

Threat to Greenbelt around Caversham?

The latest edition of Outlook, published by South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) and sent to all householders in its area, reveals that the District is under pressure to allow substantial housing development around its borders.

Because people are living longer - slowing down the turnover of property because households are becoming smaller - needing more housing units, and because more people are moving into the area, there is continuing pressure for more houses to be built. The South-East England Regional Assembly is the regional planning authority. It is a non-elected body comprising a nominated representative from each council in the region plus delegates representing economic, environmental and social interests. It has indicated that it would like to see expansion in two areas in South Oxfordshire, one of which is adjacent to Reading. The Assembly is saying that the Reading area could become a focal point for major expansion.

SODC say that areas like Playhatch and Dunsden Green could be under threat. Because the whole area from Sonning Eye to Tokers Green is not in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (unlike the Mapledurham area) the whole arc across the north and east of Caversham will come under the spotlight because there is no fundamental constraint on its development.

The main impediment at present to such development is the absence of a third bridge over the Thames. As SODC say, there is no point in building more houses if the people living there

do not have easy access to their places of work. They make it quite clear that they will continue to resist a further crossing of the Thames unless that crossing is there solely to support better public transport links. Such a policy will help safeguard land from development and it will stop cars crossing South Oxfordshire as a short cut rather than using the A34/M4 to link to the M40.

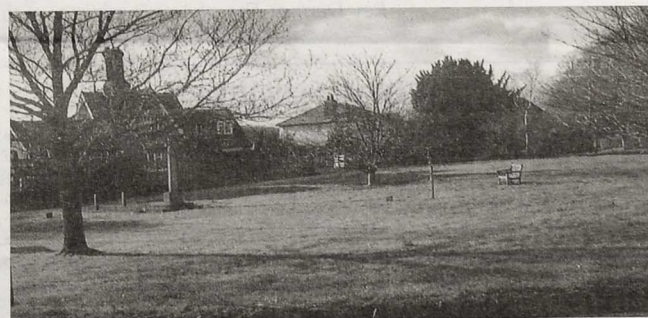
WILL SUCH RURAL SCENES DISAPPEAR?



Field of vegetables at Playhatch.



Field of stubble near Dunsden Green.



Dunsden Village Green.

The article does not indicate the possible number of houses that could be built on Caversham's northern borders but it does say that 5000 houses are proposed around the south-eastern borders of Oxford itself, which would be the equivalent of a town the size of Henley.

It becomes clear that a third bridge across the Thames, at or near Caversham, would have much more far-reaching consequences than alleviating traffic congestion in Caversham. Is it possible that the Caversham hinterland could stretch its borders well into the territory of South Oxfordshire? Could we see a situation similar to that of the mid-seventies when Reading effectively annexed all the built up areas around Caversham, Emmer Green and Caversham Park? Would there also be a need for a northern bypass to Caversham? What route would it take?

Such questions make one realise that any development proposals will be a matter for public concern. No doubt there are those who view encroachment into the green belt with dismay, but there will be others who regard the provision of housing as more important since its availability should alleviate present problems and help to make it easier to provide affordable housing.

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Please note - Offers of help always welcome.

The Caversham Bridge is your paper, providing a link between the churches and the community.

Contributions are welcomed if they are relevant to community matters or church life. Copy should be kept short, typed in double spacing if possible and with a word count. Copy dates are given in the paper each month and copy should be handed in at the Parish Office at Church House, Church Street, Caversham. The office is open 9.30 - 12.30 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please note the Editors reserve the right to edit copy if necessary.

The Caversham Bridge is delivered each month to homes in Caversham. It could be delivered to you for £2.40 per year. If you do not regularly subscribe to the paper and would like to do so, please contact the Parish Office on 947 1703.

TALKING POINT

By

Dermot Thornberry

Beginnings

I arrived in South Africa in 1975 and enjoyed life in the excessive beauty of Cape Town. However, as a restaurant manager I began to experience the more sinister side of life in apartheid South Africa. The restaurant was the subject of pass law raids. If black workers were without a pass permitting them to work in Capetown they were immediately shipped overnight to their designated tribal homeland. There was an Orwellian type response to any protest carried out against these laws. One could find oneself regarded as a social outcast within one's own community graduating to the label of communist and put under house arrest.

I joined an organisation which went into the townships to establish and train locals in setting up blood donation centres. I met Christians who, at enormous risks to themselves, were working against apartheid purely motivated by their desire to imitate the compassion of Jesus Christ. I heard the Rev Peter Storey (Methodist answer to Desmond Tutu) preach without fear against the so called ideology of separate development. I suddenly found integrity in Christianity that I had not known in the turmoil of the Northern Ireland troubles which I was born into in 1950.

I met Charlene through the blood donation projects. We married and had an almost Damascus Road type experience. The new found faith absorbed our lives and I eventually went into training for the ordained ministry after testing a call in Namibia. Working in a rural community in Natal and Pretoria we experienced growing Christian communities. There was particular success with a combination of well produced programmes such as Alpha, Walk to Emmaus and Disciple.

Six years ago we transferred to Yorkshire from the Southern African Connexion. For the first time I heard about the Post-Modernist dilemma, experienced first hand the decline of Christian faith and the hair raising need to look at the way we do Christianity in the 21st century. It is perplexing when you come from a country where Christian communities are on the growth..

