

# CAVERSHAM

JANUARY  
2000  
BRIDGE

No.  
420

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## From Canon Richard Kingsbury

As the nation's church bells welcome in the new century, the combined fourteen bells of St Peter's and of St Margaret's will join in the chorus at noon on 1 January. I hope it will be possible for you to make your way to a Christian church near you (the 'denomination' doesn't matter, surely?) around midday, quietly count past and present blessings and make prayerful resolve for the future. It is the YEAR OF THE LORD!

Long ago, prophets knew:

Thus says the Lord

Who made a way through the sea,

A path through mighty waters.

"Remember not the former things,

Neither consider the things of old;

Behold I am doing a new thing,

Even now it is springing to light.

Do you not perceive it?

A way will I make in the wilderness

And rivers in the desert."

*Isaiah 43.*

GREETINGS, on behalf of Anglican brothers and sisters, to all! May we confidently know that "Christ leads us through no darker rooms than He went through before."

When Jesus came to earth as a baby and lived among human beings, He was largely ignored. His life was threatened and eventually He was killed.

As we begin the third millennium since His birth, the world would still largely ignore Him and many would love to see His church destroyed.

But His church is still alive. It still declares the life and reality of Jesus.

God still calls us to be the body of Jesus in the world, to express God's desire for our new beginning.

May the living God who reveals Himself in Jesus richly bless you in this new year.

From Deacon Vic Downs

## From Rev Peter Edwards

This New Year is coming in with a great deal more preparation, publicity and celebration than any the world has yet known – not just a new year but a new century and even a new millennium! Wow! Yet, who really thinks that the millennium moment will make an indelible impression on the world, your world?

On the other hand, we all know how our lives can be changed by something that happens in a moment – and not only for ill but also for good. Inside the glittering packaging of the coming millennium moment is the fact that 2000 years ago was the moment that changed history from BC to AD. It was the moment when God became man, when He who is the

same, yesterday and today and forever took on human flesh, and died and rose again to save us from ourselves, our sins and our mortality. Jesus Christ wants us to experience something more than a new year or even a new millennium; He wants us to receive His new life – the forgiveness of all our yesterdays, His leadership for all our tomorrows and His presence for all eternity. Now is the time to trust in Jesus Christ. If this new year becomes a new beginning with Him it will mark your transition from BC to AD – it will be the "year of our Lord" in your life.

As each day of the year 2000 becomes today, allow Christ's presence to fill it with His love, mercy and power.

It all began 2000 years ago, in the most insignificant, back of beyond village, in a minor province of a great pagan empire; a baby boy was born to a travelling family who were only passing through. The event was hardly noticed even by the locals; a few did take the trouble to go and see the new baby but no record was kept by eye-witnesses, no register listed the arrival in the world of the Son of God. Only his mother Mary and guardian Joseph treasured the event in their hearts.

But that silent hidden birth changed the course of human history. 'God loved the world so much that He gave His only-begotten Son'. Jesus came into our world to save, to reconcile, to heal and to give His life as a loving sacrifice. The power of His life showed us all that it is possible to overcome hate with love, hurt with forgiveness and death with life.

Catholics will keep the year 2000 as a Holy Year, a special time when we dedicate ourselves again to the great work of Jesus. We know we have not always lived as Jesus taught us; in the past we have caused suffering, division and rivalry. We are truly sorry. So our Holy Year is the time to repent the failings of the past and begin again to serve the world as Jesus showed.

We wish everyone a very happy and joyful New Year holiday. And then we invite everybody to join with us in making our world more peaceful, hopeful and equal in this new Millennium.

From Fr Tony Jones

## LOVE AFFAIR

Millennium, Annum

One thousand, two thousand

Millefeuille leaves of history

In the Anno Domini of the world

All neatly packaged in a hemispherical dome

Temple to man's love affair with man

Cathedral to the cold technological achievement of our Anno Domini.

And the birthday

Where is the birthday party?

Have we forgotten the banners the balloons the birthday songs

The laughter the singing the dancing the cheers

For Him whose birth we celebrate?

For Him without whom there would be no Millennium, no Anno Domini

For Him, born on a stable floor, dispossessed poor

A child in an alien land

A child of Kosovo Somalia Brazil Northern Ireland

A child for all times

Grown into a King of Kings

With a crown of thorns and oozing wounds crusting in the midday sun

Arms outstretched nailed to a tree.

No revenge for Him, but a Love Affair

With ... You and ... Me.

*Editors' Note: This poem is taken from 'Christian Thoughts for the Millennium' being published by the Eden Press.*

*It was written by Hermione Evans who lives at  
334 Peppard Road, Emmer Green. (Tel: 947 3843).*

# New Century Greetings to all our Readers!

## INSIDE

Youth News.....	page 3	New Year Resolutions.....	page 9
Watchdog .....	page 4	Clubs & Societies.....	page 10
Churches.....	pages 5, 6 & 7	Environment .....	page 11

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## DING DONG MERRILY ON HIGH

Soon the church bells will be ringing once again for Christmas and the New Year, and on this occasion to welcome in the year 2000.

There is something about the sound of bells that touches the heart. Way back in the twenties and thirties on a still summer evening, or if the air was coming from the Thames Valley, you could hear all the bells of Reading in the garden in Darell Road until nearby St Peter's joined them in the call to Evensong. Now it is different. The noise of road traffic and planes has taken over, and perhaps sadly, bells are not rung so much on Sunday evenings in some of the town churches. However, only during the war did all the bells of the land fall silent.

Tuesday evenings present another chance to enjoy hearing them when St Peter's has bell practice. In the long days of summer, gardening and the sound of the church bells seem to go well together.

This year the bells of St Margaret's Mapledurham ring again after a period of silence, as they are pealed by a team of bell ringers for the eleven o'clock service on the first Sunday in each month.

With few pastimes to enjoy, centuries ago, bell ringing was a way of joining in a local activity, and in many cases gave the bell ringers some welcome extra cash, or at least a few free pints of ale at the local inn.

### Bells for Guy Fawkes

In the churchwarden's accounts for Mapledurham in the year 1716 the bell ringers at St Margaret's were given three shillings for pealing the bells on Guy Fawkes' day, a custom long ceased. Who knows when they last rang on that occasion. Now we have ever noisier fireworks instead.

Another observance which has been long forgotten was the ringing of the bells for the Restoration of the Monarchy. The lads in Mapledurham were paid beer money for this in 1718. The six bells also rang for the birthday of George I and for his heir apparent.

### Beer for the Ringers

Bell ringing was thirsty work and with little in the way of income a few extra pints of free beer (or 'bear' as it was spelt!) were greatly welcomed. No doubt the Mapledurham ringers repaired to the King's Arms, the village inn at the start of the lane at the bottom of Mapledurham hill leading to Hardwick. The old place is still there but is now a private residence, the White House. Outside in the garden dozens of broken clay pipes were once found where the locals had sat on summer evenings for a smoke with their pint.

In more recent times whilst the Revd Thackeray was Vicar of Mapledurham (1888-1919) the bell ringers had an annual supper. On one occasion, in 1906, a few outsiders joined them. This caused bad feeling among the ringers to such an extent that the vicar disbanded them and formed a new group within three weeks. How did that appeal?

The church accounts for St Peter's also mention the ringers. In 1787 they note:- 'March 19th paid for a leg of mutton for the ringers on a day of celebration for the King's recovery (George III) and for liquor for them on the same occasion, ten shillings and sixpence'. And on 4th October 1798 we read: 'Beer for the ringers on account of the victory obtained over the French fleet by Admiral Nelson on August 1st, five shillings'. The celebration seems a little late. The refreshments were always taken at the nearby Griffin.

### Four hundred years

None of the bells at either church appears to be older than the 1600's, in fact the earliest one from each church dates from exactly 1600. Locally there are very few really old bells, one of the oldest hangs on a wall in Goring church. Two, slightly less old, can be found at Swyncombe.

