was conducted, a very comfortable vehicle sleeping up to five people. He's available most days and

will discuss anything, with no hard sell, and would be worth a visit for anyone thinking of investing in one of these vehicles.

But it is a bit difficult to get Gabriel to talk about the caravanettes as he would far rather talk about all the people who have helped him, people like Eddie Chandler, who will be well-known to the local motor-cycle fraternity, who was once a European side-car champion, and who comes in from time to time to give him a hand. Indeed I have a feeling I could write an article about Eddie, a very friendly person, but I must resist as there are others, including P.C. Todd, who comes in from time to time to check all is well. Gabriel has made a definite effort to get to know local people, to do the odd job, fixing taps etc. for local housewives. His relations with them, with the Stronges and others

would seem to ensure that it would be difficult for anyone to get away with vandalising his property now. But it is not for this he has made such efforts; as Elsie South says, he's such a genuinely nice lad.

But at this point I'd better give up trying to chronicle all the people Gabriel wanted to mention. He has nothing but praise for the people of Caversham, and full of gratitude for all the help he has received, top of the list of course being Sarah, his mother and the rest of the family.

It has been a great pleasure meeting them all, and it is a friendship we hope to maintain in the years ahead.

KATY

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY WEEKS 7-13th April

During this year's collection week a total of £777.64 was raised by the parishes of St Margaret's and St Peter's. On behalf of Betty Smith and myself I would like to thank all who helped raise this record breaking sum. Many thanks.

Jane Sheppard

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

GOSBROOK ROAD REVIEW

Don't cast a clout before May's out, goes the old saying, and it certainly seems to be coming true. As I write this article (May 28th), I'm back in my winter jumper which I had packed away for the summer. I hope by the time you read this you will be enjoying those lazy hazy crazy days of summer! Maytime always conjures up for me Sunday School Anniversaries, and I am sure most of you can remember the songs and recitations spoken in our best dresses or shirt and tie. Things have changed quite a bit for children, and it may not be quite the occasion that it was in years gone by, but the children still like to take part and enjoy the practises and preparation. This year at Gosbrook Road was no exception when the children told of God's wonderful world. Producing and organising these events is not easy, and we thank Doreen Boakes and her team for their dedication to the children.

The Band has been to its first competition at Nuneaton. During the winter there has been a change of name and the Ambassadors are now Cadence Drum & Bugle Corps. They

have been joined by other band members from Whitley Hall Methodist Church (The Starisers), which have swelled the numbers, and they all now march under the name of Cadence. We wish them well in this new venture.

The Women's Fellowship have been busy as usual, with visits to other churches, Circuit Women's Day at Caversham Heights and a Flower Service at St. John's Mother's Union. A varied programme is always enjoyed by the members.

It is with great regret that we record the deaths of Mrs. Mary Clark, a member of the Women's Fellowship, and Mrs. Dorothy Marshall, wife of the late Duncan Marshall. Both will be missed in their different spheres. Mrs. Marshall had been a loyal member of the Church for many years and supported Duncan in all he undertook. She was a charming hostess and welcomed all to her home, even the whole church for garden parties. Our sympathies go to John and Brenda Marshall and family and Eileen and Stephen Flint. It