In response, the pragmatic "me" claims that the opposing fortunes are the result of our two entirely different social and economic orders. However the spiritual side of me says 'BUT....we worship the same God.' Anyway most of the successful programmes applied in South Africa are sourced in the UK or America. I then ask the question (or is this the naïve me!) 'can we make a difference in our own Christian communities?' It would be interesting for me to dialogue with others on this subject!

Meanwhile I am left wondering which is the greater threatening issue - living under an Orwellian type regime in protest or having to re-think all that we understand in terms of doing and living our Christian faith in the 21st century?

*Rev Dermot Thornberry is minister of the
Methodist Churches in Caversham.*

CAVERSHAM BRIDGE

Contributions for the April 2005 issue of this paper should be sent to the Parish Office, Church House by noon on Wednesday 2nd March. The date for submission of items for the May 2005 issue will be Wednesday 6th April 2005.

All advertising copy for the April 2005 issue should be sent to Mrs Lobley, 15 Albert Road, Caversham, by Tuesday 1st March 2005. For the May 2005 issue the date will be Tuesday 5th April 2005.

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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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 1787

Fr 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, St Peter's Hill**

8.00am Holy Communion

9.45am Parish Communion

6.30pm Evensong

St John's, Gosbrook Road

8.00am The Holy Eucharist

10.00am Parish Eucharist and Sunday School

St Andrew's, Harrogate Road

8.00am The Eucharist

10.00am Parish Eucharist (Sung)

First Sunday, Family Eucharist

11.30am The Eucharist

6.30pm Evening Prayer (as announced)

An up to date list of weekday Services will be found on the Church notice boards.

St Barnabas, Grove Road, Emmer Green

8.00am Holy Communion

10.00am Family Communion (apart

from 2nd Sunday)

10.00am Family Service (2nd Sunday only)

St Margaret's, Mapledurham

11.00am Parish Communion

CAVERSHAM PARK ECUMENICAL PARTNERSHIP

11.00am Holy Communion (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays)

Morning Worship (2nd and 4th Sundays)

All Age Worship (at Festival Times)

CAVERSHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

10.30am Prospect Street

6.30pm Usually at 191 Kidmore Road

CAVERSHAM HILL CHAPEL, Old Peppard Road

10.30am Worship and Ministry, Children's Church

6.30pm Prayer Meeting

THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CAVERSHAM

Caversham Methodist Church (Gosbrook Road)

10.30am and 6.30pm

Caversham Heights, Highmoor Road

9.00am (first Sunday), 10.30am and 6.30pm

Woodcote Parish Church

9.45am (second Sunday)

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Our Lady and St Anne's, Southview Avenue

Saturday 5.30pm,

Sunday 10.00am and 6.30pm

Mapledurham House 6.00pm Mass (last Sunday of the month)

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (Quakers),

Church Street, Reading

10.30am

(House study groups Sept-June Tel: 9475783)

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD, Church Street, Caversham

9.30am Sunday School

11.00am Divine Worship

6.00pm Evening Service

EASTER SERVICES

St Andrew's Caversham Heights

Palm Sunday 20th March (palm crosses at both services)

8.00am Holy Eucharist (*said*)
10.00am Blessing of Palms (*in Church Hall*),
Procession and Sung Eucharist

Monday 21st March

7.30pm Holy Eucharist (*said*) with Homily

Tuesday 22nd March

7.30pm Holy Eucharist (*said*) with homily

Wednesday 23rd March

9.30am Holy Eucharist (*said*)
7.30pm Passover Celebration in Church

Maundy Thursday 24th March

7.30pm Sung Eucharist of the Lord's Supper &
Ceremonies of Washing of Feet, Stripping
of Altar, and Watch of Prayer before the
Altar of Repose (*until the morning*).

Good Friday 25th March

9.30am Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion
(*ending the Vigil from the previous
evening*)

11.00am Family Service, followed by hot cross
buns in Church Hall & Walk to
Mapledurham

Holy Saturday 26th March

9.00pm The Easter Vigil, Service of Light & First
Communion of Easter

Easter Day 27th March

8.00am Holy Eucharist (*said*)
10.00am Family Service with Eucharist (*sung*) &
Blessing of Easter Garden
Communion (*said*)
11.30am
6.30pm Festival BCP Evensong (*sung*) with Address

St Barnabas Emmer Green

Palm Sunday 20th March

10.00am Communion with procession which begins
in the Church Hall

Maundy Thursday 24th March

7.00pm Communion in the context of a meal in the
Church Hall followed by a vigil in the
Church. (Please phone vicar on
947 8239 for more details)

Good Friday 25th March

2.00pm - 3.00pm 'Hymns and Reflections on the Cross'

Easter Day 27th March

5.00am Easter Dawn Communion
8.00am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00am Family Service Sung Communion

St John's Lower Caversham

Palm Sunday 20th March

8.00am Holy Eucharist. (1662)
10.00am Procession, Blessing and Distribution of
Palms. Solemn Reading of the Passion.
PARISH EUCHARIST

Holy Tuesday 22nd March

2.30pm Mothers' Union Holy Eucharist. Study 6 -
'The Final Consummation'. Refreshments
afterwards in Caversham Hall

Maundy Thursday 24th March

10.00am Holy Eucharist.
7.30pm Holy Eucharist. Stripping of the Altars

Good Friday 25th March

2.00pm Hour by the Cross in words and music.
"Words from Calvary"

Easter Day 27th March

8.00am Holy Eucharist (1662)
10.00am PROCESSION AND PARISH EUCHARIST.
Blessing of the Easter Garden and Easter Eggs