The old tradition of bell ringing on certain occasions may have vanished but long may the bells and their ringers continue. As they ring out all over the land on New Year's Day to celebrate the millennium they will remind us of our heritage and, above all, of our Christian Faith. May they ring out for another thousand years.

MK



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

EDITORS: Mr Eric Chappell, Mrs Marjorie Tillman, Mr Kevin Corrigan, Mr Bernard Miller, c/o Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham, RG4 8AX Tel: 9471703.  
ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: Mrs Sarah Lobley, 15 Albert Road, Caversham RG4 7AN. Tel: 9461512.  
CIRCULATION MANAGER: Mr M. Staunton, 23 Albert Road, Caversham, RG4 7AN. Tel: 9472389.  
COMPANY SECRETARY: Mr H. Pilgrim, 64 Highmoor Road, Caversham RG4 7BG. Tel: 9474017.  
POSTAL SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER: Miss E. Stark, 14 The Cloisters, Priest Hill, Caversham RG4 7RQ. Tel: 9473045.

All contributions for February issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday January 5. All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs S. Lobley, 15 Albert Road, Caversham by Tuesday January 4. The dates for March will be Tuesday February 1 and Wednesday February 2.

The Editors wish to make it clear that the views expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the board. The Editors also would like to bring to readers' notice that the inclusion of advertisements in this paper does not mean an endorsement of the products or of the services offered.

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Tel: 947 9130.  
(Parish Office: Tuesday-Thursday 9.30-12.30  
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Revs Stephen & Christine Rowe.  
The Vicarage, St John's Road. Tel: 947 1814.  
Rev Cathy Pynn, 21 Ridge Hall Close. Tel: 947 6065  
Rev John Dudley, 26 Russet Glade, Emmer Green.  
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Rev Andrew Evans, 6 Scholars Close. Tel: 9483396

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Village. Tel: 947 5152.

METHODIST TEAM MINISTRY  
Rev Rosemary Fletcher, 72 Highmoor Rd.  
Tel: 947 2223  
Deacon Vic Downs, 9 Woodlands Grove.  
Tel: 948 2530

BAPTIST  
Rev Peter Edwards, 14 Tredegar Road, Emmer Green.  
Tel: 947 7697

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CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL  
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Rev John Ellis, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common  
Tel: 972 3418

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD  
Rev. H. R. Gayle Tel: 945 3849 (contact)

## 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  
10.00am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School  
6.30pm Evensong (1st Sunday)  
6.30pm Informal Worship (3rd Sunday)

St Andrew's  
8.00am The Eucharist  
10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)  
First Sunday, Family Eucharist  
The Eucharist  
6.30pm Evening Prayer  
An up to date list of weekday Services will be found on the Church notice boards.

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 PARK CHURCH  
(Caversham Park Primary School)  
11.00am Family Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)  
Morning Worship (2nd Sunday)  
Triple F Family Service (4th Sunday)  
Evening Worship (1st Sunday)  
6.30pm Worship and Wonder (2nd Sunday)  
8.00pm

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST FREE CHURCH  
10.30am and 6.30pm (Evening at North Caversham)

NORTH CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH  
6.30pm

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL  
10.30am

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM  
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10.30am and 6.30pm  
Highmoor Road  
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Woodcote Parish Church  
9.45am (second Sunday)

ROMAN CATHOLIC  
Our Lady and St Anne's  
Saturday 5.30pm,  
Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm  
St Martin's School 9.00am Mass  
Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH,  
York Road  
11.00am

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers),  
Church Street, Reading  
10.30am  
(House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD  
9.30am Sunday School  
11.00am Divine Worship  
6.00pm Evening Service



# YOUTH

## SIMON

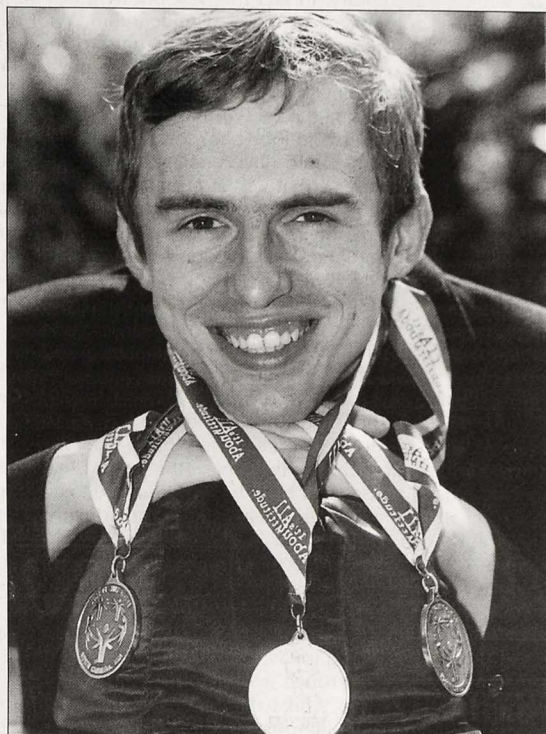
Did you go to the Lord Mayor's show in 1999, or perhaps watch it on television?

One of the floats, sponsored by Otis, the Lift and Escalator Company, featured the very successful 1999 UK Special Olympics Team. And there, right at the top of the escalator-shaped float, waving enthusiastically to the crowds, was Caversham's 27-year-old Simon Pinchen. As the float proceeded majestically through central London, Simon's parents, Mary and Rodney, were among the supporters who flanked the float, giving yet more willing support to the children they had encouraged over the years, proud to see them attain so much for their country.

So, how did it come about? Simon has been disabled from birth and as he grew up attended Reading's Avenue School for children with Special Needs. There he was given opportunities to widen his horizons, some of his earlier successes being as a swimmer. In his teens he joined the Pangbourne Group of the Riding for the Disabled Association, which meets fortnightly. He became steadily more proficient on horseback and entered competitions in the RDA's Southern Region. He was then chosen to represent the Southern Region in the UK Special Olympics held at Portsmouth in July 1997 where he won several medals.

He subsequently heard that he might be considered for a place in the UK Special Olympics team to go to the International Special Olympics to be held in the USA in the summer of 1999 and was desperately keen to be selected. And his dream came true, as the following month he was invited to join the seven strong Equestrian Team. More training followed, some as far away as Glasgow, with dedicated support from his parents, his teacher at Pangbourne, Veronica Lilley, and team coach, Clive Milkins. Clive is based full time at the RDA Southern Region Equestrian Centre at Fulmer, Slough, where many disabled children and adults gain equestrian skills.

At last the great day dawned. Simon, fully kitted out thanks to many sponsors (though it was still to cost him £1,000 for transport and hostel fees), joined the rest of the 150 strong UK team at Gatwick. Before flying to the USA the whole team attended a reception with the US Ambassador. The Games took place in Raleigh, North Carolina where temperatures were in the 90s and competitors were given a week to



Simon Pinchen.

Courtesy Reading Chronicle

acclimatise. The equestrian events were held in an enormous air-conditioned arena. In total there were 7,000 competitors in nineteen sports, representing 150 countries, as well as 3,000 Coaches/ Assistants/Team organisers. All were looked after by 30,000 local people.

Simon claimed to have no time to ring home so it was fortunate that details of each day's progress were available on the Internet. His parents could find no reports in the British press! Simon won a bronze medal in both the Equitation and Trials Events and then went on to even greater glory, winning gold in the Dressage Event. The Games concluded with a magnificent ceremony on 4 July, American Independence Day.

This all led to Simon's appearance at the Lord Mayor's Show in November, a day described by his father as "one of the best days of my life". There he and Mary met the Team Organiser who told them that Simon had been the life and soul of the party, always helping others more handicapped. No wonder he couldn't find time to phone home.

Amazing what unstinting encouragement and support can achieve!

