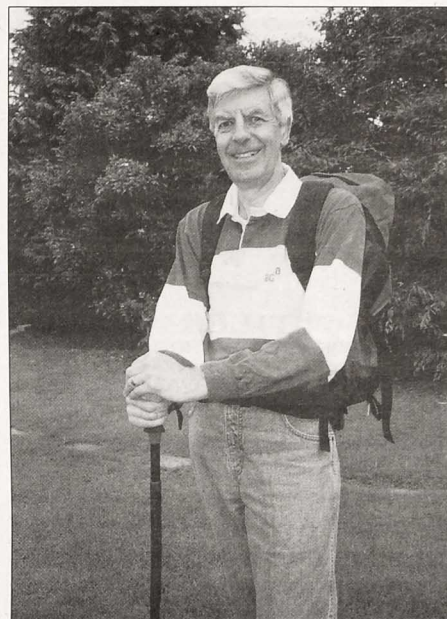


THREE PEAKS CHALLENGE

– *benefitting Children's Aid Direct*

There have been many athletic feats during this Olympic year, not all of which have achieved the same glamour as those which occurred in Sydney. Among our unsung heroes is Emmer Green resident Graham Fuller, who earlier in the year took part in the BG Energy Challenge. BG International, the Reading based multinational energy company, promoted this event which was a three peaks mystery challenge between energy companies to raise money for the Reading charity Children's Aid Direct. The objective was for each member of the teams of seven to walk up and down one peak in each of Scotland, England and Wales within a 24 hour time period. Twenty-six teams participated in the event, two coming from the BG International and seven from the BG Group.



Graham Fuller.

– O. Jewiss

Beinn Dorain

Graham Fuller, in his early fifties one of the oldest competitors, was the map reader for his team. The walk started from the rendezvous point at Bridge of Orchy in Scotland, the staggered start for his team being at 6.30 pm on a Friday evening in mid-June. The first task was to climb Beinn Dorain, a 1,096 m peak in the Grampian range north of Glasgow. All went well until half way up when the team was shrouded in mist making it difficult to find the way. Despite this, the ascent and descent were completed by 11 pm. An uncomfortable night was spent trying to sleep in a people carrier, while the team was driven to a motorway café near its next climbing point in the Lake District. (Each team had two drivers.)

Great Gable

These events are carefully managed by the Institute of Fund Raising Managers. Their code of practice ensures that the events are spread through the year, and that not all of those wanting to engage in such activities turn up on the same day. Walkers on these challenges are not allowed to start their day in the Lake District before 6 am, thus allowing the locals to have at least some peace and quiet. On a clear and sunny morning the

walkers set off to climb Great Gable, a mere 899 m, a task achieved by 10 am.

Carnedd Moel-Siabod

It was already getting hot when they climbed back into the people carrier for Dolwyddelan in North Wales. By the time they arrived it was 32 °C, the hottest day of the year. The new objective was Carnedd Moel-Siabod, a lesser peak of 872 m close to Snowdon. Despite the heat the ascent and descent were completed by 7 pm (because an earlier start than 6 am is not permitted in the Lake District, this is still regarded to be within the 24 hours allowed). Tired and weary the team had completed its challenge and rested for the night in an hotel in Llanberis.

£160,000 for Children's Aid Direct

The two BG International Teams raised £42,000; Graham's sponsorship was for £1,040 and he is most grateful to all who supported him on this venture. The BG Foundation which supports charities matched the money raised by the walkers and a total of £160,000 was given to Children's Aid Direct. Not only was the event successful financially but it was the first such event for five years that had not at some time experienced torrential rain.

Graham told our reporter that he enjoyed the experience, for which he trained by walking and running to work. Graham and his wife Pat are worshippers at Park United Reformed Church but are known in Emmer Green through running a Fair Trade stall at St Barnabas Church once a month and on occasion a Fair Trade 'fashion show' in Emmer Green.



– Andrew Sansom

Our photos show our local walker, Graham Fuller, ready for action and three of the team approaching the top of Great Gable; Graham is on the right.

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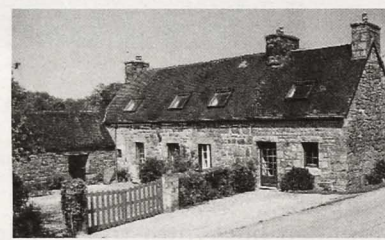
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TALKING POINT
By HOWARD BALLARD
of Caversham (Gosbrook Road)
Methodist Church

HOW SELFISH IS SOCIETY?

Something tells me that a talking point should be controversial, as that makes the reader think. This month, too, is set to be controversial, as with November comes the Budget. Traditionally we all listen in with one thought in mind - how will it affect me? But this time comes the extra tension of wondering what the government will do about fuel tax. Will we be thrust back into the chaos suffered in September as filling Stations ran dry or, equally dangerously, will the price of fuel drop?

What would really be gained by a small drop in petrol tax? A cheaper journey to work, reduction in food costs because of the reduced transportation costs? Or just the ability of the petrol companies to put their portion of the price up to approach £1 per litre? And then what? Will the masses complain to the government again, staging protests and disrupting the nation's business demanding further cuts?

Surely, September's demonstrations highlighted the selfishness of society and our unwillingness to accept authority when the result does not suit us. Yes, they brought out a number of other issues too. Strangely the protests are an indictment against HM Opposition (since if they were effective they would have championed the cause rather than requiring public demonstrations. To whom else do people return?)

Also the ensuing chaos must be a comment on our public transport system and our recent development of infrastructure which is so heavily reliant on road transport. We have seen the growth, spurred on by greed and profit, of out of town shopping centres and business parks, which, for our convenience, we choose to drive to.

But largest of all is the comment on the selfish and arrogant nature of our society. We enjoy sitting in our cars because it gives us a sense of control and security. It is also very convenient, and we defend our "need" for it vigorously, it is a statement of our independence. But we confuse the sense of our uniqueness and individuality with importance. The claims at petrol pumps to special needs, the inability to admit that some needs are greater than others and the refusal to sacrifice the chance of fuel to enable urgent services to continue, are just examples. One claimed her importance to be first in the queue when many were remembering sacrifice made by many young pilots 60 years ago in the Battle of Britain. Perchance whilst we remember the dead of two world wars this month other will be claiming on the forecourts their right to be lazy! We should remember too that protesters, driven by self interest, do so against the advice and pleas of both representative associations and industry not to strangle the country's prosperity and jeopardise large numbers of jobs.