St Peter's Caversham

Palm Sunday 20th March - *Palm Crosses at all Services*

8.00am Holy Communion
9.45am Sung Eucharist (procession 9.40am from
Caversham Court)

6.30pm Entry Into Holy Week - choral service

Monday 21st, Tuesday 22nd, Wednesday 23rd March

7.00pm Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday 24th March

9.30am Holy Communion
8.00pm Sung Eucharist followed by Stripping of
and Altar, candlelit Vigil to midnight

Good Friday 25th March

8.00am Holy Communion.
12.00 - 3.00pm Stations of the Cross -
Three Hours Devotion

Easter Day 27th March

8.00am Holy Communion
9.45am Sung Eucharist
6.30pm MAKE POVERTY HISTORY service with
Canon Francis Makambwe of Zambia.
Special liturgy, readings, music and
questions and answers sessions

St Margaret's Mapledurham

Palm Sunday 20th March

11.00am Sung Eucharist (*Palm Crosses*)

Maundy Thursday 24th March

7.30pm (At Trench Green Hall) Fellowship Meal of
the Last Supper (Vigil follows)

Good Friday 25th March

10.30am Good Friday Devotional Service

Easter Day 27th March

11.00am Sung Eucharist

Caversham Baptist Church

Palm Sunday 20th March

10.30am (at South Street) Communion Service
6.30pm (at North Caversham) Youth Service

Maundy Thursday 24th March

7.30pm (at North Caversham) Prayer and Praise
Communion Service

Good Friday 25th March

10.30am United Service at Caversham Methodist
Church, Gosbrook Road

Easter Day 27th March

10.30am (at South Street) All Age Service.
6.30pm (at North Caversham) Evening Service.

Caversham Hill Chapel

Good Friday 25th March

10.30am

Easter Sunday 27th March

10.30am

Caversham Park Church

Good Friday 25th March

11.00am Meditation "At the Foot of the Cross"

Easter Day 27th March

11.00am "Beyond the Cross". Celebration of the
risen Lord. Service includes Holy
Communion

Methodist Church in Caversham

Palm Sunday 20th March

Caversham Methodist Church - (Gosbrook Road)
10.30am All Age Worship, led by Mr Graham Carpenter
6.30pm Evening Worship, led by Mrs June Hardcastle

Caversham Heights Methodist Church -

10.30am Morning Worship, led by Revd Dermot
Thornberry

6.30pm Evening Worship, led by Mr Steven
Devaney

Monday 21st March

Caversham Methodist Church (Gosbrook Road)

8.00 - 8.30pm Joint Service (with Caversham
Heights Methodist Church)
Meditations for Easter week, led by
Revd Dermot Thornberry

Tuesday 22nd March

Caversham Heights Methodist Church

8.00 - 8.30pm Joint Service (with Caversham
Methodist Church)
Further Meditations for Holy Week,
led by Revd Dermot Thornberry

Maundy Thursday 24th March

Caversham Heights Methodist Church

8.00pm Joint Service (with Caversham
Methodist Church)

A *Tenebrae* Service, to include a Silent Communion, led by
Revd Dermot Thornberry

Good Friday 25th March

Caversham Methodist Church (Gosbrook Road)

10.30am United service for Caversham Baptist
and Methodist Churches

Easter Day 27th March

Caversham Methodist Church (Gosbrook Road) -

10.30am Morning worship led by Revd Dr
John Ogden
6.30pm Evening Worship with Holy
Communion, led by Revd Dermot
Thornberry

Caversham Heights Methodist Church -

8.00am Holy Communion led by Revd
Dermot Thornberry
9.00am Easter Breakfast
10.30am All Age Worship with Holy
Communion, led by Revd Dermot
Thornberry
6.30pm Evening Service

Parish of Our Lady and St Anne

Saturday 19th March

5.30pm Vigil Mass

Palm Sunday 20th March

10.00am Mass
5.00pm Stations of the Cross
6.30pm Mass

Maundy Thursday 24th March

8.00pm Solemn Mass of the Lord's Supper
Watching at the Altar of Repose till
Midnight

Good Friday 25th March

9.00am Morning Prayer of the Church
12.00 noon Children's Way of the Cross
3.00pm Solemn Liturgy of the Passion
7.30pm Stations of the Cross and Holy
Communion

Holy Saturday 26th March

9.00am Morning Prayer of the Church
8.30pm Solemn Easter Vigil and First Mass of
Easter

Easter Day 27th March

8.30am, 10.00am and 6.30pm Masses
Holy Sacrament of Confession and Reconciliation
Maundy Thursday and Good Friday; after the Liturgy
Saturday 26th March 10.30 - 11.30am

New Testament Church of God

Good Friday 25th March

10.00am Good Friday Service

Easter Day 27th March

11.00am Easter Sunday Service

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BYSTANDER

Caversham Festival 2005

The disbanding of the 2003 Festival organising team culminated in the absence of this event last year. However, through the good offices of the Caversham Rotary Club, a new team has been formed. This process has taken time but now plans for the 2005 Festival are taking shape. The good news is that the event will take place on Saturday September 10th 2005 on Westfield Green and will be free to all comers. This successful formula was instrumental in attracting some 5000 visitors when the Festival was last held. It is hoped that the attractions will include the Caversham Horticultural Show, a number of musical events, a craft tent and numerous attractions for the children. Special attractions will be staged within the main arena as well as on smaller stages. There will be displays and presentations by local

interest groups and charities, together with some retail stalls and, of course, refreshment tents and a beer hall.