## THE PLEASURE OF POETRY

The English department from Queen Anne's School, Caversham, invited nationally renowned poet Matthew Sweeney to run workshops for the day with year 10 girls. This hugely popular poet is best known for his published works 'Blue Shoes', 'Cacti' and 'The Bridal Suite'.

Matthew explained some of his principles behind writing poetry, read some of his own work and then encouraged the girls to compose their own poems. He was determined that everyone should enjoy poetry and firmly believes that nobody is incapable of writing something worthwhile. Holly Wallis and Charlotte Berger were particularly struck by his advice that "one of the worst crimes when writing poems is being vague" and "use descriptive phrases when writing as this brings the poems to life". As the girls said, "We all enjoyed the day immensely and some excellent poems were written as a result".

Matthew stayed on in the evening to read a selection of his own work to the Lower Sixth General Studies group. Jenny Yang, in her delightful vote of thanks, expressed the pleasure derived by all those present at the reading.

## TREES FOR OUR FUTURE



- Margaret Pearson

Front: on left Amy Russell, on right Daisy Jennings.  
Back, left to right: Clare Munnings, Alice Wainwright, Lela Grzybowska and Anna Odell.

By the end of the year 2000 The Guide Association through its nationwide 'Environmental Challenge' hopes to have

- planted 1 million trees
  - conserved 1 million kg of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)
  - and recycled 1 million empty aluminium drinks cans.
- The Challenge is in celebration of the new millennium but will also help to protect the earth's natural resources and raise awareness of the damage being done to the environment.

St Andrew's Brownies were only too happy to help plant young oak trees at Valentine Crescent in Caversham. They have also been gathering acorns, beech nuts, haws, ash and lime seeds to take to Caversham Court Environment Centre for germination. We are lucky to have the centre on our doorstep to encourage us in our efforts and to give help and support.

Any member of the public who is interested can deliver seeds or young trees that have popped up in their gardens to Caversham Court Environment Centre. They can be left outside in a labelled pot. (Contact Tina Gower (901 5201).

Margaret Pearson - Brown Owl, St Andrew's.

The price of the "Caversham Bridge" remains unchanged for the coming year. It would be appreciated, please, if you would help by paying your subscription for the year as soon as possible thereby simplifying the work of your Street Distributor.

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**PHONE 0118 947 4538****RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT****By Watchdog**

It is a sobering thought that this is the last Residents' Viewpoint I shall be writing this century. In fact the next one will not be just the first of the century but the first of the next millennium. With deliveries being voluntary (and here let us take off our hats to the volunteers) and Christmas intervening, it could already be the new millennium when some of you are reading this.

It is a time for looking back as well as looking forward. The older ones amongst us may be able to look back for a sizeable part of a century but not even Methuselah could have managed a thousand years. As far as Caversham goes, however, it was at least there, unlike many bigger and better known places. There it is in Domesday Book, with its reference of TRE, meaning it was there in Edward the Confessor's time. A humble place it was, with a handful of peasants scratching a living from the soil. It appears not to have had a church, although these were not always mentioned, as Domesday Book was mainly a listing of things of economic importance. It had several mills, one of which remained until recent times. Its inhabitants may have been scarcely aware of the millennium. On the other hand they may have expected it to herald the end of the world. They would hardly have visualised what it would have been like a thousand years further on.

It grew slowly for many centuries. Its real expansion came in the nineteenth century and by the end of this period many of the streets of small terraced houses had been built, with more to come round the turn of the century. Many churches appeared, including Nonconformist ones and the Roman Catholic Our Lady and St Anne's. The oldest part of the village was at Lower Caversham (its name and not a comparison with the later Caversham Heights) and here several old cottages can still be seen.

At that time Reading Bridge did not exist and to get into Reading on foot it was necessary to go across the Clappers which must have been a bit of an adventure in rough weather. Reading Bridge was not built until 1924, to take traffic, whilst the old iron Caversham Bridge, itself a successor to a much older structure, was being replaced by the present one.

Near St Peter's church there were some old cottages, a forge and an ancient public house, The Griffin, now replaced by the present one of that name. This was when Caversham Court, as it now is, was the site of an old house where the Priors of Nottley who served the parish church lived. The rest of west Caversham was mainly farms and orchards.

What is now Caversham Heights remained largely undeveloped until the early years of this century. The first house in Albert Road, named after Victoria's beloved Prince Consort, was the one now occupied by Bill Vincent. It was built in 1899 and has its date above the porch.

It was the forerunner of many large or largish well-built houses that characterise that area. What was once a small Oxfordshire village has now become a large suburb of Reading, though with its own character retained rather than sinking into anonymity. There are still echoes of the village of a thousand years ago from which the present-day Caversham emerged. What will happen to it in the next millennium? Only a few of its youngest inhabitants will be here even by the end of the first century. The rest of us will have to guess.

**Mind how you go**

The wider footways in the centre of Caversham are to be welcomed as a recognition that people are more important than cars. The block paved surface is far more pleasing than the patched asphalt and cracked paving slabs that it replaced, but some of the blocks have risen or sunk and could result in someone tripping over, so it's eyes down while walking. The corner by the library is still unfinished at the time of writing so I reserve judgement but the wider pavement is an improvement. The almond tree, always a delight when it bursts into early blossom, looks a bit vulnerable now it is unprotected by railings; it does not look as tough as the 'street-cred' planes.

The scarlet bus lane at the south end of Hemdean Road now has what can only be described as a car trap in it, to deter motorists who choose to ignore the 'Taxis, buses and cyclists only' sign. If they persist in using this short cut their exhaust is likely to come to harm. Taxis are higher slung and should be all right, but will cyclists always be aware of it in the dark?

**If winter comes . . .**

This column is being written in November owing to an earlier deadline than usual, because of delays caused by Christmas. Gardens still have colour in them as so far no frosts have arrived. Geraniums and even nasturtiums, as well as hardy fuchsia, are still in flower and long may this continue. The period could be brief before the first aconite of the coming Spring appears, but as we do not know what is in store for us, it would be wise not to tempt fate, beyond hoping that the Millennium is not so cold that no-one will want to be out of doors. So greetings to all for this unique season. Yes, as far as pedants go, I know it is not unique. It happened a thousand years ago, and we should really be celebrating at the end of next year, but for lay persons it is the ring of two thousand that has an impact. So here's to the year 2000.

**Anno Domini**

But just **what** are we celebrating? Recently a newspaper comment

suggested that it was probably not unreasonable to allow the Archbishop of Canterbury five minutes to offer a Christian prayer at the Greenwich commemoration. Whilst realising that many of the population of this country are not Christian, our dates are all AD for the past 2000 years, so it is certainly **not** unreasonable.

*The Editors are glad to hear that 'Watchdog' is making good progress after her horrendous recent experience and are delighted that her contributions have continued.*

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# THE CHURCH IN ACTION

## READING YOUNG OFFENDERS INSTITUTION

### - The Inside Story

At a recent open meeting of the Council of Churches Together in Berkshire, Caversham's Deacon Vic Downs gave a graphic description of his role as a Chaplain at Reading's Young Offenders Institution which most of us know as Reading Jail. This houses young people from the surrounding counties who have either been convicted or are awaiting trial. After 24 years as a teacher, Vic Downs offered himself for the Methodist ministry and, following his appointment to the Methodist Team in Caversham, he became involved with the Prison, an opportunity and experience for which he is now most grateful.

#### The first and last Adam

From this experience he now sees prison as both an academy of criminology and also an academy of theology: a point which was brought home to the audience when he showed a photograph of a painting of Christ on the cross that hangs over the altar in the Chapel at Reading Prison. It had been painted by a prisoner called Adam who was in jail for murder and who had used himself as a model. In a very real way this picture drew attention to the first Adam and last Adam, the fall of man through sin and man's redemption through Christ.