In all we do we must remember we are part of society and what we do affects those around us. We live on a small island with approaching 20m vehicles and real problems of pollution and congestion. The petrol shortage in September at least made many seriously consider if we needed our car for the journey. Are we too selfish, too lazy to walk a mile to the shops or make our children walk to school or take the bus? Leaving the car behind could well do us good. It is not just cars and petrol, but our general lack of humility. We all get annoyed at being kept waiting.

The wider issue is how much are we willing to sacrifice our comforts, pleasures or opportunities to improve the lot of others, or their long term future, or just maintain the fabric of society? Or do we live in too much of an instant society to be interested in anything where we cannot see the effect immediately? Wouldn't it be good to listen to the chancellor's speech wondering how it will improve our whole world and the lot of all those in it? And wonder how we can improve the environment rather than exploit it?

Note: Howard Ballard is a Methodist Local (Lay) Preacher.

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

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All contributions for December issue should be sent to Church House, by noon on Wednesday November 1.
All advertising copy should be sent to Mrs S. Lobbey, 15 Albert Road, Caversham by Tuesday October 31.
The dates for January will be Tuesday November 21 and Wednesday November 22.

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 2788
Rev Derek Chandler, 20 St Barnabas Road. Tel: 947 8239.
Rev Philip Dallaway, The Vicarage, St John's Road.
Tel: 947 1814
Rev Cathy Pynn, 21 Ridge Hall Close. Tel: 947 6065
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Rev John Ellis, 18 Peppard Road, Sonning Common
Tel: 972 3418

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SUNDAY SERVICES

ANGLICAN

St Peter's
8.00am Holy Communion
9.15am Parish Communion
11.15am Matins
6.30pm Evensong

St John's
8.00am Holy Communion
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
11.30am 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)
8.00pm Worship and Wonder (2nd Sunday)

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Woodcote Parish Church
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11.00am Divine Worship
6.00pm Evening Service

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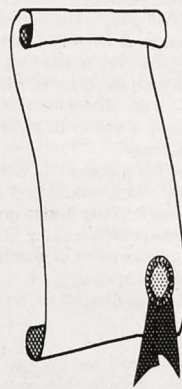
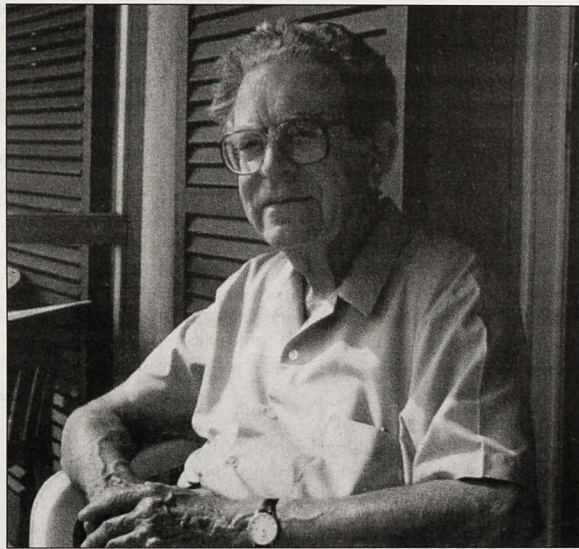
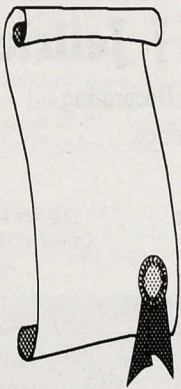
WINNIE DARTER

Many readers of the Caversham Bridge News will remember a column which appeared each month in this paper many years ago, written by Katy of Caversham. Katy was Winnie Darter who lived in Cromwell Road and worshipped at St Peter's Church. Those who remember her articles will be saddened to hear that she has recently died after a long illness in a nursing home in Wokingham.

Winnie was an early member of the Board of this newspaper and wrote regularly about Caversham news. Whenever or wherever there was something afoot, Winnie was there. When a new shop or business opened, or sadly closed down, she was there to welcome or bid farewell, and in the next issue we heard all about it. She took an intense interest in the community. Many will have good reason to thank her for her kindness often making newcomers feel at home and she was always so cheerful.

The Board of the Caversham Bridge extend their deepest sympathy to her family. *A full tribute will be published in our next issue.*

KEN BENNETT



The funeral was held at St Peter's Church, Caversham on Thursday 14 September, of Ken Bennett, longstanding Rotarian and, until recently, Chairman of the Sue Ryder Home at Nettlebed.

Born in Yorkshire, Kenneth Perrin Bennett, who died on 4 September aged 74, had moved to Caversham in 1972, when Harris Lebus, the furniture manufacturers of which he became Finance Director and later Managing Director, moved to Woodley from North London. Mr Bennett had started with the company in 1954, having previously been in practice as a Chartered Accountant in Southampton. He had joined the Royal Navy on his 18th birthday in 1943 and served in various war zones, including the Far East, before leaving in 1946.

Besides having a distinguished career in financial management Ken Bennett also served the community faithfully, notably as Churchwarden of St Peter's, Caversham, where he and his wife Doreen were committed and active members. He was Honorary Auditor and Honorary Treasurer of various bodies, including Caversham Rotary, of which he had also been President. In 1978 Mr Bennett had become a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers, and was honoured by being made a Freeman of the City of London. He and his wife travelled extensively, including to Africa where their son Mark was engaged in creating computer systems in Zambia and other countries, and to Borneo, where their daughter Liz is engaged in managing zoological projects for the New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society.

After the takeover of Harris Lebus in 1979, Ken Bennett was appointed European Financial Controller of Tonka Toys in Henley-on-Thames. When he retired he continued his charity work, particularly as Honorary Treasurer at the Sue Ryder Home, later being appointed its Chairman, bringing what was described by Canon Richard Kingsbury, who conducted the funeral service, as "inestimable benefit" to that worthy care centre.

To a very full congregation, which included Mr Bennett's widow, son, daughter and two grand-daughters and many who had travelled far to attend the service, Canon Kingsbury said "Ken Bennett had a special eye for anyone needing a welcome or a word or deed of support - he gave tirelessly of his time and skills with indefatigable energy, wit, integrity and gracious charm, always attributing his 'plus points' to his dear wife, Doreen."

Flowers were from the family only, donations being made to the Sue Ryder Home, Nettlebed, through A B Walker & Son.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors,

As you will remember, in May the Emmer Green Residents' Association held an exhibition of the area, with financial support from the Millennium Festival Awards for All, and this was covered in the July edition of the Caversham Bridge. A number of visitors to the exhibition asked if a book would be published on the material displayed at the exhibition and we are now in the process of seeking a further grant to enable a book to be published.