The organisers, mindful of the Caversham Festival slogan 'Organised by Caversham people on behalf of Caversham people', would be pleased to hear from local groups, organisations and tradespeople who might like to take part in the event. Continuing the practice of previous occasions, all profits will be donated to local charities, including the Sue Ryder Care Centre at Nettlebed. We are already looking forward to another highly pleasurable and successful Festival and our thanks go to the Rotary Club and the new organising committee for all their efforts.

For further information, please contact Mr. C McCombe on 0118 947 7430 or Bob Hudson, telephone 0118 948 2026.

SUNDAY BUSES

We are grateful to Stephen Wise of Southcote who, having read in his parents' copy of The Bridge, some comments about Sunday bus services, or lack of, to Caversham Heights, has compiled the summary below of all buses to/from Caversham on a Sunday, as people aren't generally aware of the Arriva and Thames Travel services which operate. Many of the people who want to travel on a Sunday – elderly without cars, can use their Reading Borough pass on both these services.

So although the Thames Travel X40 is only every 2 hours, and goes up Woodcote Road rather than to the middle of the Heights, it would save many people the walk up the hill at least.

(Reading Buses had a minor timetable change on 21st Feb, but that didn't change any Sunday service, nor much of the rest of the week as far as Caversham is concerned)

Sunday bus services to and from Caversham

Reading Station to Caversham centre, Emmer Green & Caversham Park or Henley Road

Arriva 329, Reading Buses 45, Nighthtrack N1/N1A

	329	45	329	45	N1A	N1	N1A	N1	N1A	N1	N1A	N1	N1	N1
Reading Station	9.00	9.00 And	19.00	19.00	20.00	20.30	21.00	21.30	22.00	22.30	23.00	23.30	0.30	1.30
Caversham Library	9.05c	9.05 every	19.05c	19.05	20.06		21.06		22.06		23.06			
Kidmore End Rd/Chalgrove Way		9.15 hour		19.15										
Lowfield Way/Barnard Close		9.17 until		19.17										
Henley Rd/Caversham Park Rd	9.12	9.20	19.12	19.20		20.37		21.37		22.37		23.37	0.37	1.37

**Bold times are
timing points**
Light times are
approximate

Henley Rd, Caversham Park & Emmer Green to Reading Station

	329	45	329	45	N1A	N1	N1A	N1	N1A	N1	N1A	N1	N1	N1
Caversham Park Rd/Osterley Dr						20.39		21.39		22.39		23.39	0.39	1.39
St Barnabas Church						20.44		21.44		22.44		23.44	0.44	1.44
Kidmore End Rd/Chalgrove Way		9.15 And		19.15										
Lowfield Way/Barnard Close		9.17 every		19.17										
Henley Rd/Caversham Park Rd	8.40	9.20 hour	18.40	19.20										
Caversham Library	8.47c	until	18.47c		20.19	20.50	21.19	21.50	22.19	22.50	23.19	23.50	0.50	1.50
Reading Station	8.54	9.33	18.54	19.33	20.26	20.57	21.26	21.57	22.26	22.57	23.26	23.57	0.57	1.57

**For detailed
times and other
travel info
call Traveline
0870 608 2 608**

c; Arriva route 329 stops in Church Street

Reading Station to Caversham centre and Caversham Heights.

Thames Travel X40, Nighthtrack N1A

	X40	X40	X40	X40	X40	N1A	N1A	N1A	N1A
Reading Station	11.25	13.25	15.25	17.25	19.25	20.00	21.00	22.00	23.00
Bridge Street	11.28	13.28	15.28	17.28	19.28				
Caversham Library						20.06	21.06	22.06	23.06
Albert Rd/St Andrews Church						20.11	21.11	22.11	23.11
Woodcote Rd/St Peters Ave.	11.30	13.30	15.30	17.30	19.30	20.15	21.15	22.15	23.15

Caversham Heights to Reading Station

	X40	X40	X40	X40	X40	N1A	N1A	N1A	N1A
Woodcote Rd/St Peters Ave.	11.05	13.05	15.05	17.05	19.05	20.15	21.15	22.15	23.15
Caversham Library						20.19	21.19	22.19	23.19
Bridge Street	11.11	13.11	15.11	17.11	19.11	20.20	21.20	22.20	23.20
Reading Station	11.18	13.18	15.18	17.18	19.18	20.26	21.26	22.26	23.26

Route 45 is operated by Reading Buses www.reading-buses.co.uk

Nighthtrack routes N1, N1A are operated by Reading Buses on behalf of Reading Borough Council

Route 329 to Henley & High Wycombe is operated by Arriva the Shires.

www.arrivabus.co.uk

Route X40 to Wallingford & Benson is operated by Thames Travel

www.busbook.co.uk

www.reading-travelinfo.co.uk

Fares and tickets

Reading Buses operate a flat fare with no change given

Fares are £1.20 adult single, £2.20 return

80p child single, £1.50 return

Town Busabouts for 1 day are £2.50 adult, £5 family
(up to 4 people, max 2 adults)

Nighthtrack single fares are £1.20 before 2329, £2.20

for journeys from Station at or after 23.30.

Child fares are 80p until 22.00 but not issued thereafter.

Reading Buses North Reading weekly tickets (£5.50) are
only valid on route 45 on a Sunday

Greater Reading weekly Travelcards (£11) and Town
Busabouts are valid on routes 45, N1, N1A (until 23.29)

Reading Borough Council Concessionary cards are valid
on all routes (including 329 and X40) at all times.

The Mayor at St Martin's School



Presentation of the Award.