#### Under lock and key

Something of the feeling of being a prisoner came home to Vic in the initial period of six weeks after his appointment as the Free Church Prison Chaplain. Then, every time he visited the prison he was accompanied by someone with the keys who opened each door in front of them and closed and locked it behind them. Several doors and a courtyard had to be passed before they entered the prisoners' wings where the chapel is situated. This experience alone was sufficient to identify himself with the prisoners. After the end of six weeks, when he was issued with a set of keys, he felt he was no longer alongside the prisoners.

Even more of the feeling of the prisoner came across to his audience when he unrolled a half scale plan of a cell occupied by two people.

#### The Chaplains' role

The law requires each prison to have three groups of people in addition to the inmates, namely the Governor, Chaplains from each

of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Churches, and as many Prison Officers as are necessary. Prisoners from each new intake have, by law, to be interviewed by a Chaplain within 48 hours of arrival and for some, this might be the only contact they have with the Chaplaincy. Chaplains also make regular visits to those in the prison hospital, the punishment block and other blocks where bullies, those requiring protection and segregated prisoners are confined; a note of each of these visits has to be recorded. Every Saturday there is a Roman Catholic Mass in the Chapel and on Sundays there is either an Anglican or Non-conformist Service. The latter are attended by 35 to 40 out of a prison population of 245, a rather better proportion than in the world outside. Those attending are well behaved but are always accompanied by two Prison Officers. The reaction of the Prison Officers to the Chaplaincy Team varies from sympathetic, through indifference to apparent antagonism to their role and work. The prison regime itself is not always helpful to the work of the Chaplains, particularly around meal times, when prisoners report for their meals in a numbered sequence and failure to do so results in forfeiture of the meal.

#### Need for aftercare

Vic spoke of how some come to faith while in prison, giving telling examples of how the toughest of the inmates may change and how many of these have come from unhelpful backgrounds. Once released, these people need to be welcomed into a Church and we in the congregations ought to be encouraging this. Vic reminded us that they all needed to be enfolded in the love and gentleness of Christ. He commented that the work of a Prison Chaplain is a role in which it is possible for one to get more out of it than one actually puts into it.

#### Ecumenical Partnership

Also speaking was Marjorie East, one of two Visiting Ministers to the Prison Chaplaincy from the Salvation Army, who drew attention to the fact that the interview with the Chaplain might be the first time some of the prisoners had heard about God. Some opportunities exist for groups to meet during the week. As a result 8 or 9 attend a Bible study. There are also opportunities to show



- O. Jewiss

Our picture shows the Revd Derek Wales, Wessex Provincial Moderator of the United Reformed Church and Chairman of Churches Together in Berkshire, Deacon Vic Downs and Mrs Marjorie East (from the Salvation Army in Lower Earley).

and discuss videos and for the meeting of a group known as the befrienders; befriending is clearly what many want. In 1994, the Roman Catholics, Methodists, Church of England, Salvation Army and Society of Friends signed a Covenant which pledged them to work together; those present at the signing have felt that this was a very powerful act affirming their joint work for God in the Prison.

## OLD ORATORIAN



Boys from The Oratory School laying a wreath on the graves of three boys who died and are buried in the grounds of Caversham Park, which was the home of The Oratory School from 1922 to 1941, now of course the home of the BBC Monitoring Service.

The three boys who died at the school were Richard Donegan aged 17, Wilfred Patrick Thunder aged 15 and John Michael Butchers who died in July 1940. A plinth and plaque are to be erected near the graves which are opposite the former School Chapel, built as a tribute to all Old Oratorians who served in the First World War and as a memorial to the 87 who gave their lives.

It is the intention that every year a wreath will be laid on the graves by those members of the School travelling to London for the Requiem Mass for Old Oratorians.

Informal

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## AROUND THE CHURCHES

## CHRISTIANS IN PUBLIC LIFE

The special speaker at the Churches Together in Caversham Annual Assembly in 1999 was Canon Tom Farrell, Episcopal Vicar of South Oxfordshire, who spoke about the recent conference on 'Catholics in Public Life' held in Liverpool during July and attended by 500 delegates drawn from all types of secular occupations in public life. He used the lessons from this conference as a basis for the way forward for all Christians in public life. Canon Farrell reminded us of the regard in which various professions are held. Thus a poll of public opinion has shown that teachers and doctors are trusted and believed by 84% of the population, clergy by 80%, judges 68% and politicians 14%. Lord Nolan, a contributor to the conference and chairman of the 1994 - 97 Commission on Standards in Public Life, has enunciated the following seven principles that should surround involvement in public life, namely: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

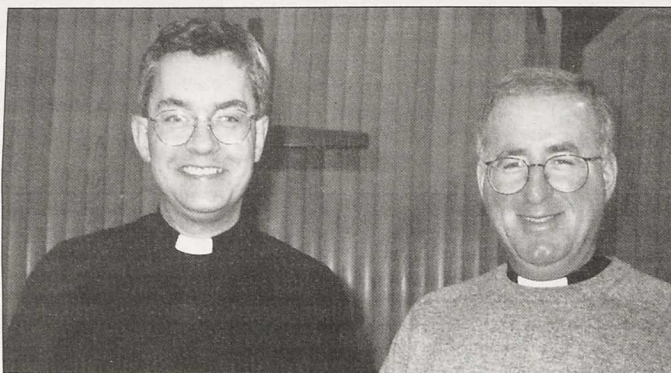
## Possible Christian approaches

At the conference, three possible approaches by Christians were noted: (1) to condemn and be strongly opposed to that which goes on in the world as being anti-Christian; (2) to bury our heads and pretend events have not happened, while continuing to live in our own Christian world; (3) to see what is happening in the

world, to recognise the need for change and to try to influence that change. We were reminded that Jesus drew on experiences from the world and that we should not let the vision of eternal life cloud our vision now, nor should it be used as an excuse for doing nothing.

## Holiness and politics

Contributions to the conference highlighted the fact that the eternal and the immediate or holiness and politics were not separate; holiness was defined as the outstanding practice of faith, hope and charity, whereas politics was defined as the actions that transform society in the direction of the Kingdom of God. Reports



- O. Jewiss

Canon Tom Farrell (left) was photographed at the Churches Together in Caversham (CTC) Annual Assembly in Caversham Baptist Free Church with Fr Tony Jones (Chairman of CTC).

## INVESTITURE OF PAPAL KNIGHT AND DAME

Evening Mass at Our Lady and St Anne's on Saturday 13th November was the occasion for a rare ceremony with the Parish Church providing the setting for the installation of Mapledurham residents, Jack and Lady Anne Eyston, as members of the Pontifical Order of St Gregory the Great with the rank of Knight and Dame respectively.

Recommended to the Holy Father by Archbishop Maurice Couve de Murville prior to the latter's retirement, the Papal awards were bestowed by the Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Philip Pargeter, acting as diocesan Bishop of Birmingham until a permanent appointment is made. He conveyed Archbishop Maurice's warmest regards to Jack and Lady Anne on this joyous occasion.

The day's Gospel reading had recounted the parable of the talents and, in his homily, Bishop Philip reflected that we are all entrusted by God with powers - for His sake, not for themselves - for which we will have to account to Him; we should not be like the servant who buried his talents. Today we were witnesses that Jack and Lady Anne had not buried theirs. While

Mapledurham House was a notable memorial to their ancestors who had helped to preserve the faith, they, in serving both their local and the wider community in so many ways, had also borne public witness to that same faith.

Supported by other members of the Order from within the Archdiocese, Jack and Lady Anne then approached the altar where they were invited by Bishop Philip to make their vows of fidelity and were invested by him with membership and the Insignia of the Order. Mass then resumed its normal course concluding with a final Pontifical Blessing and a rousing rendering of "Faith of our Fathers". Those of us in the congregation had been privileged participants in a moving ceremony, the simplicity of which belied its great significance - in Fr Tony's closing words, 'a wonderful celebration that made us feel part of the Universal Church'.