We still have many gaps in our record of the Emmer Green area, particularly matters relating to the last 50 years when so much has changed. For example, we would like to hear from people who attended local schools and would be especially interested if they have school class photographs or pictures of sports events or other celebrations. We would also like to hear from anyone who can recall the celebrations for the Coronation in 1953. There was a big party in the park and again if residents have photographs of the celebrations we would be very pleased to see them. If anyone can help please contact any member of the Residents Association.

Paul Gallagher (Chairman)

MACMILLAN CANCER RELIEF

WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING 29.9.2000

The Organisers of the Coffee Morning held at The Bowling Club Pavilion in Albert Road, Caversham, would like to thank all those who attended, and are pleased to say that a sum of £427.55 was raised for this worthwhile cause.

CAVERSHAM THEATRE

Caversham Theatre regrets that circumstances beyond their control forced the cancellation of the October production of Dead Guilty, and apologises for any disappointment caused. Details of the next production, in March, will be announced shortly. We look forward to your continued support.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

Contributors to the **January** issue of the Caversham Bridge are reminded that copy should be sent to the Parish Office by **Wednesday November 22nd**.

SERVICE TO REMEMBER LOVED ONES

On Thursday, November 2nd at 8pm there will be a special service at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Woodcote Road, for all who have been bereaved, to come and remember the loved ones from whom they have been parted. The service will be led by the Reverend Rosemary Fletcher.

WANTED!

A volunteer Distribution Manager for the *Caversham Bridge* is urgently needed for the Upper Woodcote Road area of Mapledurham/Caversham Heights. Could YOU spare A COUPLE OF HOURS EACH MONTH to parcel up copies of the *Caversham Bridge* and then take them to the street distributors?

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RESIDENTS' VIEWPOINT
By Watchdog**CAVERSHAM FOR EATING**

What was formerly the Nue Valbonne Night Club is being turned into a restaurant and an upmarket one at that, so we are told. The Nue Valbonne was originally intended as a Club for older people but rapidly became a Mecca for teenagers who didn't know their drinking capacity and thought that anyone who wanted to be in bed before the early hours must be slightly peculiar and not worth considering.

The owners of the new restaurant (still unnamed at the time of writing) must be well aware of the reasons for their predecessors' unpopularity and will presumably avoid going the same way themselves.

Caversham is rapidly becoming the eating place of Reading. I estimate you could eat out somewhere different every day for at least three weeks, and if you include Caversham Road, for a month.

OPEN SPACES

Another thing Caversham is not short of is open spaces. A recent issue of this newspaper carried accounts of the open day at Clayfield Copse. View Island, recently restored and open to the public is another. It is approached across an excellent new bridge. The island has been tidied up rather than tamed, good use being made of its natural features. There are strategically placed seats and fallen trees have been carved into appropriate shapes, one being the wonderful old man. If you do not live close enough to walk there it is always possible to park in the George Street car park from where it is only a short walk to View Island.

Another open space is Balmore Walk. A walk along there offers good views over Reading. The controversial path along there which can take cyclists has done little to urbanise it, although for part of its length the gravel could have been a little less bright in colour. It enables people to walk along it in winter and prevents the grass from being worn out over a wider area as people seek to avoid muddy patches. As for hoards of cyclists, I met one when walking along the whole length and she was riding in a very sedate way.

Likewise the controversial statuary and sculpture has not suddenly urbanised the whole area. There is so far only one piece and that is in metal. Whether it is liked or not is a matter of individual taste but it is interesting and can lead to much discussion.

Another piece ofwell what? Sculpture, architecture, and artwork? Take your choice. Well, whatever it is, it cost quite a bit and is to be found beside the river between Reading Bridge and the Mill (as was) on the north bank. The nearest thing I can think of its looking like is the Coronation Chair, only it is in yellow stone. It is of course covered in graffiti, and abhorred as this is, there is a sneaking sympathy with the perpetrators. It is difficult to see how this adds to the riverside amenities, but perhaps this just shows up my Philistinism.

BARBARIANS

The original Vandals were the last and most destructive of the barbarians, as the Romans thought of them as being, who attacked the mighty Roman Empire which had existed for so many centuries that it must have been considered the norm. Today's vandals seem to have the same intentions as they methodically damage the environment. There is evidence that it is methodical rather than spontaneous, and that Caversham is being deliberately targeted. The newly painted Bridge has been repeatedly attacked. It is difficult and costly to remove graffiti and the last attempt to paint over it has left it still visible.

In Caversham Court the stone coping round the edge of the pond and rhododendron garden has been prised up and even more sadly, the gnomon on the sundial which commemorates the early death of a loved daughter has been pulled off.

Can't these people read and see what the sundial was put there for? Probably no, as they were most likely school 'dropouts'. Our academically based education simply passes them by. But we must not allow the vandals to win. Look what happened to Rome.

CRIME

The latest crime figures continue to show that, contrary to the common impression, Caversham is in the lowest position for reported crime in the town. The less privileged are not pouring over the bridge to steal from the better off; instead they are stealing from each other. The chief crime in Caversham is car based, either theft from a vehicle (lock your valuables out of sight) or "unauthorised taking". Lock and in some other way, immobilise your car. The other car based crime is 'driving away without payment', ie of petrol, and Buckingham Drive is the main victim. It is easier to get away fast from there than from most of the other stations.

Criminal damage to cars is often the result of a botched attempt to steal it or to steal from it. Car owners can do much to protect their vehicles (probably their most expensive purchase after their house) even though the determined thief will often achieve his end. Cost apart, the inconvenience is a great trial. Stolen cars are often found but usually damaged in some way. The car has become such an essential piece of equipment for so many, that the philosophy is, if you can't afford one, steal it.

LIBRARY

Nothing so far has been done to put right the mistakes that led to the demolition of the listed wall round Caversham Library. What is meant to be a grassy area has become a muddy patch, usually litter strewn or accommodating a shopping trolley, not always from the same supermarket. Caversham Centre has been tidied up and repaved to celebrate the Millennium, but this particular patch is left looking totally neglected.

In addition the cheap looking aluminium tubular railings have been left, a case of spoiling the ship for a h'a'p'orth of tar. Surely the money could have been found for something better for this prominent site.