J Shaw

In January the school was honoured by a visit from Councillor Richard Stainthorpe, the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Reading, when he attended a whole-school assembly. Councillor Stainthorpe amused the children by removing all his regalia, including his chain of office, and giving it to children to look after for him. He then spoke to the children about the town of Reading and how it came to be the important town that it now is. He also talked about things that had been forgotten such as where Reading Castle used to be and exactly where Henry the First was buried.

At the end of assembly the Mayor presented to the Head Boy and the Head Girl, as representatives of the school, the certificate for the Basic Skills Agency's Quality Mark.

The Agency describe the Quality Mark as follows: "The Basic Skills Quality Mark recognises schools that meet minimum standards in teaching reading, writing, spelling and maths. To get the Mark, schools

must meet ten Elements to demonstrate that they are on an upward trend in terms of basic skills teaching. For example, they must have a whole school strategy to improve performance in basic skills, they must use a range of basic skills teaching styles in the classroom, they must have improvement plans in place for pupils at the school who are under-attaining in basic skills and they must involve parents in developing their children's basic skills."

After the presentation, the Mayor spent some time in conversation with the members of the school council who then showed him round the school. This was altogether a most exciting assembly and one which the children will remember for many years to come.

Report by Jane Shaw

EASTER CONCERT

This Easter, the South Chiltern Choral Society's varied concert should have something for everyone.

Mass of the Children by John Rutter

This will be one of the first local performances of this work full of glorious Rutter melodies. For this piece the choir will be joined by Valerie Hoppé's girls choir Vivace Cantamus.

Little Organ Mass by Josef Haydn

In contrast, Haydn's Missa Brevis Sti Joannis de Deo allows the choir to feature both the University Great Hall's wonderful pipe organ and accompanist, Ian Westley, as organist. Ian will also be performing a couple of solo pieces.

Rio Grande by Constant Lambert

The third richly rhythmic piece, Rio Grande, was composed in 1927. Although a student of Vaughan Williams, Lambert's main influence was not English folk music but the then very fashionable jazz. The piece has become a seminal work of symphonic jazz combining sultry Brazilian idioms with an English choral sound. The solo pianist for a demanding and bravura performance will be Adrienne Black.

As you see – indeed something for all tastes! The concert will take place in the **Great Hall of the University of Reading, London Road on Saturday 12th March 2005 at 7.30pm.** Tickets priced at £12.00 (£10.00 for students and under 18s) are available from Michèle Whitehead on 01491 578641.

SINGSPIRATION

is a group of mixed voice singers from Southwest London, who, under the leadership of Marion Redwood, enjoy sharing their Christian faith through song, dialogue and testimony in an attractive lively manner.

The choir will be singing in **Caversham Baptist Church at 7 pm**

on Saturday 5th March and it should be an evening not to be missed.

So do not be disappointed
Book tickets by phoning
0118 947 8330

Riding Lights Returns Friday 11th March

Riding Lights will be returning to Caversham with their new Passion play, Calvary, following last year's moving version of the Passion. This presentation is a powerful act of remembrance, both participatory and reflective. Six dramatic episodes are interspersed with time for reflection and music, creating a memorable whole.

It takes place at **Caversham Heights Methodist Church on Friday 11th March at 8pm.**

Tickets (£5, £3.50 for concessions) are available from the box office (0118 946 1763 - answerphone when unstaffed). For further information contact Kathy Munns (0118 954 6680).
Riding Lights website:
www.ridinglights.org/news

The Erleigh Cantors

will be performing a concert of music for voices, harp and organ on

Saturday 5th March 2005
at St Peter's Church at 7.30pm.

Proceeds to the Speakability Charity. Speakability is a charity which assists those who find it hard to speak, read, write or understand language as a result of stroke, head injury or other illness.

Details and tickets -
Ian Westley 0118 966 1087.

Parenthesis

On Saturday 5th March at 7.30pm, Parenthesis choir will be giving their Spring Concert at **St Andrew's Church in Harrogate Road, Caversham.**

The programme will include two Te Deums, by Dvorak and Andrew Carter, who is an English contemporary composer. The choir will be joined by the children's choir from English Martyrs Roman Catholic Primary School for the piece by Andrew Carter. In addition to these pieces **Parenthesis** will perform music by Telemann and Taverner, and a set of four spirituals. Tickets are £6 and £3, for further details contact Chris Hawkins on 0118 926 7510 (evening)

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AROUND THE CHURCHES

THE UNIFYING POWER OF SCRIPTURE

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity drew the usual large congregation to St Peter's for the United Service on the Sunday. The theme of the week was "The one Foundation of the Church is Jesus Christ" and preacher Sue Wilmot, Regional Manager of the Bible Society drew on the unity in diversity that comes through the Bible reaching out to the peoples of the world through 135 Bible Societies proclaiming the good news of Jesus through whom comes salvation.

God speaks through the Bible

The Bible Society started through men of vision meeting in a tavern in London. This was celebrated in 2004, 200 years later, by a vast Service of Thanksgiving in St Paul's Cathedral attended by representatives from all over the world. That Service remembered the people who risked their lives to make known the love of God through the distribution of the Bible and celebrated how, through the inspired word of God in the scriptures, come messages of truth, hope, guidance and salvation.