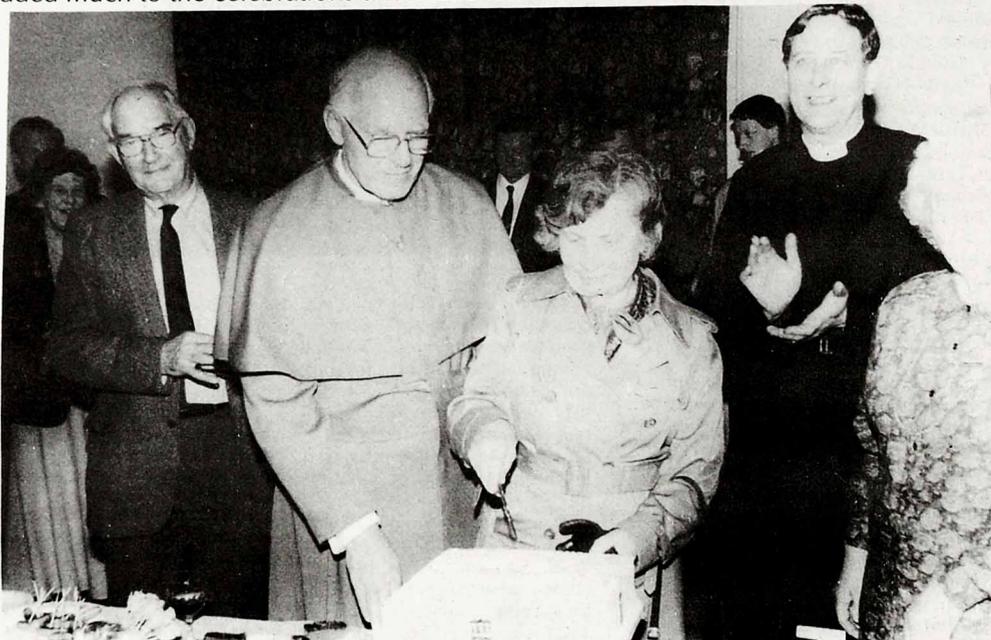
was also a shock to hear of the premature death of Mrs. Doris Jones, a former church member who moved to North Wales with her husband Ray. Doris and Ray were very active at Gosbrook Road and made many friends. Though far away her loss was just as keenly felt, and Raymond and family are assured of our prayers.

80th BIRTHDAY!

St Andrew's celebrated its 80th birthday on April 29th. Not much history attached to that? No, perhaps not, but even now there are first hand stories being told by those who, as children, played on the fields which are now this place of Worship.

The Archdeacon, the Ven. David Griffiths, celebrated at the Eucharist and preached, and at the party which followed, Mrs. Griffiths cut the birthday cake, which was decorated with the shields of Oxford, Berkshire, Canterbury and St. Andrew and a picture of the Church. This was designed and made by Mrs Ingrid Dreweatt.

A display of all the memorabilia belonging to those eighty years and a mini Flower Festival with organ music, arranged and planned by Mrs Ann Gray and her flower ladies in Church added much to the celebrations and made it a weekend to remember.



Cutting the Birthday Cake at St Andrew's 80th Anniversary.

- E.S. Archer

NEWS FROM CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL AND CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

"Focusing on Evangelism"

Over the past few months the members of the Caversham Hill Chapel and Caversham Heights Christian Fellowship have met on alternate weeks in Focus Groups. These groups consist of "Evangelism", "Mission", "Bible study", and "Local Community". The purpose of these groups is for people to focus in on a specific area that they feel God wants them to be involved in, and to be able to then share ideas and projects, prayer requests and needs with the rest of the church.

As a result the Evangelism Focus Group has been involved in a number of events recently! An evening with Peter Gammons, travel Evangelist and Derek Bond, Worship Leader. (Full report

St. Andrew's Fellowship

St Andrew's Fellowship went for the first of their summer outings on 15th May when they had an evening mystery tour. Although the weather was cloudy it did not rain until everyone was safely back on the coach on the journey home. The party of forty members and friends was taken through leafy lanes and byways for mile after mile barely a car in sight which brought home dramatically how beautiful Berkshire is and how much of it is still quite unspoilt in spite of Bugs Bottom schemes, motor ways and yet more developments planned for the future. The very knowledgeable driver stopped at a public house at Boxford which seemed completely isolated, but where everyone was made welcome. Then the pleasant evening came to an end with a swift journey home when everyone was dropped off near their homes.

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ROUND THE CHURCHES

THE INAUGURAL ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BERKS on 13th April 1991

Berkshire Clergy and Lay people representing different denominations met recently in the pleasant and well appointed Community Centre. The programme for the day began with a short service of prayers led by Jill Jackson and including reflections by the Revd Colin Marsh. The Chairman introduced the guest speaker for the day, the Revd Christopher Ellis, who was now based in Sheffield, but had travelled down to lead thoughts and discussions on the theme: "Committed to Travelling Together".

It was explained that Mr Ellis was author of 'The Theology of Communism', which was highly recommended. It was also mentioned in the Chairman's introduction that the guest had been involved before his move to Sheffield in an ecumenical project which developed in the centre of Swindon due to external and internal influences and opportunities. He was not therefore unfamiliar with the Berkshire area.