- K. Corrigan

Jack and Lady Anne Eyston with Bishop Pargeter at their investiture.

in recent years have emphasised the importance of the church and the world, of working to bring transformation in society, and of the breakdown of hierarchical structures; we are all called upon to help to bring these changes in the world through the adoption of Christian principles.

## Engage in the world

Two years ago, a further report stated that the Gospel values provided common goals for the common good. Many share the ideals of better health and better education. In preparation for the Millennium, the Pope has drawn attention to the importance of justice, love and peace. Increasingly Christians are being called to engage in the world to bring about change and to enable their Christian faith to shine. Evil thrives when good people do nothing.

Those attending the CTC Assembly were able to go home pondering these thoughts, the business of the AGM having been transacted before we heard the main speaker. Fr Tony Jones remains as Chairman of CTC until January when the Revd Rosemary Fletcher takes over on her return from sabbatical leave.

## NEW PRIEST-IN-CHARGE FOR ST BARNABAS

The Revd Derek Chandler has been appointed Priest-in-Charge of the Parish of St Barnabas, Emmer Green. He will be licensed on Wednesday 3rd May 2000 at 8 pm. Derek is currently Priest-in-Charge of a daughter church (St Francis) in the Parish of Sholing, Southampton, where he has been since 1997. Originally from Alton, Derek was ordained Deacon in 1993 and Priest in 1994. His first appointment was as Assistant Curate in the Parish of Bitterne Park, Southampton, where he served from 1993 to 1997. He is a Master of Divinity and a Bachelor of Theology.

Derek is 32 years of age and is married to Chris. They have two children, Hannah aged 11 and Robert aged 8, but the family will be enlarged by the time they move to Emmer Green; a third child is expected at the end of March 2000. The family will be visiting St Barnabas on Sunday 9 January and will attend the Family Service at 9.30 am. They will be assured of a very warm welcome by the church family at St Barnabas. Pending the completion of a Reading Deanery review of ministry in Caversham, all appointments to the Anglican churches are being made as Priests-in-Charge.

## NEW PRIEST FOR ST ANDREW'S

The Reverend Father Keith Kinnaird, currently Vicar of New Shoreham and Old Shoreham in the Diocese of Chichester, is in the process of being appointed the new Priest of St Andrew's, Caversham.

The congregation of St Andrew's look forward to extending a warm welcome to Father Keith and wife Pam when they take up occupation of the Vicarage in early March 2000.

Father Keith will then be licensed at 12 noon, Saturday 25th March 2000.

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## AROUND THE CHURCHES

## ST JOHN'S VICAR TO BE A FLYING ANGEL

Rarely do three of the Church of England clergy in Caversham leave in such a short space of time; the latest to announce his departure is the Revd Stephen Rowe, Vicar of St John's for the past seven years. His last Sunday will be 9 January, before his departure for the West coast of Canada, where he is to become Missions to Seamen Chaplain in Vancouver. The logo of the Missions to Seamen (shortly to change its name to the Missions to Seafarers) is a flying angel; the chaplains have sometimes been called flying angels.

## Kenyan experience

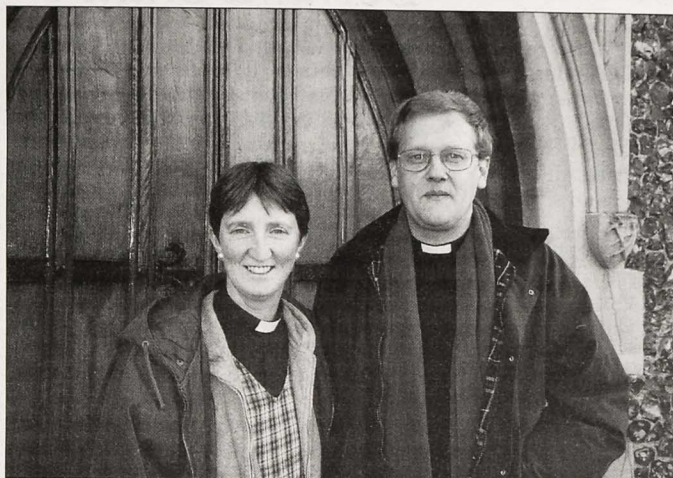
What at first might seem to be an unusual move becomes more understandable the more you talk to Stephen Rowe. Unknown to many will be the fact that before Stephen trained for the ministry he spent a year in Mombasa on the Kenyan sea coast as a lay helper for the Missions to Seamen. He has never severed that connection with the Missions to Seamen and, even now back in parish life, Stephen is an Honorary Inland Chaplain for the Mission. In this capacity he has spoken in parishes to raise the image and encourage financial support.

## Back to their roots

We have discovered that Christine Rowe has a Canadian passport; her mother, Mrs Josephine Cutler, was born in Vancouver and spent the first 12 years of her married life in Vancouver. Christine's sister and brother live in Vancouver. In different ways, the move to Vancouver takes both Stephen and Christine back to their roots although Stephen confesses that he had not foreseen his ministry developing in this way.

## Missions to Seamen

The Missions to Seamen is a voluntary society of the Anglican Church founded 144 years ago. It has a network of chaplains, staff and volunteers in some 300 ports worldwide. They make tireless efforts for the physical and spiritual welfare of seafarers who lead lonely, sometimes dangerous and often difficult lives; many are away from home between 9 and 12 months a year. World wide during the past year, Missions to Seamen has welcomed over one million seafarers into its centres, has visited 93,000 ships and 1,200 crew members in hospital, has helped with welfare and justice cases; it has helped seafarers to make 135,000 international telephone calls home, has provided transport, distributed Bibles and held Communion and



- O. Jewiss

The Revds Christine and Stephen Rowe photographed outside St John's Church recently.

other services which have been attended by about 10,000 seafarers in total.

## The Flying Angel Club

Vancouver is the largest port on the west coast of North America with over 3,000 ships calling each year. On its East Waterfront may be found the Missions to Seamen Flying Angel Club. The general manager looks after the club where seaman may have rest, refreshment and recreation. There is a large coffee bar, snack bar and shop and facilities to enable visitors to phone or write home. The still centre is the chapel where Stephen Rowe will be its chaplain. In the mornings Stephen expects to visit the ships in port, a task in which he will have voluntary help; in the evenings he expects to be in the club offering friendship to those present.

## The Diocese and the City

As a Missions to Seamen Chaplain he will be part of the Anglican Church in Canada and a member of the New Westminster Diocese where he will automatically be a member of its Synod. He will be exercising his ministry in a modern city with approaching 2 million people in the metropolitan area. It is a city with the same problems as any big city with large contrasts between rich and poor, with unemployment, homelessness and people on the streets. It is also in a picturesque area with an interesting coastline, along which extend the berths for shipping, and has a backdrop of snow covered mountains to the east.

## New challenges

For Stephen, Christine and their family, including Christine's mother, Jo, the move presents a challenging new life on the Pacific edge of one of the world's largest countries. For Stephen especially it presents the opportunity to be God's messenger to the many ships that call at this large port and to their crews, two-thirds of whom are likely to come from the Third World. It is far removed from inland Reading whose main river traffic is leisure craft. Perhaps this new work of Stephen Rowe's is an area with which Caversham can identify, particularly through an annual observance of Sea Sunday, always the second Sunday in July.

The Rowe family will be leaving Caversham not only with gratitude for Stephen's and Christine's ministry among us and good wishes for the future, but also with the prayerful support of many of its church people. They will be missed in Reading and beyond.

Christine has been full-time Assistant Chaplain to the Royal Berks and Battle Hospitals and also Chaplain to the Mothers' Union. Earlier she was also a Chaplain at the Reading Young Offenders Institution.

## CORRESPONDENCE

## EVACUEES

Peter Littlewood's description in the November edition of the Caversham Bridge of his experience as an evacuee, brought back recollections of our experience of receiving children like him in Caversham.