How we can help spread the Word

The Bible has a message of hope to diverse people and the Bible Society lays aside differences to strive for the common purpose of providing the scriptures without note or comment. The Bible has still not been translated into a third of the languages of the world and the congregation were invited to become part of the story of spreading God's message around the world through the Bible. This they could do by either joining the 'Bible a Month' initiative or committing themselves to join a continuing programme of prayer. If, as part of the former initiative, 10 people join, then over five years this would buy 600 Bibles. It is estimated that each of the Bibles distributed is read by five people; this means that 3,000 lives could be changed as a result of their action. The second opportunity would be to join the programme of prayer support for the Bible Society by receiving every three months a programme of prayer. The collection of over £150 taken at the Service was also a tangible support for their work. Those present left with the thought that the Bible contains the living word of God, which shines as a light in the world and is the opportunity to know Christ.

Tsunami Tragedy - Does Jesus Have an Answer?

Phil Rout who grew up in Caversham and is currently working with a Christian organisation in Brazil writes:

Caversham Residents can't have failed to be touched by the plight of the millions affected by the tsunami in South Asia. Surely we all felt compassion arise in our hearts. Surely we all asked 'why?' What do we do with these feelings and questions? Do we look to science? Do we adopt the postmodernist approach and try to drown our questions with some subjective rhetoric and a spot of light entertainment? In a culture heavily influenced by Judaism and Christianity, one might have hoped that the Bible would play a part in the discussion. People seem to assume that it is irrelevant. The general view is that the Bible offers an escape from the world into personal religion. But that view is itself the result of the enlightenment's reductionism. So what does the Bible have to say? What would Jesus have to say?

The Bible constantly acknowledges both 'human' and 'natural' evil as a terrible reality. It doesn't try to minimise it or explain that something good will come out of it. Nor does it allow any of us to deny that we have any responsibility for any of it. Rather, it tells us of a Creator God who's willing to get his hands dirty in putting the world to rights.

Jesus is at the centre of the solution. What would He have said to us in our search for answers to the question of suffering? If we turn to the 13th chapter of Luke's gospel, we'll find out. A tower had collapsed, killing 18; people were wondering why. "Were they more 'sinful' than their peers?" Jesus' answer reassures us and challenges us: "No they weren't! But unless you repent, you too will all perish." What would He say to us? Jesus would surely tell us that the South Asian tsunami should be a wake up call. It should call us to repentance as we realise that one day our fragile lives will end and we will stand before our Maker in judgement.

Eight chapters later Jesus is talking to His disciples about natural disasters: "There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven." Here in Luke 21, and also in Mark 13 and Matthew 24, Jesus' main point is this: that we are to see such natural phenomena as reminders that he himself will one day return to judge our messed-up world. What He wants to know is, will we be ready for the most terrifying day of all? Will we heed the warning signs? Instead of seeking out a scapegoat, will we look within ourselves? And, seeing our own sin, will we willingly repent?

"Who is this guy," you may be asking yourself, "some 18th-century hellfire and brimstone preacher come back to haunt us?" Repentance certainly isn't one of the top-ten themes of today's ministers. But perhaps it's time for us to take a reality check. After all, Jesus' main message was "Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15)

So what is the good news? Is there any? Is it all judgement and repentance or does the Bible offer any kind of solution to its bleakly realistic diagnosis of mankind's problems?

Yes it does. The God of the Bible reveals himself as a God who cares enough to get involved in the problem. More than that, He comes to earth in the form of a man and, for those who are willing to repent, He takes their punishment on himself. He pays the price for their forgiveness so that he can face final judgement without fear or guilt. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mark 10:45) Jesus does not avoid evil or suffering, or play it down. In His death, He takes upon Himself the full force of the world's evil, and defeats it. This is the real message of hope for our world.



Sue Wilmot, Regional Manager of the Bible Society, with Canon Richard Kingsbury after the Christian Unity Service which he led.



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AROUND THE CHURCHES

THE END OF AN ERA

There is a poignancy in having to publish details of the closure of the Convent of the Visitation in South View Avenue for it is only a little over two years since the centenary of the Order's arrival in Caversham was being celebrated. 'A Century of Service' was the headline in the *Caversham Bridge* at the time and what a century it had been.

From their arrival in 1902 until the retirement of Sister Anne in the mid-nineties, there had been an unbroken line of sisters from the Convent teaching at St Anne's school. Indeed, the community supplied the Head Teacher from 1902 until 1976 when the first lay head was appointed and, during the 20s and 30s, the school was almost entirely staffed by the sisters.

The community itself reached a maximum of fourteen sisters in the early 60s but there was a steady diminution in numbers thereafter, a process only temporarily stemmed by the transfer of some sisters from the Order's house in Bridport when that closed in 1999; and now, the Caversham House itself has had to close. However, while the falling numbers of sisters in Europe may occasion some regret, numbers overseas, particularly in Africa, continue to flourish so not all is gloom.

In a tribute to the Visitation Sisters during a Mass of Thanksgiving, celebrated at Our Lady and St Anne's on January 8th, Julia Feeney, herself a former pupil at St Anne's and currently Head Teacher of St Paul's Catholic Primary School in Tilehurst, described how the parish had good reason to be grateful for the presence of the nuns at St Anne's over the preceding 102 years. She had spoken to people who had been educated by the Visitation Sisters in every decade from 1920 to 1980 and had been struck, but not surprised, by the similarities in their memories of the sisters. The following notes have been distilled from Julia's tribute which she based on these discussions and her own researches.