In his opening address the Revd C. Ellis spoke on the themes of Peace, Reconciliation, Unity and Oneness. He also expressed his thoughts on Mission — Evangelism, mentioning the importance of the Stewardship of

Resources. It was stressed that Evangelism would not have any impact in our communities unless the Church, in Unity, had credibility.

The Assembly then broke into small groups to consider the questions (a) 'Why we went to the Church we did' and (b) 'Was there anything which prevented a greater degree of Unity?'

After lively debate the Speaker resumed his address with 'coping with differences'. He told a nice story about whether there were any divisions in Heaven and which denomination was St Peter. It was pointed out there were differences in the Gospels, but they still had an underlying purpose which united them. He felt that a 'Theology of Ecumenism' was required for a wider framework. To simplify further the human difficulties in understanding the differences in God's creation, a story was told about the varying descriptions given by five or six blind people of an elephant produced only from their sense of touch.

After a break for lunch, the guest spoke about 'Local Ecumenism', and the underlying themes of 'Where do we go from here?' and 'Pilgrimage'. Mr Ellis

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN READING

"Churches Together in Caversham" rose like the Phoenix from its ashes of the Reading Council of Churches. This happened on May 8th at the Annual General meeting. It is not without significance that this took place in the early part of the Decade of Evangelism. At County level, Reading District level and at local level, working relationships and constitutions have been worked out, in addition to making approaches to those churches who have previously felt unable to share in ecumenical activities.

The main change is that the Churches will no longer have direct membership with the Reading District, instead membership will be in the Local areas, and each Area Council will have a direct relationship with the County Body, Churches Together in Berkshire. The Reading Committee consists of representatives of the local area councils, and it's work

was able to share his experiences of the L.E.P. at Swindon and explained, in outline, the external influences which produced shared buildings and resources etc. It was also stressed that we could learn much more from local Ecumenical Projects than they could learn from us. Mr Ellis even suggested that to learn how different denominations in the community could come together we should pay them a visit. The Assembly was advised that LEPS could gauge their progress towards total unity by using the scale beginning at (1) Competition (2) Co-existence (3) Co-operation (4) Commitment and (5) Communion.

To conclude the day's programme, the Chairman asked the Bishop of Reading, The Rt Revd John Bone and a leading member of the other Churches to join him in a General Forum. The Assembly was then fortunate to hear their answers and views on a number of topics such as Industrial Mission, Chaplaincies, Creedal Agreement with the Quakers, and Future structuring and financing of Berkshire Churches Together.

will be to look after matters of Christian concern which are better dealt with on a Reading-wide basis, Christian Aid, I.T.E.M., Reading/Dusseldorf Churches interchange, Radio 210, St. Mary's Centre and the homeless problem.

In the event of a general election tentative arrangements are being made to set up a Forum where Candidates from the main Parties can explain their Policies and answer questions. Ways and means are being explored to expand the facilities of the very successful 'Drop-in centre' at present at St. Saviour's hall Berkeley Avenue, this means an ever increasing supply of Cash, Food, and Voluntary helpers. Was it the Lady Julian of Norwich who said 'Jesus Christ has only our eyes to see with, our feet to go where we are needed and our hands to carry out his work?'

Bill Vincent

READING RESILIENTS CONQUER SNOWDON!



Saturday 8th June saw the first climb up Snowdon with a difference — carrying Multiple Sclerosis sufferers in their wheelchairs up the Mountain.

The Caversham based Reading Resilients team surprised even themselves with the second fastest time of 2 hours 17 minutes to the summit beaten by only one minute by a similar team from another ARMS Branch.

If you would like to make a donation or would like further information about ARMS OR would like to enter a team next year in the Snowdon Challenge — then ring Reading 482072.

A 'NEW FACE' AT ST PETER'S & ST MARGARET'S!

The Bishop of Reading has invited Revd Richard Kingsbury to 'take on' for an initial six months a Non-Stipendiary Minister colleague in Revd Terry Lee.

Terry was Assistant Curate (NSM) at St Birinus', Calcot, until a few years ago. He is a chartered accountant, young 'mid-forties' who — as any accountant will tell you — has had to weather the pressures of changing workload during the recession. He now is poised to re-enter parish ministry as priest, with a more relaxed scheme of work

as an accountant/consultant. After several years 'out' of priestly ministry, Terry Lee has been assigned to the Rector for (as Terry puts it) 're-treading'.