CRABBED YOUTH & AGE

Cllr Pugh is reported as saying eighteen is too young to be a councillor. He feels they cannot have had enough experience. Most eighteen year olds who aren't up to their necks in exams, probably can think of more exciting things to do than be a councillor. However, those few who would like to must be keen and would bring a new dimension to local politics. Do I hear a rush to seek nomination?

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LOCAL HISTORY IN FLOWERS

The Caversham and District Flower Club celebrated its 25th anniversary and the Millennium in late September by holding a flower festival with a historical flavour in St Barnabas Church. The floral artists depicted in an imaginative way many facets of local history that complemented the Emmer Green Exhibition held in Highdown School over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend.

The origins of Emmer Green

Festival Designer, Mrs Irene Manson, had thoroughly researched the local history before designing the floral exhibits to illustrate it. These were presented under the title "A Lake Beside a Stream", the meaning of the Old Saxon word 'eamere', from which many think the name of Emmer Green is derived; the present Emmer Green pond may well have been the lake and the stream the Swilley that used to run down from the pond to Caversham alongside Rotherfield Way. This was depicted in flowers and foliage complete with pool just inside the church. Others think that Emmer Green may have had a more agricultural derivation related to the name of the ancient wheat, emmer, grown by the Egyptians and brought over to England by the Celts and we were reminded of that too.

Existing and former heritage

Caversham Grove, where Highdown School now is, used to be the residence of Frederick Saunders, Chairman of the Great Western Railway; there was a subtle reminder of this fact in the Caversham Grove display with a model of a typical Great Western steam locomotive emerging from among the flowers drawing attention to this Grade II listed building. The Golf Club, Surley Row Conservation Area, Caversham Park Monitoring Station, Village Life and the Local Pubs were all there, as were memories of the former children's home of St Benet's, and the Physic Garden.

The church

The Virgin Mary and the life of St Barnabas were represented on either side of the altar, cushions of flowers shaped like kneelers lined the communion rail



Mrs Joy Boddington (Chairman) [on the left], Mrs Irene Manson (Festival Designer) and Mrs Pat Williams (Festival Chairman) were photographed alongside the exhibit illustrating village life.

and the Floral Designs of the 1920s were displayed around wedding scenes in the chancel. The overseas mission link of the church with the South African Amajuba Education Trust was graphically displayed in flowers and with medical and other professional accoutrements. A striking feature of St Barnabas Church is the incorporation of lilies in the glass at the top of each of the nave windows, a theme taken up by sensitively placing lilies on the ledges between each of the windows and attaching yet more lilies on shaped boards suspended from the architectural cross ties on both sides down the length of the nave.

Music with flowers

As part of the celebration the Festival aimed to share the financial proceeds between the Churches in Reading Drop-in-Centre, St Barnabas Church and the Flower Club itself. To this end there was a special preview evening on the Friday night and a concert on the Saturday night. Local artists, ranging from Jonathan Cray on the euphonium, Simon Gray (baritone), Sally de Freitas (soprano), to Old Nick and the Heavens Jazz Band, provided a satisfying evening of varied music to a sizeable audience.

Caversham and District Flower Club

In a speech of thanks on the opening night Mrs Joy Boddington, the Chairman of the Caversham and District Flower Club, gave special thanks to the score or more sponsors of the event, drawn from the commercial world and private individuals, for their invaluable help. The Flower Club, Festival Designer and Mrs Pat Williams, Chairman of the Flower Festival Committee, are to be congratulated on an excellent event which resulted in arguably the best floral display in the church in recent memory. Any person interested in floral art is welcome to come to the club evenings; they meet on one Thursday evening a month in St Andrew's Hall. Further details may be obtained from either Mrs Joy Boddington (Tel: 947 3547) or Mrs Pat Williams (Tel: 948 1489). The club is linked with the National Association of Flower Arranging Societies of Great Britain, whose regional President was present on the opening night.



St Barnabas - his life and works. Sponsored by James & Cowper and executed by Jackie Leight.

Photos: O. Jewiss

Forthcoming Concerts

There is a wide range of music to be heard this autumn in the Caversham area, both orchestral and choral.

On Sunday November 12th the Langtree Orchestral Society are holding their concert at Langtree School, Woodcote at 7.00pm. The programme includes Greig's *Holberg Suite* and *Symphony in C* by Bizet. There is also a Fanfare and Woodwind Ensemble. The conductor is Paul Fox. Tickets cost £6 (concessions £4) and can be obtained from 'Inspirations', 1 The Arcade in Goring or 0118 947 6291 or at the door.

There is a performance of Handel's *Oratorio Saul* on Saturday December 2nd at Caversham Heights Methodist Church at 7.30pm, given by the Reading Haydn Choir. Tickets are available at the door and cost £8 (concessions £6.60).

For the past couple of years the South Chiltern Choral Society has had the idea of setting its Christmas concerts in different parts of the world and exploring the music of the

region. This year they come home and every item is English. There are two substantial pieces, the first the much-loved *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* by Vaughan Williams. The baritone soloist is Christopher Foster who will throw in a few Christmas Pops too. The other piece is a *Magnificat* by Howard Goodall who is better known as the composer of the music for *The Vicar of Dibley*, *Mr Bean* and *Black Adder*. The rest of the concert features other English music and as usual there will be a primary school in attendance (this year from Yatendon) as well as plenty of opportunities for the audience to join in with old favourites.

An Old Christmas will be presented at Chiltern Edge School, Sonning Common on Saturday December 16th at 7.30pm and on the following day at 2.30pm. Tickets will be available from mid November at £6 (concessions £4) from Freda Miller on 0118 986 2016 or any member of the Society

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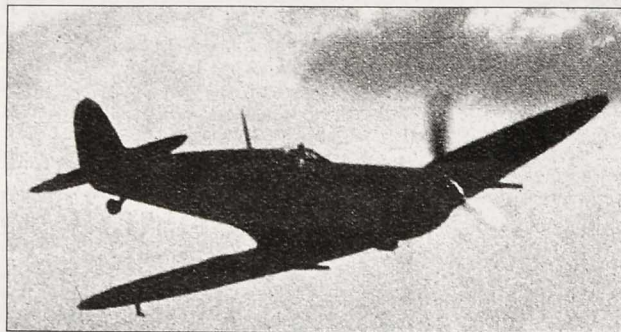
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J.P. MOTORS
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My grandson asked me "What was life like in London during the Blitz, Grandad?". So I told him, and then thought that some of these experiences could be of interest to readers of "The Bridge".