Although it was sixty years ago, and I was only five at the time, I vividly remember the bus full of children arriving in Uplands Road where we lived. Hosting the evacuees was not voluntary. The adults simply went from door to door and if you had a spare bed you had to fill it. We were assigned two little girls of about my age called Marlene and Sheila, but it must have been a very unhappy time for them.

They came from East London from a very different culture to ours. Like Mr Littlewood they shared a double bed, but they tended to fall out because they were used to sleeping with far more than one other child. They did not know how to tackle a boiled egg, and had never been accustomed to sitting at a table for a meal. All they wanted was a slice of bread to take out into the street. This was another problem as I had never been allowed to play in the street and of course I wanted to join them.

They were Roman Catholics and were required to attend church each Sunday somewhere in Lower Caversham. I have no idea how they got there, as petrol for private cars was at a premium in those days and not many families had cars anyway. I remember my mother thought it most inappropriate that such small children should have to go so far each week. In fact this was the breaking point and Marlene and Sheila were only with us for a week or two before they were removed to live nearer their church. I wonder if any of our readers were their new hosts.

I often wonder what eventually happened to them. I am sure that all the hosts did everything in their power to look after these children properly and make them happy, but there was too large a culture gap to be bridged. As Mr Littlewood experienced, there was a total disregard in matching the children with their reception family, and I think in fact many of them went back home before long.

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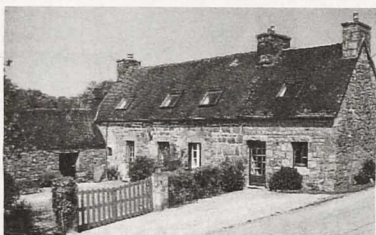
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# CAVERSHAM THEATRE

## – Bernard Shaw's 'Candida'

If the title of a play is Rebecca or Candida the lady in question must be a singularly distinctive person. Rebecca was unearthly and no better than she should have been: Candida has worldly emotions but saintly tendencies. At her very first entry as Candida, Anne Piper achieved an aura of distinctiveness and soon established a character that was romantic, maternal, shrewd and strong.

Candida is married to an Anglican parson, the Revd James Morell, played by Martin Leckie, who is the shepherd of a flock living in Hoxton in 1894. James is a Christian Socialist whose vigour and fluent oratory oblige him to spend all evenings and most days addressing meetings of social reformers. Care of the flock is mostly left to his curate, the Revd 'Lexy' Mill, an Oxford graduate acquiring the flavour of the East End, who was effectively played by Jonathan Dart.

Candida's romantic spirit and motherly compassion has been aroused by Eugene Marchbanks, a noble scion of poetic aspiration and nervous disposition whom James has rescued from sleeping rough on the Embankment. Guy Baxter coped well with the difficult part of Marchbanks, who has been so charmed by Candida that he not only announces to Morell that he is in love with her but decides that he has a greater claim to her love. After all, James loves his calling more and neglects her for it.

The climax of the play is dictated by James and Eugene, who insist that she must choose between them. Candida declares that she will give herself to the weaker of them. This is not the underconfident, cringing Marchbanks but the confident, successful parson, who admits that she has made him with the

labour of her hands and the love of her heart.

Morell was perhaps the Gumbel of his day, a single minded evangelist with an attractive personality and a gift of compelling oratory. As always, Martin Leckie gave a competent performance in the lead role, but his parson lacked that genial warmth which could have roused the enthusiasm of crowds and excited the hero-worship of the ladies. Peter Ludlow was in his element as Burgess, Candida's brash scoundrel of a dad, whilst Kathy Munns did well in the part of Proserpine Garnett, Morell's starchy secretary.

Candida was a thought provoking play and, though audiences were small, it was well received. This was the last play to be produced by Bob Green before he takes time off to perform a more worshipping role!

E.M.A.

## TRIBUTE

### JOHN LAW

John was born in Coventry in 1915. His father fought in the First World War and died when John was only three.

His mother managed with difficulty to bring up her children, though when John wanted to become an architect, there was no money to fund his training.

Instead he became an apprentice tool-maker in a mechanical engineering firm. He studied in the evenings, passing all his exams with flying colours.

Although in 1939 John was in a reserved occupation, he decided to volunteer for the army, feeling that he could make a greater contribution as a soldier. He soon became a Lieutenant in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, and was promoted to Captain by the end of the war. He served in a number of campaigns, one of the most dangerous being the clearing of mines and obstructions from the British landing beaches on D-Day. He was mentioned in Despatches in March 1945.

After working for 7 years in Uganda, John moved with his wife Peggy and Richard, Robert, Mary and young John to Borneo. He was involved with large infra-structure projects, and got a lot of satisfaction from making significant improvements to the lives of the people in these third-world countries.

John's next move was to Hong Kong. Shortly before leaving Borneo he met Grace who joined him in Hong Kong in 1980. Lindsay, Grace's daughter, now became a member of the family, and over the years she and John formed a very happy and close relationship.

In the early 1980s, John and Grace returned to the UK. He worked for a while for the Crown Agents in London, and then for Macdonalds and Partners. He loved his work so much that he was determined not to retire and managed to postpone retirement for ten years by making a tiny adjustment to his year of birth in his passport. He finally did retire in 1990 at the age of 75, leaving monuments to his engineering skill in many parts of the world.

John's active life continued after his retirement. He loved his garden and was active in a local environment organisation called GLOBE. There are his grandchildren, too, Clare, Phillipa, Charlotte and Duncan, and he was very fond and proud of them all.

John kept his youthful attitude to life right until the end: he was riding his bicycle up to two days before going into hospital. Everyone who knew him will miss him greatly, but they will always be grateful that he was a part of their lives.



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If you believe you might like to join the Volunteer teams at CIRDIC, please contact the Centre manager, Verna Makins on 0118 950 2536. She would be pleased to give more information on the Centre and on how any commitment you might be able to make could be fitted into its activities.

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## New Year Resolutions

### EMMER GREEN AFTER SCHOOL CLUB NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

Emmer Green After School Club is a thriving club for children attending schools in Emmer Green and Caversham. Held in the Emmer Green Youth & Community Centre, we provide after school care for up to 32 children a day from 3pm until 6pm. We provide a hot snack and care and entertainment for 4 to 11 year olds from Emmer Green, St Martin's, Caversham Park and Caversham Primary Schools. The Club is managed by a committee of working parents and we recently achieved charitable status.

We appear to have it all; funding, secure premises, some full sessions, a waiting list, and happy kids who love the Club. What we do not have is enough staff and we are currently in the process of recruiting. We are all 'mucking in', parents and staff alike, to make sure that our staffing shortfall does not affect the level of care and fun that we provide for the children, and that we do not compromise the care standards expected of us by Social Services, the parents and the schools.

Our dilemma would be greatly eased if we had a 'pool' of reliable volunteers to call on in an emergency. In particular, the playworkers prepare the snack, wash up and clear away. These jobs could be done by willing volunteers and free up the playworkers to play!

We also want to organise walking buses from Caversham Primary School and

St Martin's and Caversham Park Primary Schools to the After School Club. We have enthusiastic support from Reading Borough Council, but we cannot afford to send playworkers to collect the children from the schools because we need all the staff at the Club from 3pm when it opens. Currently, parents of children from schools other than Emmer Green Primary have to make their own transport arrangements to the Club.

Each of these activities takes just an hour here or there, but without a full complement of staff we are unable to provide the walking buses and have a parents' rota for the washing up!

If you feel that you may be able to help us out, either as a volunteer or as a paid member of staff, please contact Lesley Clark, Chairperson of the Management Committee, on 946 3202. Your help would be greatly appreciated.