He will come on line at St Peter's and St Margaret's (the parish and incumbent to which his initial re-licensing is granted by the Bishop) from August. It will be our privilege to share in Terry's re-establishment in the active ministry (though primarily work pressures will mean mainly Sunday duties) and, under the guidance of God and the Bishop of

Reading, we hope to rejoice as Terry 'uses' us, very properly, and then perhaps to full time parish ministry, in the near future.

Checking the registers, the Rector finds that in fact, in the mid-eighties 'bleak times', he invited Terry Lee to help with Caversham services — so a 'Welcome Home' is in order. He lives in central Reading, drives a beaten-up Landrover, is a Geordie by birth and nurture, and we look forward to welcoming alongside in the coming six months!

By Mountain Bike to Santiago de Compostela

From the 10th century to the present day pilgrims have been making their way to the shrine of St James the Great, one of the twelve apostles, in the North West Spanish city of Santiago de Compostela. On foot, on horseback and, more recently, by bike, many millions have, over the centuries, made the journey, the majority of those from outside Spain itself following through France which converge into a single

'Camino de Santiago' across Northern Spain.

While my preference would be to walk it, time, alas, does not permit. My plan, therefore, is to cycle from Bordeaux, a starting point for many past generations of British pilgrims but using a mountain bike so that I may follow as closely as possible the old pilgrim route rather than the modern roads that parallel and occa-

sionally overlay it. The total distance is in the order of 1000 kilometres involving some 2500 feet of ascent and I hope to complete it during September and early October.

I am dedicating my efforts to the Alzheimer's Disease Society and will be very pleased to receive pledges of sponsorship. (Kevin Corrigan Tel (0734) 479699).

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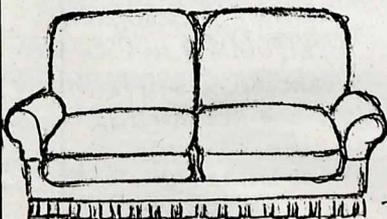
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'OLD PIPER' – A Caversham Ferryman



The iron bridge erected in 1869 with Waterman Piper's white cottage beside it. Part of the original old bridge can clearly be seen below the new iron structure.

Waterman Piper and his family rose to local fame when the second bridge over the Thames at Caversham was constructed in 1869. This was made completely of iron and replaced the original one which was built around 1230.

On January 29th, 1869, Waterman Piper's cottage, a three-storey building, was moved en masse, using a recently developed American technique, to a new site eight feet away. This was achieved successfully, and 'Old Man Piper' as he was called and his family and furniture were supposed to have remained inside throughout the whole operation. The house weighed one hundred and fifty tons, so I read. No doubt most of Caversham turned out to see the event and perhaps expected the worst! Actually the story has always been that the house was moved twenty feet. Perhaps the event was embroidered, as so many are over the years. There is certainly no mention of the family remaining inside during the moving in the press report of the day. Reading the account in the Berkshire Chronicle for Saturday, January 31st, 1869, it definitely states a move of only eight feet and said not a pane of glass was broken in any window. In about three hours the work was complete.

The term waterman is just another name

for a ferryman. The trade is a very ancient one and there was certainly a ferryman at Caversham in 1231 and very probably long before then.

Possibly it might interest some readers to know more about the ferrymen of the Thames. In London wealthy families kept watermen on their staff just as they employed coachmen. They, too, were provided with "liveries of the appropriate dignity". Some wore silk hats, others uniforms. The oldest rowing race on the Thames, that for the Doggett Coat and Badge, dates from these days.

At one time the only bridges across the Lower Thames were London Bridge and Chelsea Bridge. Anyone who wanted to cross elsewhere had to hail a ferry. Up and down the Thames are still found the "steps" as at Wapping and Chiswick, where, those who wished to cross could board a skiff for the other side.

Once 10,000 strong The watermen who managed these craft soon aroused arguments among passengers as to who was most skilled in the trade. The gentry often took up a wager during the discussion and the craft became known as wager boats. It was for Watermen that the Doggett Coat and Badge race came into being, a race which is still rowed between London and Chelsea bridges.