When war broke out in September 1939 London's air raid precautions, or ARP, were well advanced. I had started work as a junior clerk in the Treasurer's Department at Hammersmith's new Town Hall, the construction of which had only been completed in July that year. Hammersmith's Town Clerk was the Borough's ARP Controller, and in charge of all the borough's air raid precautions, his first job being to arrange for the distribution of gas masks to everyone, man, woman or child, within the borough's boundaries.

Then came the setting up, and employment of staff to man the various depots in the borough for both the Heavy and the Light Rescue Services, several First Aid Posts, about thirty ARP Wardens' Posts, a separate mortuary for the Civilian War Dead, and an overall Control Centre, all these units being manned round the clock, 24 hours a day, by three 8 hourly shifts.

The Control Centre was housed in the reinforced basement under the Town Hall main entrance steps, and was manned by a team of girl telephonists supervised by the Duty Control Officer, usually a member of the regular Town Hall staff. Direct telephone lines had previously been laid to all the outlying posts as well as to the LCC (London County Council) local Ambulance Station, and to the local Fire Station which was a part of the LCC London Fire Service and Auxilliary Fire Service, and to the two local Police Stations.

The main Heavy Rescue and Light Rescue units had been integrated with the Council's Transport Depot with further Rescue Units being based in a former LCC Remand Home for Children (its original inmates having been evacuated to the country on the outbreak of war). One of several First Aid Posts had been set up on the ground floor of the Queen Charlotte Maternity Hospital. Hammersmith had a further three hospitals - the Hammersmith Hospital, the West London and the Royal Masonic.

The thirty or so ARP Wardens' Posts in the borough had an overall staff of 300 Wardens, each of them

being paid weekly by cheque, each cheque having to be manually written, and then individually signed by the Borough Treasurer. All of the other ARP services staff were paid weekly in cash which sometimes meant the wages clerk getting to work by 6am in order to pay the ARP staff who would be coming off shift at 7am.

The borough's open air swimming pool, closed down at the end of the summer season, became the main mortuary for the bodies of people killed in the air raids. Trenches had been dug and sandbagged over to form community air raid shelters in the local parks and open spaces. These were supplemented, after the bombing started, with brick and concrete shelters being erected in a number of minor side streets. Each householder was offered, free of cost, a corrugated iron Anderson shelter erected in the back garden. Later when the bombing intensified many people took refuge on the platform or the steps leading down to the Shepherds Bush Tube station.

At night there were no street lamps as these would have been visible from the air, and most people would take a hand torch with them when they went out to visit one of the many cinemas or pubs, or to visit friends. The headlamps of all cars, lorries, motor cycles, and pushbikes were masked over so that only a thin slit of light was shown, about three inches by half an inch for a car's main headlight! Personally I felt safer then walking London's streets in the pitch black dark than I ever have since, and that despite the falling bombs!

One night I was out walking when I heard the whistling of a bomb falling so I threw myself flat on the ground close up to a brick wall and waited. The bomb exploded and bricks, lumps of concrete, and shards of glass fell all around me. A mechanic from a garage opposite came to my rescue and took me into his garage where he gave me a steaming hot mug of tea - that tea was good. But that's how folk were then - all for one and one for all. We could do with a lot more of that spirit today!

Finally back to another question from my grandson - "How old were you then, Grandad?". "Sixteen" I replied. We had to grow up quickly then!



Wood recalls two aspects of his the Second World War

MEMORIES OF THE REAL "DAD'S ARMY"

– The Home Guard in West London 1940/42

With the evacuation of allied troops from Dunkerque in June 1940 it was evident that the invasion of Britain by the Germans was imminent so Prime Minister Winston Churchill ordered the War Office to set up an organisation of civilian male volunteers aged between 17 and 65 for the defence of their own local areas. Originally called the Local Defence Volunteers or LDVs, they were subsequently renamed the Home Guard. Hammersmith council decided to set up its own Hammersmith Town Hall Sub Unit which became part of the 7th County of London Battalion of Local Defence Volunteers. All male members of the Council's staff, both officers and manual workers, were urged to join, and despite being under age I was duly enlisted. Our sub unit was split into two, the manual workers, and dustmen employed by the Council's refuse collection contractor formed one part based at the Council's Works Depot whilst the other half of office workers and councillors was based in the Town Hall.

There were four sections in our unit, each comprising ten men and a section sergeant. Our training took place in the school hall and playground of the Latymer Boys School, a short distance from the Town Hall, the whole school having been evacuated to the country on the outbreak of war in 1939. Initially we had no uniforms but were provided with a khaki armband on which the letters "L D V" had been printed in black, and this was worn on the left upper arm. We had no weapons either, apart from a couple of .22 calibre sporting rifles we had been given. Instead some of the Council's carpenters had made some dummy wooden rifles and poles for us and we were able to carry out parade ground arms drill.

As the Town Hall also housed the area's Civil Defence Control Centre it was essential that the building be provided with a 24 hour guard.

The several different entrances were all closed and blocked apart from the south west door which was heavily fortified with sandbags. To provide the 24 hour guard a rota was drawn up.

Perhaps here I should emphasize the local importance of the Town Hall – it housed stocks of identity cards and ration books for food whilst the Control Centre had telephone links to the area's ARP Wardens' Posts, First Aid Posts, Heavy and Light Rescue units, local hospitals, and the police, fire, and ambulance services – in short the Control Centre was the Borough's nerve centre.

After some weeks our rifles arrived and these were .300 calibre Canadian Ross, being stocks held by Canada after World War 1. These were followed by a .303 Bren gun, a solitary Thompson sub-machine gun, and a .50 Browning Automatic carbine. Months later we also received supplies of the Sten gun, and a Piat mortar.

It was some little time before we were provided with a khaki battledress, side cap, army boots and respirator, leather gaiters and belt, canvas webbing to support two canvas ammunition pouches each capable of holding two clips of five rifle bullets, a steel helmet, and an army greatcoat (very useful on bitterly cold nights!) Around the

time we got our uniforms the LDVs became the Home Guard and we had shoulder "flashes" with Home Guard above and "LON 7" below denoting the 7th County of London Battalion. We also had a cap badge – that of the King's Royal Rifle Corps.

Apart from arms drill and stripping and re-assembling our weapons we also made several visits on Sundays to Bisley for live rifle shooting, and grenade throwing and the practical use of the "sticky" bombs. These were a bulbous glass flask with a long neck, the bulb being filled with explosive and a detonator fitted with a long neck, the bulb being filled with explosive and a detonator fitted into the glass neck. The bulb was then coated with a very sticky substance which was encased in a two piece metal cover which was spring loaded and removed before it could be used. The idea was to creep up to an enemy tank, and having removed the metal cover, to smash the bulb against the tank and run like hell before the bomb exploded! We also had live firing of Mills bombs from a mortar cup affixed to the muzzle of a rifle.