An inspection report of March 1902 indicated that the school, which had been founded in 1898, was giving cause for concern and, in September of that year, two Visitation Sisters from Bridport took over its management. In July 1903, inspectors paid an unexpected visit to the school and expressed their entire satisfaction with standards and the work that was being carried out. A subsequent report of November 1909 stated that the 'influence of the Headteacher is excellent and the tone of the school is very pleasing. Good methods are followed and the level of intelligence and attainment is very satisfactory.'

And so the school and its reputation flourished and grew. But this was not all, for the sisters were also involved in the pastoral life of the Parish, undertaking a number of diverse activities such as instructing converts, visiting the sick and lonely, acting as sacristans for the church, preparing children for the sacraments of Confession, Holy Communion and Confirmation, and organising out-of-school activities such as a Youth club and the Children of Mary.

Amongst the many nuns who came to Caversham, some held

a special place in the memories of parishioners including Sister Mary Marcel who, though not a teacher, looked after the kitchen and orchard and could often be found between the infant block and the convent with a basket of fruit available for a penny a piece (ha'penny a piece according to another former pupil). Another fondly remembered was Sister Joseph of the 'babies' class' who would coax reluctant attendees into class by scooping them up like a mother hen and protecting them with her cloak. Sister Mary Aidan taught in the school for thirty-three years and

also acted as church organist. In 1997, she celebrated the centenary of her birth while living in the convent where she had been for nearly 70 years, not having originally intended becoming either a nun or a teacher! In more recent times and following her years of teaching, Sister Anne had worked tirelessly in a variety of roles, caring for elderly colleagues

such as Sisters Mary Aidan and Mary McAndrew, undertaking pastoral and charitable work, and keeping the Convent and its grounds in immaculate condition.

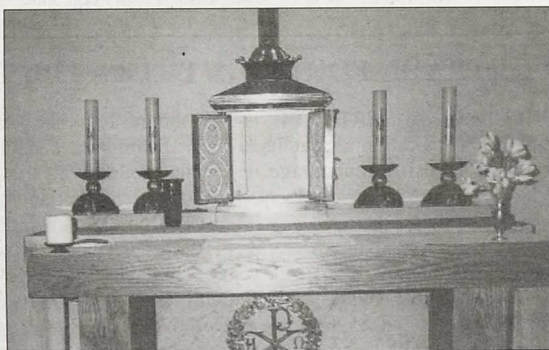
The one thing that all the sisters had in common was a desire to demonstrate their love of God by the service they gave. They were women who had dedicated their lives to God and selflessly and tirelessly striven to educate the children in their care in the knowledge and love of God. The Parish had been blessed and enriched by their presence over the past 102 years and, in conclusion and on the Parish's behalf, Julia Feeney wished them a future of peace, contentment, joy and happiness as they moved into the next phase of their vocation. Following Mass, the congregation retired to the Cenacle for a social farewell to the nuns.

One further occasion attended the closure of the Convent when, on January 20th, a final Mass was celebrated in its chapel. This ended with the Tabernacle – no longer the abode of the Blessed Sacrament – left empty, its doors wide open and the Sanctuary Light extinguished; truly the end of an era!



Classmates of the 50s at the Farewell Party.

K. Turner



The end of an era

K. Turner

Women's World Day of Prayer 2005

(Interdenominational)

The Women's World Day of Prayer service for 2005 has been prepared by the women of Poland and the theme is 'Let our light shine'

The programme for the day is as follows:-

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Polish Church
Watlington Street, Reading

On Friday, March 4th, at 10.30 am

Speaker - Father J. Januszkiewicz

There will be special Polish singing and refreshments will be served after the service.

Our Lady and St Anne Roman Catholic Church

Southview Avenue, Caversham

On Friday, March 4th, at 8.00 pm

SPEAKER - REV JO LOVERIDGE

Refreshments will be served after the service.

An Evening with Selwyn Hughes

You are invited to an evening at Greyfriars Church, Reading, on Saturday 12th March at 7.30pm to hear Selwyn Hughes speak about his life and how important the Bible has been to him. There is no charge for the event, but there will be a retiring collection for the Bible Society. Copies of his recent autobiography will be on sale.

Reverend Selwyn Hughes is the founder of Crusade for World Revival, an interdenominational organisation dedicated to assisting people to apply God's word to everyday life and relationships and to pray for revival. For more than 39 years he has been the author of the Bible reading notes *Every Day with Jesus*, read worldwide. A Welshman, he was trained in Theology in Bristol, England and later attended a number of counselling training courses in the United States. He was a pastor for eighteen years before founding CWR and has travelled in many countries presenting seminars on different aspects of the Christian life and ministering to leaders in many nations. Currently he is Life President of CWR and has been responsible for the development of the counsellor training programme at CWR. With over fifty years of counselling experience, Selwyn has developed deep spiritual insight into the complexities of human behaviour. He has personally trained thousands of Christians throughout the world.

For further information please email sue.wilmot@biblesociety.org.uk, or phone 0118 959 9796. Everyone is welcome; however, if you intend to bring a large group, please inform Sue Wilmot. (0118 959 9796 or 07810 750 983)

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MakePovertyHistory in Caversham

MakePovertyHistory came to Caversham on Wednesday 2nd February, the start of a campaign to ask the government to use its influence this year, as Tony Blair takes over the presidency of the G8 group of countries and the EU, to bring to an end the appalling scandal of poverty in the countries of the South. MakePovertyHistory is focusing on three crucial issues; increased overseas aid, debt and trade justice.

The 30 or so people who ventured into Caversham Heights Methodist Church to discover how our generation can, and must, make history this year, watched a powerpoint presentation which illustrated the way that poorer countries are getting poorer, and richer countries richer, and heard how we have in our hands the power and the resources to do something about this huge stain on our civilisation.