At the time of Pepys', Thames ferrymen were numerous. There were about ten thousand of them plying their trade then.

Life was not easy for these people. Out of work when the Thames froze, and with always the danger of becoming press-ganged into the Navy because of their knowledge of tides and currents they were very vulnerable. Gradually as more and more bridges spanned the river the demand for their services decreased.

The fares in those days varied. London to Westminster Stairs cost sixpence, London to Gravesend set the traveller back four shillings and sixpence, and from London to Windsor he had to hand over the costly sum of fourteen shillings.

To cross the river at Westminster the charge was two pence for a man and horse and two shillings and sixpence for a coach with half-a-dozen horses. Horseferry road can still be found in the vicinity.

The Waterman's Company was founded in 1555 and the Doggett Coat and Badge race was instituted by one Thomas Doggett, a comedian actor and joint manager of Drury Lane Theatre. Doggett was fond of haunting the Swan Tavern at London Bridge and one rough night with a strong

tide he wanted a ferryman to row him over the Thames. No one was over-enthusiastic to do so until a young waterman volunteered. On the way across he told his passenger he had just gained the Freedom of the Company after a seven years' apprenticeship. Hearing this Doggett decided to institute the race — "for fellow just out of their time." The prize was an orange coat and badge plus ten pounds for the winner, and a further eleven shared between second and third. The race was to take place annually every August the first, the anniversary of the accession of George I,

for Doggett was all for the House of Hanover. The King was supposed to have watched the inaugural race and it was for this event Handel is said to have composed the famous "Water Musik".

Famous riverside families in this race include the Phelps, Cobbs, Brewers, Berry and John and Jack Broughton from Hungerford. Sad to say no one is mentioned from Caversham. But never mind. Waterman Piper made his name in another way and Piper's Island, where his house once stood, will remain a memory for him and his family for many years to come.

M.K.

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BOTSWANA '91

Eight months have passed since we last wrote and we are now well settled on the Madiba Senior Secondary School campus at Mahalapye. This is a fast growing village situated on the main road which runs up the eastern side of the country, halfway between Gaborone, the capital, and Francistown, the last town before the border with Zimbabwe. The visitor's first sight of Mahalapye is a dusty strip lined with shops opposite a railway line with an open crossing. It's just like a set for a one-horse western town on the films, but instead of horses tethered to the posts there are Toyota pickup trucks or "bakies" all over the place, and goats ambling around scavenging the rubbish and even climbing inside the oil drums which serve as bins.

The school is 8km off the main road, the last part of the ride being over an unstarred dirt track full of huge potholes left by the rainy season. When we turned into the gates for the first time last September we decided at once that we would like our new home. The drive is lined with stones, there are many trees shading the staff houses, and at the entrance to the school building the Botswana flag flies, blue to represent the water that is so precious in this arid country, bisected by a black and white stripe symbolising the unity of blacks and whites working together. We were soon made to feel welcome by the staff: a mixture of Batswana, and ex-

Ken and Marjorie Tillman wrote in October's Bridge giving an account of the beginning of their two years' teaching in Mahalapye. Here we have the first part of their second letter, which will be continued next month.

patriates from Ghana, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, India, Holland, the USA and Britain. The people from Botswana are called Batswana, one of them is a Motswana, and they speak Setswana.

Madiba is one of the twenty-three Senior Secondary Schools in the country where students spend three years preparing for the Cambridge Overseas O level examination. There are now nearly one thousand pupils, about a third of whom board, the rest walking distances varying between one and ten kilometres each way every day. Ken joined the Science Department straightaway after our arrival and I was appointed to the English Department in January.