At 6pm each evening the guard was mounted on the main entrance. We also had a heavily sandbagged observation post on the Town Hall roof, which was manned by two guards throughout the night with telephone links to the guardroom and to the ARP Control Centre. The roof observation post was extremely useful when the bombing started. During the daylight air raids the office staff would take refuge in the shelters whilst the Home Guard section on duty would man the observation post and report the sighting of any incendiary or high explosive bombs landing as well as aerial mines dropped by parachute. With the bombing at night we would report to the Control Centre where we thought bombs had landed and I well remember the night the Waring & Gillows Furniture Depository went up in flames, an ideal target for incendiary bombs.

A fair number of incendiary bombs fell on the Town Hall roof and ignited which the roof guard tackled with stirrup pumps and sandbags. The first bombs just burned up but later ones included a small explosive charge which burst after the magnesium outer casing was well alight and scattered the burning pieces still further afield. Even today if one walks around the Town Hall roof you can still see in the concrete paving slabs circular indentations about the size of an old 50p piece with two deeper points inside the circle where the striker pins of the fuse had hit. Each morning at daylight the guards on roof duty would search the whole of the roof area for unexploded incendiaries, pieces of shrapnel and nose caps from our own anti aircraft shells some of which I still possess today.

BASEMENT OF SORROW

Our basement is a bomb-shelter
We live there in the night.
My mother sits and weeps,
Her face and fingers white.
I lie myself beside her,
She tries to keep me warm,
But the cold, damp bricks beneath me
Shiver my freezing form.
Continuous noise assaults me
As bombs explode nearby,
But still I know she's crying
And I always wonder why.
Perhaps it's for my father
– he left our house one day,
And came home in a letter
Died in battle, they say.
Or maybe it's for our friends
Who disappeared one night.
They took their big house with them,
Left only a bomb-site.

Frankie McClure, Year 10,
Queen Anne's School

Note: This poem was written at a Poetry Workshop held at Queen Anne's School in November 1999.



CAVERSHAM POPPY APPEAL 2000

November will see the annual Remembrance appeal and sale of poppies, organised in Caversham by Pauline Palmer. She says "Caversham's appeal is twofold. It is a lovely place to live in and despite many changes in recent years it still retains its village atmosphere and community spirit. This is why Poppy Appeal collections in Caversham are always so good. We want to make the 2000 collection extra special and that is why I ask you all to 'buy locally' and help us help those who really need our assistance."

She points out that in every year bar one in the last century at least one member of the services was killed or injured on active service.

You can buy your poppies in Caversham from: doctors' surgeries, schools, garages, pubs, house-to-house collectors and other outlets from 28th October until 11th November and also Caversham and Emmer Green shopping precincts on 10th and 11th November.

Pauline Palmer would be grateful for any help you can give whether collecting or some other way. Why not call her on 947 5345; just one hour of your time could make a difference.



Local Defence Volunteers on parade early in the war.

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AROUND THE CHURCHES**CAVERSHAM'S NEW DEACON
ORDAINED**

Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, was packed on the evening of Saturday, 30 September for the ordination of Margaret Dimmick as deacon, in company with nine other ordinands from Berkshire, by the Rt Revd Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford. Husband Robert and grown up children, Juliet and Michael, together with other family, members of Caversham Park Ecumenical Church and friends, had earlier travelled to Oxford by double decker bus. Because of the small size of the Cathedral, ordinations are now split; a further ordination service was held on the Sunday for ordinands from Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. This allows those being ordained to invite more supporters. Also the cathedral authorities, mindful of the difficulties of a College Chapel doubling as a Cathedral, have installed television screens so that more people may see something of the action.

Ordination

The Revd Dr James Woodward in his sermon urged those to be ordained to be themselves and reminded them that the role of a deacon is to be of service to others. The act of ordination, by the laying on of hands by the Bishop, was followed by the training vicars (tutors) robing the new deacons with a stole placed over the left shoulder diagonally across the body, thus signifying their office. The stole symbolises the towel used by Jesus to dry the disciples' feet. The Bishop then presented each of the new deacons with a New Testament. Participation in Holy Communion by the congregation followed, a practice common to all Anglican ordination services. After the service there was a great excited mingling when the new deacons and their supporters exchanged greetings in Christ Church's Tom Quad as darkness fell.

- and Licensing

The second part of this memorable weekend took place on the Sunday when at Caversham Park Church there was a celebration of Margaret Dimmick's ordination as deacon. The Revd Nigel Hardcastle, Margaret Dimmick's training vicar, explained to the ecumenical congregation the role of a deacon in the Church of England, read Margaret's licence as a deacon in the Parish of St Peter and St Margaret and to Caversham Park Church in particular; the licence was signed by Margaret. The Revd Cathy Pynn, deputising for the Revd Graham Lynch-Watson who was unable to be present because of illness, preached, drawing on her own relatively recent experience of ordination. After the service the local congregation sat down to a shared lunch, together with the members of the Local Ministry Development Group which has been so important in Margaret's training for the Ordained Local Ministry.

Correction: In the article about Margaret Dimmick in last month's Caversham Bridge her role in the Churches in Reading Women's Centre was erroneously missed; she is a trustee on their Management Committee. With apologies for the omission.



- O. Jewiss

Our picture shows the Revd Margaret Dimmick with husband Robert and the Revd Nigel Hardcastle outside the cathedral after ordination.

**CHRISTIAN WOMEN
IN CAVERSHAM**

On 21st September women from many of the Caversham churches came together for one of their periodic meetings. This was an occasion for finding the general opinion of a body of people - mainly people over 50 - without any counting or previous discussion allowing a few outspoken women to sway the meeting. Each woman was given 2 cards, a red one which said "YES" and a yellow one which said "NO". As Mr Roy Baxter from St Peter's, Earley, asked questions that could be answered by a simple yes or no we each held up the appropriate card and we could see at a glance what the general consensus of opinion was.

The questions were varied. "Do you think a child ought ever to be smacked?" raised a sea of red cards, while "Should every day start with a good hot meal?" raised a yellow sea. Other questions on e.g. giving Myra Hindley parole, or the provision of condoms in places of learning, or how often the family should meet together for a formal meal were much more controversial and provided material for discussion when, at the end of the question and answer session, we all sat down for our usual tea of scones and cream and jam.