## TROOP, TROOP ALERT!

In your youth did you enjoy cubs, brownies, scouts, guides, rovers, ventures, rangers? Did you go on to achieve your Queen's scout or guide award? Maybe you were in a similar organisation. Would you like to recapture that excellent fun and companionship again? Would you like to put something back for all that you gained? Perhaps you have children or grandchildren who are involved in scouting or guiding or perhaps you feel you missed out when you were younger. These days often both fathers and mothers work and do not have the time to volunteer to help run our units even though they are fully supportive in other ways. We cannot, however, survive with only occasional or financial help. We need people who can be committed on a weekly basis to provide what the scouting movement has uniquely given to young people for almost a century. [The centenary is in 2007.]

At the 89th Reading (Milestone Wood) Scout Group we are struggling to maintain what we feel is a valuable service for our young people which helps them develop into confident adults able to take a constructive place in society. Scouting is for 6-20 year olds. We need leaders and helpers at all levels, Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts and Venture Scouts so that we can stop contemplating closure of one or more of our units. We have about 180 young people who want to be part of the fun so it's not lack of participants which would close our units but a shortage of adult help. We also need a Group Scout Leader who is not involved with running a unit, but who has overall responsibility for the group, for the leadership and some administration. Don't worry if you feel you would not know what to do, there is training available and support from the existing leadership. Have I grabbed your interest in any way? If so please phone Catherine Radcliffe on 947 9831. If you would like to visit any of the units in action please ring. DON'T LEAVE IT UNTIL NEXT WEEK. RING NOW!!!

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## A NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

Give me a good digestion, Lord,  
And also something to digest.  
Give me a healthy body, Lord,  
With sense to keep it at its best.  
Give me a healthy mind, O Lord,  
To keep the good and pure in sight,  
Which seeing wrong is not appalled  
But finds a way to set it right.

Give me a mind that is not bored,  
That does not whimper, whine or sigh.  
Don't let me worry overmuch  
About that fussy thing called 'I'.  
Give me a sense of humour, Lord,  
Give me the grace to see a joke,  
To get some happiness from life  
And pass it on to other folk.

*An ancient prayer.*



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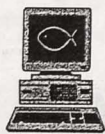
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## the CLUBS

### Caversham WI

A cold evening found members enjoying some colourful slides shown by Mrs Meryl Beek. Her talk, entitled 'Birds, Beasts and Flowers', transported her audience far and wide, showing some familiar examples and others not so well known. Mrs Beek then judged the competition for a country photo and awarded first prize to Sylvia Myszor, with second place going to Val White.

Members were congratulated on the result of the Autumn Fair and reminded about the Christmas Party.

### Caversham Afternoon TG

At the November meeting the chairman, Mrs J Slatter, reminded members of the Birthday and Christmas Lunch at the Travellers Rest on 7th December. Mrs Manning said that the programme for the following year was well under way but any suggestions would be welcomed.

A new design was invited for the Guild Yearbook, entries to be in by March 2000. The 'get well favourite remedy' competition was won by Mrs E

Hodgkinson

The speaker was Mr R Pearce on Press Photography Part 2. He gave a very interesting talk on his work as a freelance photographer, illustrated by pictures of various events. He stressed the importance of a voluntary agreement the Press had with the police - sometimes to withhold news that might hinder police work as, for example, in a kidnapping. Also, how valuable the infra-red camera had been in taking pictures in circumstances that would not otherwise have been possible. The vote of thanks was given by Mrs Kirby.

Meetings take place in Church House at 2.00pm every third Tuesday each month, new members are welcome.

### Caversham Heights Townswomen's Guild

The chairman, Mrs Hazel New, who has been awarded a second bar to her Red Cross medal, welcomed members to the November meeting and then introduced Mr James Bragg from the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

There are 2000 outlets in the UK with over 28,000 staff, most of whom are voluntary, but because life is getting more complex they are increasing the number of paid staff. Problems occur mainly with benefits, debt, consumer rights, housing, employment and relationships. Although there are specialists in the bureau to advise, listening and then talking over the problem helps towards the aim of "keeping people afloat".

Members enjoyed a visit to the Hexagon to see the Sainsbury's Singers in Annie Get Your Gun and are looking forward to a visit to the Houses of Parliament thanks to Sheila Holley.

Social studies had an enjoyable evening when Alison Parmenter spoke very enthusiastically of

her two visits to Zimbabwe. The excellent slides included views, especially good ones of the Victoria Falls, and wild animals and depicted her special interest in trees and flowers, some of which were unknown to us. She also showed cave paintings similar to those found in Spain. Alison had been visiting her daughter who works with girls and women with AIDS and brought along embroidered and tie-dyed garments they had made, as well as some carved and woven objects from the villages.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month in Saint Andrew's Church Hall in Albert Road at 7.30pm. Why not come along?

### Reading & District Probus Club

The Club held its monthly meeting at the Upcross Hotel on Monday 8 November, starting as usual with lunch. The guest speaker was Mr Roy Bridgen of the Rural History Centre at Whiteknights Agriculture & Countryside College who addressed members with accompanying slides of both old and less ancient farm implements, horsedrawn ploughs and wagons of the late 1800's and their tractor successors.

The College also retains many elderly engineering drawings of agricultural machinery which are often borrowed by commercial concerns as an aid to repairing ploughs, wagons etc. of that vintage, and the College can arrange to receive visits.

Probus enjoys a variety of talks and happy social occasions, and membership is open to retired and near-retirement gentlemen. Details from Mr Barry Ward, the Secretary, telephone 0118 942 8806.

### Caversham and Chiltern Flower Club

The Club's Silver Anniversary Year has been a special one with an excellent programme of events and demonstrations in the latter part of 1999.

For the Day School in September, Irene Manson taught

members how to arrange in the Victorian style and everyone completed an Epergne. A very successful day which was enjoyed by all those lucky enough to have attended. Thank you Irene!

The year's Special Open Meeting in November was a sell-out. 120 members and guests enjoyed the wit and wisdom of Stephen Crisp. Stephen showed slides of his work for Embassy parties and receptions and there were many stories to go with them. He works on a very large scale at the American Ambassador's official residence, but in his demonstration he showed us how some of his ideas could be scaled down to decorate our own homes. Many members bought items from the Christmas Sales Table with this in mind. The evening was a great success and many favourable comments were made over the wine and mince pies at the end of the evening.

In December, a combined 25th Celebration and Christmas Party was held. The theme was Victorian, with the decorations, food and entertainment inspired by the Victorian period. Past Chairman of the Club and guests from NAFAS Area were present. Many thanks to the sub-committee who organised the evening and prepared the delicious three-course supper.

There will not be a meeting in January but the Club's Chairman, Joy Boddington, and the committee look forward to welcoming members to the AGM on 3rd February 2000 which will be followed by an American Supper.

The first demonstration of the year will be on the 2nd March at 7.30 in St Andrews Hall, St Andrews Road, Caversham. Details of the programme for 2000 will be given in the next issue.

## METHODIST DIARY

### CAVERSHAM (GOSBROOK ROAD)

January 1	11.30am	NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE - Mrs Elaine Cresswell
January 2	10.30am	COVENANT SERVICE - Deacon Vic Downs/Rev Rosemary Fletcher
	6.30pm	Mrs Judith Norris
January 8		Caribbean Evening (World Church Weekend)
January 9	10.30am	World Church Day - Rev Winston Graham of Methodist Church House
	6.30pm	Deacon Vic Downs
January 15	7.30pm	'Canticle' in Concert
January 16	10.30am	Deacon Vic Downs
	4.30pm	United Service at Caversham Park Village
January 23	10.30am	All Age Worship & Parade Service - Rev Rosemary Fletcher
	6.30pm	United Service with St John's - Mrs Elaine Cresswell
January 29		Quiz Evening
January 30	10.30am	Mrs Liz Aldersley
	6.30pm	Healing Service - Deacon Vic Downs

### CAVERSHAM HEIGHTS (WOODCOTE ROAD)

January 1	11.30am	NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE - Rev Rosemary Fletcher
January 2	10.30am	Miss Jackie Case
	6.30pm	COVENANT SERVICE - Deacon Vic Downs/Rev Rosemary Fletcher
January 9	10.30am	All Age Worship - Mr Patrick Stonehewer
	6.30pm	Rev Rosemary Fletcher
January 16	10.30am	COVENANT SERVICE - Rev Rosemary Fletcher
	4.30pm	United Service at Caversham Park Village
January 23	10.30am	Mr Roy Baxter of Earley
	6.30pm	Youth Service - Deacon Vic Downs
January 30	10.30am	Rev Rosemary Fletcher
	6.30pm	Holy Communion & Healing Service - Rev Rosemary Fletcher

### ST LEONARD'S PARISH CHURCH, WOODCOTE

January 9	9.45am	COVENANT SERVICE - Rev Rosemary Fletcher
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### Thursday Evening Services

Anyone who finds it difficult to attend worship on Sundays will find a very warm welcome at the mid-week evening services at Caversham Heights Methodist Church at 7.45pm on Thursday evenings. The service will take varying forms each week.