Curiously enough there are some parallels between Mahalapye and Caversham although there are many great differences. There is a river called the Mhlawatse comparable in width to the Thames where the cattle can be seen plodding along the almost permanently dry riverbed. There will soon be an influx of five thousand people as the village is to become the HQ of Botswana Railways, but unlike Reading only one passenger train goes through in twenty-four hours and that is in the middle of the night. The trains which are diesel,

travel very slowly indeed. The main tarred road passing through is the principal road in the country (the M4 Botswana if you like) but it is not even a dual carriage-way and goats and donkeys are perpetual hazards. Most people drive robust Toyota bakkies as they are more suitable for the bumpy roads than saloon cars and carry up to twenty people at a time, or a load of chicken manure, or a 48kg cylinder of butane gas which we all have to use for cooking, or a fridge, or a mattress for camping, or even a deceased relative - the undertaking business being not quite as advanced as in the western world. There are no plain vans to whisk away the body discreetly, it is taken by the family to lie in the mortuary while they make arrangements for the funeral, a major event in Botswana that can

go on for days. There is no cremation here as ancestor worship is still very much part of the traditional way of life. Incidentally, my hairdresser in Caversham will be intrigued to know that I now have my cut and blowdry at the local "coffin shop", sitting in the office being combed and snipped by my South African hairdresser who with her Geordie husband has set up a small but fast-growing business manufacturing caskets for the local population. Before their arrival all coffins were imported over the border from South Africa like 95% of all Botswana's goods.

What is life like without Waitrose you may ask and it does take some getting used to! For one thing you don't plan a meal, make a list and then go out and buy the ingredients. You go out and see what's available and then

come back and concoct something out of what you have managed to get. Having said that we are really quite lucky here, we have a Supermarket called Fairways where we can obtain such western necessities as Kellogg's cereals, Rose's marmalade, Birdseye peas and cheddar cheese, at a price, as well as the more staple foods such as bags of maize mealie meal and sorghum. Ice-cream is our great extravagance at P14 or \$4 a litre box. There are two good butchers run by an Afrikaans family where best fillet steak can be bought for P11 a kilo which I work out to be just over \$1.50 a pound. Unlike the local women I do not carry my purchases home on my head. It is not uncommon to see a woman walking through with a baby strapped to her back, a large sack of oranges on her head and a suitcase in each hand. Another local sight is the Hereru women, refugees from Namibia who wear Victorian dress in brilliant colours and wide intricately folded turbans.

In some parts of Mahalapye there are some very attractive modern properties with all mod. cons. and some, but not many, even have gardens with lawns, but in Madiba ward outside the campus where we live most



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the CLUBS

Caversham Ladies Club

Members were welcomed to the May meeting by Mrs Harwood with apologies from two members, Mrs Hafenden who was undergoing treatment in the Royal Berkshire Hospital and Mrs Beardmore who had met with an accident to her hip, both members were wished well.

In the absence of Mrs Nan Nelhams, Secretary of the Club, the minutes for April were read out by Mrs Harwood and the business conducted from the Chair.

Members were reminded that the outing to Southsea on Tuesday the 14th May would leave at 8.30am and return at 7.30pm.

A letter was read from Mrs South thanking the Club for presenting her with chocolates at the Easter Party after she had kindly judged the competition for an Easter Bonnet, Mrs South also wished the Club every success with their future activities.

In three meetings the sum of £20.68 had been collected for the Sue Ryder Home and a 'thank you' had been received from them.

It was then time to introduce Mrs Dorothy Suter who gave a demonstration of Floral arrangements which were much enjoyed by members who afterwards were able to buy several of these lovely arrangements. Mrs Suter was duly thanked by all, tea then being served as one of the much appreciated items on the Agenda.

Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

On Tuesday May 14th the ladies of Emmer Green Townswomen's

Guild met to hear Mrs Sue Brandon give a talk entitled "All Buttoned up". This was about her collection of buttonhooks and their history. The first reference to "buttoners" or buttonhooks was in 1611 but the Victorians really made them popular by making them as decorative as they were useful, with the most popular period being between 1880 and 1910. Gloves and boots were very tight fitting allowing no room to manoeuvre the fingers to do up the buttons, so hooks were the only answer. Ladies also were more restricted in their movements owing to the nature of their undergarments, hence many of the long-handled buttonhooks. Boxed sets were very popular as gifts especially at weddings and could have handles of silver with jewelled decoration or, usually in the case of a man, of ivory, some were given away as advertising promotions or as a change, instead of a farthing perhaps? Every home would have had a buttonhook as it was a common everyday object and they would generally hang by the fireside being readily to hand.

Mrs Brandon started her collection with three buttonhooks, not actually knowing what they were but just interested in them as objects and also keen to start a collection of something. She now has around four thousand and has written a book on the subject. Mrs M. Pocock gave the vote of thanks on behalf of the Guild who had not only been informed but also amused by the delightful talk.