It was a very enjoyable session and we all look forward to our next meeting which will take the form of a Carol Service at Gosbrook Road Methodist Church on Tuesday, 12th December at 2.30pm. Do come and join us if you are free. The tea is free but you may be asked for a small contribution to a Charity.

ST ANDREW'S NEWS

A group from St Andrew's Church, Caversham, visited St Mary's Church at Aldworth on the evening of 19th July. After hearing the colourful history of the church, the oldest part of which is the lower half of the tower, said to date from about the year 1200, Complaine was said, led by Father Keith of St Andrew's. In the picture the group is seen, stood in front of the "Old Yew Tree" which is estimated to be over 1,000 years old.



- Norman Kent

CHRISTMAS FAIRS

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ALFRED WATERHOUSE 1830-1905

The local connection

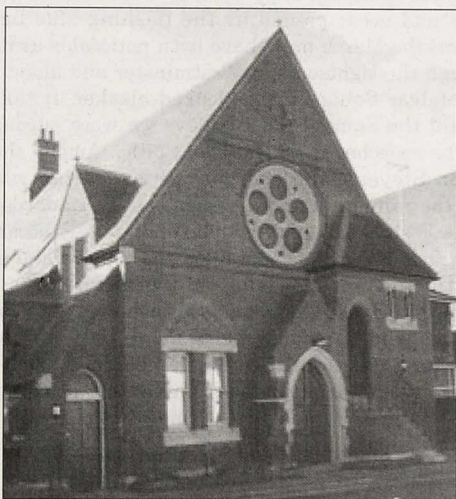
In the time of Queen Victoria Alfred Waterhouse was a nationally famous architect who was responsible for buildings such as the Natural History Museum, Manchester Town Hall, the Prudential Head Office in Holborn and Eaton Hall in Cheshire. He was born in Lancashire and trained in Manchester where he set up his first practice. Throughout his career much of his work came from commissions in the north.

When his family moved south he came to Reading, and created a thriving practice in this area. He designed and had built for his own occupation a house in Whiteknights Road which he named Fox Hill, and this still stands as part of the University Campus. Later he moved his home to Yattendon. Contracts in Reading included the Municipal Offices, Reading School, Leighton Park School, other buildings at Whiteknights and St Bartholomews Church. An interesting small project is the Rising Sun Centre in Silver Street which was built for Mrs Waterhouse as a Temperance Cafe "to encourage people to spend less time in pubs and more in creative activities".

His output was prodigious and he is recorded as being involved in more than four hundred buildings, employing a large staff of assistants on contracts throughout the country, including working on many Oxford and Cambridge College buildings. As well as his architectural skills he was a member of the Royal Academy, exhibiting paintings at the annual displays.

His connection with Caversham began in 1866 when he designed the Free Church in Gosbrook Road and this was followed in 1872 with the schoolroom to the rear which was known as the British School - his fee for this work was £25. In 1877 he designed the present Baptist Church in Prospect Street. In the early church records a Miss Waterhouse is shown a member and it may be that through this link he came to accept what must have been to him a very small commission.

The "Waterhouse" development now being offered in the press consists of 10 apartments at prices from £99,950 to £250,000 and is a conversion of the first church and schoolroom which he designed, and the buildings were originally built at a cost of under £3,000. All credit must be given to the developer and current architect for a very imaginative and skillfully carried out project.



The first Baptist Church in Caversham now converted.

A GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST

It was reported that during the very severe winter 167½ Quarts of Soup had been sold at one penny per Quart; the deficit 6/5 was withdrawn from Balance of Sick Visiting Fund. The trouble of making the Soup had kindly been undertaken by some of our Sisters.
Source - Baptist Church records, February 1889

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Autumn Concerts - For full details see page 5

Church Christmas Fairs - For notices of these see page 8

November 4 St Peter's Wives' Group Autumn Fair in aid of Sue Ryder Home. 9.am in St Martin's Precinct.

November 12 British Legion Remembrance Service 11.00am at War Memorial Christchurch Meadows.

November 18 Bluecoat Swing Band perform at Caversham (Gosbrook Road) Methodist Church at 7.30pm.

PHOTOGRAPHY

BY
Jonathan Farmer

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Autumn Leaves

Scops Owl

Migration is in full swing with daily records of rarities in various parts of Britain. Redwings will soon be heard, especially at night, as thousands arrive from northern Europe.

The most significant event has been a daily influx of Honey Buzzard. It is a little larger

than the Common which breed in West Country and Scotland. Where the latter looks compact as it soars on uptilted wings, reminding one of a pigeon, the Honey soars on slightly longer, flattened wings and with a more protruding head.

The Honey Buzzard usually frequents SE England in small numbers, but up to two hundred have been recorded over many counties. At least one was identified soaring over Caversham.

Swallows and House Martins are still catching insects as they weave their southwards journey to Africa.

Spring migration is good but Autumn rarities tend to remain longer. They are more often seen in coastal areas, being tired after long flights.

The Scilly Isles are now famous for American species in October and have already recorded Bobolink, a plump, streaky-headed sparrow.

The north coast of Norfolk can excel during north-easterly winds, often provided by an Autumn high-pressure system over Scandinavia. The shingle-ridge at Cley coast-guard station is a prime vantage-point.

We were once birding the Quags at Kelling when a younger member of our group pointed quizzically to "trees on Cley shingle-ridge", about four miles distant. Panic stations, the illusion was caused by many highly-organised twitchers. The wind had veered overnight and was bringing good and unusual birds. On arrival, we had just missed a Cory's Shearwater but were in time for the Long-tailed Skua.

Still only twenty-one, the third member of our Team of Three has returned from leading a fourth year birding expedition in South America, having successfully achieved reward for three years reading Law at Cambridge. Another new Wren was discovered and he will soon be away to Philadelphia museums for comparisons of statistics.

A Buff-breasted Sandpiper (North America) recently stayed awhile midway between the Witterings and Selsey. I have seen only one, albeit exceptionally well, on Salthouse Beach in the 1960s. Scooby had not been born and neither had the academic third member of our Team of Three.

Despite a long and thorough search, we found no sign of the rare little bird. Threatening rain eventually became torrentially impossible as time ran out. The Buff-breasted is still around but elusive - that's twitching.

SCOPS OWL

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MEDIAMARCH

BY MARGARET SMITH

Are you concerned about the content of explicit sex, violence and bad language in the media? Do you think it is possible to curb the inexorable decline in standards? Are you disheartened by the enormity of the task?