How to Book a Room for Your Event - (Subject to availability)

Gosbrook Road Methodist Church: Contact

Sarah Laming: 0118 946 3453.

Caversham Heights Methodist Church: Contact

Harry Taylor: 947 2051 or (Wesley Lounge)

Judith Higgs: 947 4494.



# ENVIRONMENT

## NEWS FROM GLOBE

BY  $\phi\beta$ 

### New Bridge!

Caversham has a new bridge at last! The rebuilt wooden bridge over the millstream was informally opened on 19th November, just a year since the old bridge had to be closed after partial collapse. The new bridge is a great improvement, wider, less steep, and carefully constructed from English timber.

The residents of Lower Caversham can once more walk to town or King's Meadow along the attractive path which skirts View Island before crossing the weir and lock gates (until these gates are in turn rebuilt early next year! – but that should only take a month).

View Island has a rather stark look at the moment; the Council and the Environment Agency have given it a severe 'short back and sides', pollarding the riverside willows and cutting the areas of grass, but these should soon recover. Unfortunately, the proposed boardwalk on to the island is just long enough to be classified as a bridge and must receive standard approval; the engineers seem to devote as much time to checking out a simple wooden bridge as to verifying the soundness of the Humber and Severn crossings, but let us hope that public access to the island will not be too long delayed.

### Riverside Trail

Caversham Globe must now decide whether to update and reprint their Riverside Trail leaflet. The

trail was rendered impassable by the loss of the bridge, but stocks of the leaflet had, in any case, run low. Copies should, however, still be available from Caversham Library during the winter.

### ECONET Network Day

Globe members attended a very successful ECONET network day on 6th November. ECONET is the umbrella organisation which brings together representatives of groups engaged in practical conservation work in the Reading area. The day offered talks from leading practitioners on subjects ranging from the basic issues of recruiting group members, raising money for projects, and publicity, through to the management of specific habitats such as ancient woodland, rivers and water meadows. The day finished with a discussion of the Council's proposed closure of the Caversham Court Environment Centre. All involved were keen to ensure that any replacement facilities will continue to provide the practical help and support for voluntary groups which the present centre and its staff very ably do.

The precious open spaces of Caversham ward (Hill's Meadow, View Island, Balmore Walk . . .) should give group members plenty of opportunities to put their learning into practice in the coming year. Best wishes also to all the other groups engaged in similar work in the wider Caversham area.

## Mapledurham Playing Fields have New Friends



Relaxing after the latest conservation task in Mapledurham Playing Fields are, left to right, Steve Ayres; Sandra Ayres; Judith Oliver, Project Leader; Robert Watson; Andrew Pearson; David Pearson; Barbara Macrae; Derek Murphy and Ian Rogers.

A new organisation, known as the 'Friends of Mapledurham Playing Fields', has been formed with the intention of carrying out conservation work within this popular Caversham recreation area. The initiative, which has the support of Reading Borough Council and the facility's Management Committee, will be reliant on the efforts of local volunteers. Amongst the aims of the group is to enhance the several tracts of woodland and rough ground to the benefit of both park users and wildlife. The immediate tasks include the improvement of footpaths, the clearing of overgrown vegetation and the planting of native shrubs and trees such as guelder rose, field maple and young oaks. It is hoped that a structured management plan, overseen by the project's leader, Judith Oliver, will increase the diversity of plants, animals and insects to be found within the boundaries of the playing fields.

The formation of the new group is the latest in a series of very successful projects which have led to the enhancement of a number of Reading's open spaces, of which Clayfield Copse is a typical example.

For further information on the Friends of Mapledurham Playing Fields, contact Judith Oliver at Caversham Court Environmental Centre, Telephone 0118 901 5201.



## Oxfordshire Provides Again

### Scops Owl

Near the end of the month our Team of Three were back at Stanton Harcourt gravel-pit. A female White-headed Duck had been seen, also a Pied-billed Grebe.

At the time strong north-easterlies and low temperatures – too low for November – prevailed.

With streaming eyes we battled in a Force eight around the pit to the only visible calm where ducks were congregating. It was the lee of a small island. For us there was no shelter and one would guess wind-chill factor was reducing conditions to minus three or four. The usual five thousand gulls were in their element, any rarities having to be disregarded. The Pied-billed failed to show but in the lee triangle were Pochard, Mallard, Shoveller, Gadwall, Widgeon, Goldeneye, Teal, Tufted Ducks and a Pintail.

My friend proved his athleticism by running to keep warm. As best as possible, I maintained standpoint with telescope and tripod. After almost an hour of battering-ram winds, TWO White-headed/Ruddy Ducks hove into view – problem!

It may be recalled that the Ruddy Duck is consorting with a population of White-headed in Spain. The result is that pure White-headed are reduced in number and

presumably hybrids increasing. Both birds at Stanton were in winter plumage, one having slightly differing head-patterns from the other which appeared to be a Ruddy Duck. It seemed logical that the former was the said White-headed but we have not accepted it as hybridisation cannot be ruled out.

Kestrels, Meadow Pipits and Goldfinches showed well as a few Goldcrests flitted between small willows from which leaves were rapidly being stripped. A flock of mixed Redwings and Fieldfares were blown past. Conditions never improved but we fulfilled the day with a Great Northern Diver on Farmoor Reservoir. As usual during winter it was a juvenile sporting speckled plumage.

We drove back to a bridge where the Thames is noticeably narrower. Being in need of shelter and sustenance our favourite establishment beckoned. The inn, steeped in history, offered its usual hearty welcome and impeccable food. As on our previous visit the river ran strong and turbid alongside.

My friend had taken brief respite from university lectures in the Midlands – the call of a White-headed Duck having been far too much to ignore.



## FRIENDS OF CLAYFIELD COPSE

November, December, January, February are the busiest times for conservationist volunteers, clearing, coppicing and planting.

November work parties at Clayfield Copse have been widening the ride. Friends and CROW (Conserve Reading on Wednesdays) have been cutting out sycamore and coppicing ash and hazel to let more light in along the path. The Green Gym group have been using the brashing to extend the dead hedge, and CROW have been building logs and brush up as habitat piles.

December work party was clearance at the end of the bridle path opposite Marchwood Avenue, before planting in January. To help out, everyone welcome, first Sunday in the month (January 2nd) meet in the car park, by the RBC truck at 10 a.m.

By the by – there is a group of wych elm towards the eastern end of the ride on the south side, Dutch Elm disease seems to have missed them, worth looking out for, though difficult to identify at this time of year.

Date for your diary, next year at Clayfield & Blackhouse Woods, A Woodlands Activity Day Saturday, 17th June 2000. All kinds of traditional woodland crafts will be on show with opportunities for you to try some of them.

Contact Judith Oliver 947 8920

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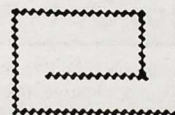
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