Mrs Cooper and Mrs Jepson presided over a sales table groaning under the weight of many plants, both vegetables and flowers, so members are looking forward to a very productive year.

On the 20th May some of the members were invited to talk to their fellow members on various subjects. Doreen Meadowcroft gave a demonstration on icing and decorating a cake with marzipan roses. She explained in detail the various stages and also showed the members how to make a greaseproof paper icing bag, to use when inscribing lettering on the cake. Some beautifully decorated cakes resulted from Mrs Meadowcroft's demonstration. Other members taking part in the evening's programme included Olive Howard and Alan Osborne, who both gave amusing readings, Dorothy Osborne who related funny stories of events in her family and May Plant who recited a whimsical poem in North Country dialect. Maida Feast completed the evening by distributing some tasty chocolate sweets and giving the recipe to any interested members. It was then time to bring the meeting to a close after a very entertaining evening.

The members had an enjoyable evening on the 13th May when Mrs Margaret Carter was again welcomed to the club to give a flower demonstration. Mrs Carter commenced by explaining how she prepared the container for the flowers, using oasis to hold the blooms firmly. The members were given advice on how to keep the flowers fresh, one tip was either to singe the stems of poppies and spurge or hold an inch or two of the stems in boiling water for ten seconds. Soon a colourful display of beautiful flower arrangements was arrayed and admired by everyone. At the end of the evening the members showed by their applause how much they had appreciated the advice, and practical suggestions for their own flower arranging, given by Mrs Carter.

The members also met to go to Blakes Lock, and found the museum very interesting.

New members are welcome to the meetings on the third Thursday of the month at 2.15pm in Church House.

At the main meeting of Caversham Heights Townswomen's guild in May a member asked questions, and motions that are tabled for discussion at the National Council meeting in June at the Albert Hall were read out and voted upon. The Townswomen's Guilds in Council assembled are urging HM Government that suspects of violent crimes be obliged to give samples for DNA analysis, these samples to form part of a national index. Two other motions included in the voting were one against new EEC regulations about transportation of animals, and another in which local education authorities would ensure education on the subject of HIV in secondary schools by appropriately trained teachers and visiting experts.

Miss E Arnold from the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council for Research was the speaker at this meeting, and warned her audience that hers was not going to be a fun talk as the previous month's talk about music had been. Members felt that it was indeed a sad sight to see in her slides young children handicapped by juvenile arthritis. Miss Arnold mentioned that with older people diet, exercise and a healthy attitude can help towards success. She recommended asking to see a rheumatologist. An important discovery, the first since 1938, has been made by London University, identifying bacteria which cause rheumatoid arthritis in women.

Meanwhile at social studies Miss Sharron Davies from Radio 210FM described how the radio station is closely concerned with the community. How cheering it was to hear how in Kent during the hurricane in 1987 people unable to leave their homes received help gathered through the local radio network. So there is good news as well as bad.

walking holiday in Devon in mid May.

Caversham Community Association

As the club meetings take place on each Monday of the month, there were only two meetings in May due to the two Bank holiday Mondays.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

The May meeting was well attended. The speaker was the Revd. David Hastings, who is the chaplain of Reading prison. He gave an insight into the condition of inmates there. He had to be approved and undertake to look after those available to him with humanity. He visits all there every day, also the hospital. Those with more serious offences are held in the punishment block to protect the public. Conditions, even in this day and age, are not good, sometimes three men to a cell. Only recently more improvements have been made in the sanitation conditions. In this country more prisoners are held than in the European countries, they number about 45,524 serving, and 998 in cells in a year. The Chaplain said he was available for any of them to talk to him of any troubles they felt like sharing. The revolt at Strangeways did some good to highlight the awful conditions of the inmates.

The members also met to go to Blakes Lock, and found the museum very interesting.

New members are welcome to the meetings on the third Thursday of the month at 2.15pm in Church House.