This Autumn many people were asked to sign the MediaMarch petition. That was easy to do. But actually to go to London for the March on 16 September . . . What was the point? In the shadow of the fuel tax revolt, with road traffic at a standstill and the government facing a crisis, was this the moment?

At the rallying point, clutching a bunch of white balloons (to represent the innocence of children), I was relieved to find I was not alone. About three hundred people had assembled. Under a cloud of white balloons, supported by a sizeable, vocal Moslem contingent and accompanied by the flashing blue lights of the police escort, the March must have been noticeable as it carved its path through the sightseers at Westminster and along Whitehall. But at Trafalgar Square things looked bleaker. It takes a lot of people to fill the Square and I believe we were outnumbered by pigeons. The speeches were short and pithy. Among the speakers was Steven Stevens, the energetic octogenarian who in 1971 organised the rally to promote higher moral standards called the Nationwide Festival of Light (which subsequently became CARE). On that occasion 31,000 people filled the Square and police were forced to turn people away for safety. Afterwards, a further 80,000 rallied in Hyde Park. Could this ever happen again?

This March is in its infancy, being the initiative of two mothers concerned for their families. Many people express the same concerns so, instead of sitting back and letting it happen, support the March to keep the issue alive. It needs to pick up momentum, to have more impact, to enlist more helpers. The venue is easily accessible, the event is fun and only lasts a couple of hours in all so there is plenty of time to enjoy the rest of the day. The March is for all ages, all faiths and no faiths so why not come along next time to show you care. Then, after the March, come home and spread the word.

The next March, subject to liaising with the police, will be in March. More information is available from MediaMarch, P.O. Box 353, Cheltenham, GL33 7ZQ. Tel: 020 8467 6452. Website: www.mediamarch.org.uk.

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Caversham Community Association

September followed the normal pattern - beginning with a games evening. The following week was the annual arts and crafts evening. The prizes were won by Margaret Cameron, Wendy Colton, Muriel Waite, Joan Aldridge, Beryl Latcham, Betty Colton and June Strudley.

The cup for best photo entry went to Betty Colton. The cup for best flower arrangement went to Margaret Cameron.

The traditional harvest supper was enjoyed by all. After 2 harvest hymns and readings a delicious supper was followed by an auction of the varied produce that had been brought. The month ended with more harvest goodies which were the prizes for the bingo session.



Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

Early September found Guild members coming together again at their annual Garden Party attended by the Federation Chairman Mrs Sylvia Robinson and Committee Member Mrs Marion Parry. The event was again hosted by Mr and Mrs Davies in their beautiful and immaculate Emmer Green garden. A touch of humour was provided by Bill and Ben the flowerpot guardsmen. Traditional games and pastimes filled a sunny afternoon, tea was taken, and £180 was raised with a donation to go to charity. The Federation Chairman gave her thanks for perfect afternoon in an atmosphere of friendship and companionship.

The first Autumn meeting on 12 September gave

opportunity to catch up with dates for the diary. Gardeners met on 28th September. Members took ideas for filling tubs and planters, together with information on the best garden visits they have made.

The Arts and Crafts group met on 21 September to assemble the handmade cards ready for the Autumn Fayre on 7 October.

Words and Music used the theme of Harvest for an afternoon of Poetry and Prose on 25 September.

Members were informed of and unanimously agreed to the adoption of the new Constitution.

Sadly, it was reported that four members had needed operations during the Summer recess, viz Mrs J Dix, Miss B Brann, Mrs S Gudgion and Mrs E Aldred and cards had been sent.

Berkshire Federation had asked for donations from all guilds towards the replacement cost of about £150 to provide a new Indian Bean Tree for the grounds of St Mary's Butt's Church and this was agreed.

The Speaker Mr N Glover-Wright showed beautiful wildlife slides from Lake Manyara, The Masai Mara and The Serengeti.



Caversham Ladies Club

The month of September was Harvest Festival time and that was the pattern for our meeting on the 14th of the month.

Mrs Phyllis Weston, Vice Chairman, took the meeting in the absence of Mrs Brenda Strong, Chairman. She welcomed members and thanked them for all the garden produce, making the Harvest table look so attractive.

The meeting commenced with the choosing of the Harvest Queen, who

was crowned by the Vice Chairman. This was followed by singing one verse of "We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land".

After business matters were completed, the ever welcome cup of tea was taken, to be followed by the disposal of the harvest produce. Members were reminded that next month's meeting would be the Autumn Fayre.



Link Group News

At the September meeting Rodney Oliver, a practising solicitor specialising in Immigration Law gave an interesting and enlightening talk on the plight of the thousands of immigrants that had been entering Britain by various means since 1992. He spoke of the problems they faced in seeking asylum and proving that they were bona fide cases. Reading has circa 5,000 immigrants of varied nationalities being looked after by Social Services. People willing to help the plight of the refugees should contact The Reading Refugee support Group on 950 5356.

At the meeting in November it is hoped to have a Speaker from the Oxfordshire Hope Centres that provide respite for severely handicapped children. For details please ring Barbara Macrae on 947 0040.



St Peter's Wives' Group

On Tuesday, 18 September Eric Aspden came along to talk to us and show slides on 'Secret Places of London'.

This was a fascinating trip around London, discovering places which are not normally noticed during shopping trips, etc. There are areas just off main thoroughfares such as Oxford Street which are known as 'village London', and

which have a cosy village atmosphere and pavement cafes where you can escape from the hustle and bustle of the busy streets nearby.

The next meeting will be our AGM at Church House on Tuesday, 21 November starting at 8.00pm. This will be followed by a talk by Canon Brian Shenton entitled: "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to

New members always welcome.



Caversham Royal British Legion


October is always a very busy time for the Branch because preparations for the Poppy Appeal Collection have to be well under way so that poppies are available in good time. Rotas have to be made up for house-to-house and street collections but the Branch still managed to have its usual monthly Social on Monday 2nd October. About 70 people attended and a quiz started the evening off. Refreshments went down well before it was eyes down again, this time for Bingo!

The Branch raises money for the Poppy Appeal all through the year, especially from its Social evenings but this time of year the activities for fund-raising concentrate on the more traditional public image of poppy 'selling'.

The Branch also organises the annual Remembrance Parade and Service. Again this year the Parade will start from Westfield Road Park and a Service, conducted by the new Vicar of St. John's, the Rev Philip Dallaway will be held at 11am on Sunday 12th November at the War Memorial by the river in Christchurch Meadows.

The Branch thanks everyone for their support in various ways throughout the year and hopes that as many people as possible will attend the Remembrance Service.

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