Caversham Heights TG

It Hurts Us, Too

At the main meeting of Caversham Heights Townswomen's guild in May a member asked questions, and motions that are tabled for discussion at the National Council meeting in June at the Albert Hall were read out and voted upon. The Townswomen's Guilds in Council assembled are urging HM Government that suspects of violent crimes be obliged to give samples for DNA analysis, these samples to form part of a national index. Two other motions included in the voting were one against new EEC regulations about transportation of animals, and another in which local education authorities would ensure education on the subject of HIV in secondary schools by appropriately trained teachers and visiting experts.

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OBITUARY

Mrs V. Kitcher

When Mrs Kitcher died in the Moorland Rest Home in March, Caversham lost a notable character and a great many people lost a very good friend. Born in Wales in 1897 and losing her parents at an early age, Mrs Kitcher was brought up by her grandmother.

When she was 18, however, her grandmother died, and as the law in those days required young people under 21 to go "into care" if alone, she decided to run away and thereafter made her own way in the world. Eventually she met and married John Kitcher. He was an upholsterer intending to work in London, but while travelling

there they stopped in Reading and decided that this looked a good place in which to settle.

London's loss was Reading's gain because, in the fullness of time John Kitcher's carpet and upholstery business was founded becoming, as their son Robin grew up, the well known landmark of John Kitcher and Son in Church Street Caversham.

For a long time from 1937 onwards the family lived on a Thames barge moored in The Warren, and it was always a pleasure to hear Mrs Kitcher recount tales of what sounded like idyllic life on the water in the spaciousness

and comfort of a large boat.

Always active in the family business, Mrs Kitcher had many interests. A devout member of St. Peter's congregation; a founder member of Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild and a member of the Women's Institute. She was a very good cook (she would have described herself as a 'plain cook'), her delicious pastry being remembered by members of TG and WI for the thousands of mince pies and sausage rolls she made for their parties over the years. Inevitably in such a good seamstress, Mrs Kitcher also designed and made

all her own clothes. Perhaps her greatest test came with the tragic death of her daughter-in-law in 1962, leaving Robin with two-year old Jenny and newly born Graham. Typically without fuss, and with the dependable common sense that marked everything she did, Mrs Kitcher now in her sixties helped Robin with the children's upbringing, with all the cooking, washing, planning and hard work that many a young working mother would find tiring. After five years friends and family were delighted when Robin met and married Marian and Mrs Kitcher was able to

'retire' to a flat over the shop — still carrying on a schedule of work that belied her age.

In her later working years she took great pleasure in watching her family grow up, her grandchildren now increased to four with Suzannah and James, and finally seeing the arrival of Emma and Louise — her two great-grandchildren.

Eventually came the time to rest at last in the good care of the Moorland staff until she slipped away from her long and useful life on March 13th. A greatly respected and much loved lady who will be long remembered by all who knew her.

Margaret Hill

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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

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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

Caversham, Gosbrook Road

10.00am and 6.30pm

Caversham Heights

9.00am Holy Communion (1st Sunday)

11.00am and 6.30pm

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St Martin's School 9.15am Mass

Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday)

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BOTSWANA '91

From page 9

people still live in the traditional way in spacious neatly swept sandy compounds which contain anything up to four

rondavels for family living. Most cooking is done outside over an open fire in the traditional black cooking pots, water is fetched from the stand-pipe, lighting is from paraffin lamps and meals

are mostly rice, mealie meal or sorghum porridge, supplemented by beef stew or a relish of mayonnaise or vegetables grown at the "lands" where the crops are grown, the equivalent of a Caversham allotment, but usually some distance away, and then if they are rich enough a cattle-post. Cattle represent wealth to a Motswana; do not ask a man how many cattle he has, it is tantamount to asking someone in the UK how much he has in his bank account. Houses are built out of mud by the women and thatched by the men. We are now getting used to seeing a freshly killed goat hung from a tree and skinned and jointed within half an hour. The school librarian, feeling that Ken's education was incomplete, offered to teach him this skill but he declined, however he has been to the

"lands" with one of his students and tried his hand at donkey ploughing, milking goats and pounding sorghum. Many people still make a living from the land, their goats and their cattle, and have no other income. Many of our students live in the traditional way at home with the bush or a pit latrine as sanitation, sleeping on the floor, spending holidays working at the "lands" or the cattle-posts, and then come into school to study "Romeo and Juliet", watch videos about AIDS and work out complicated mathematical formulae on computers.

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