We watched a 'fashion parade' of white armbands, the symbol of the Make Poverty History campaign, intended to remind us of our commitment to ending poverty, of our solidarity with our world family, and to serve as a talking point with everyone we encounter this year.

We heard that we, the political consumers, must deluge Downing Street with messages via e-mail, postcards and letters to say that we care about those 200, 000 or more people who are dying every week from poverty related causes, lack of food, water and preventable diseases, such as measles and diarrhoea, and from HIV/AIDS. That kind of number of people dying from the Tsunami has evoked an unprecedented flow of compassion, as of course it should. We need to convey to the government, and to the world, that the equivalent number are dying every week in Africa, and we want something done about it.

The action to take away from the meeting and for all Caversham Bridge readers, is "If you have never....!"

If you have never taken an interest in world poverty, or if you have never spoken about world poverty to people you know, this is the year to do it. Wear your white armband to encourage people to ask you what it is for.

If you have never sent a message to the Prime Minister about something you care about, this is the year to do it. Get somebody with a computer to show you how to send a message. Become computer buddies. If you have a computer, encourage somebody who hasn't to send a message. You don't need an e-mail address to send one. The website is www.makepovertyhistory.org Send



John Madeley (left), Claire Palmer and Peter Boardley each holding the white armbands, the attention seeking symbol of the MAKE POVERTY HISTORY Campaign, the Caversham part of which was launched at the beginning of February.

postcards or, even better, a letter, but do something.

"If you have never been on a demonstration, this is the year to do it. On July 2nd in Edinburgh, when Great Britain hosts the G8 conference, the police are planning for 250,000 demonstrators from some of the over 190 organisations and faith groups that are already part of MakePovertyHistory coalition, who will be taking time out to say to government and the G8: "2005 is the year to change the lives of 800 million people."

John Madeley, one of the speakers at the meeting, finished his talk by quoting three people who spoke at the churches' launch of MakePovertyHistory a few days before:

A Christian Aid worker, Martin Drewy, was in Sri Lanka nine days before the tsunami struck. "If we had known it was coming", he said, "we would have done everything possible to save lives, move people to higher ground, build barriers, whatever. But if we had known it was coming and done

nothing, well, how could we have done nothing?..."
"We know that poverty is not just coming," said John. it's here. We know that we have a silent tsunami every week. How can we do nothing?"

Roy Searle of the Baptist church said that he had a dream, that in 40 years time he would go to a museum with his grandchildren. The museum would tell the history of poverty. It would tell how Christians in the early part of the 21st century joined forces with others to say that poverty had gone on long enough - and that he had persuaded those in power to change history.

Jonah Ncube, a young Christian from southern Africa said "You are my friends, you are my family. I appeal to you to make poverty history."

The Revd Dermott Thornberry ended the meeting with prayer for guidance that we might know what we have to do to achieve justice for those in poverty.

There will be another MakePovertyHistory meeting on Thursday 7th April in the Cenacle at St Anne's Church, at 7.30pm. Please come and fill the place out and start to make poverty history.

For more information please ring or e-mail: Peter Boardley (947 3394, e-mail: pandl@boardley1.freeserve.co), John Madeley (947 6063, e-mail: MadeleyJohna@aol.com) (Clare Palmer, 947 3117, e-mail: clarefpalmer@hotmail.com)

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CHECK OUT FAIRTRADE is the theme for this year's Fairtrade Fortnight. It is a call to each of us to learn all about the FAIRTRADE Mark. The theme is also to encourage us to take goods with the FAIRTRADE Mark to the checkout of our local shop or supermarket and/or to patronize our local church outlet (a list is published in this paper each month). All the major supermarket chains now sell Fairtrade products, the sales of which are currently doubling every two years. However, the range carried varies as does the quantity and prominence with which they are displayed. There are now more than 700 products carrying the FAIRTRADE Mark available across the retail and catering sectors. A survey shows that the number of people recognising the FAIRTRADE Mark doubled to 39% between 2002 and 2004 and 86% of those who buy Fairtrade products say the independent guarantee of the FAIRTRADE Mark is important to them.

Three years ago Reading started an initiative to become a Fairtrade Town, which it achieved a year ago; there are now 86 Fairtrade towns and cities. Most of the churches in Caversham, of whatever denomination, have declared themselves to be Fairtrade Churches, although this is not yet the case throughout Reading.

Readers of the Caversham Bridge should already be aware that the guarantees behind the FAIRTRADE Mark ensure:

- Farmers receive a fair and stable price for their products
- Farmers and plantation workers have the opportunity to improve their lives
- Greater respect for the environment
- Small-scale farmers gain a stronger position in world markets
- A closer link between consumers and producers

Harriet Lamb, Director of the Fairtrade Foundation says "It's so quick and easy for shoppers to choose products with the FAIRTRADE Mark, and yet the difference this makes to producers can be dramatic. The Fairtrade system demands huge efforts by farmers in Africa, Asia and Latin America as they organise into democratically run groups. This ensures that the gradual improvements which Fairtrade makes possible are sustainable, giving communities a real chance to build a brighter future - and 'MAKE POVERTY HISTORY'."

Easter Day 6.30pm

MAKE POVERTY HISTORY

service at St Peter's Church, with Canon

Francis Makambwe of Zambia.

Special liturgy, readings, music and
questions and answer session.

ALL WELCOME



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Producers

FAIRTRADE DIRECTORY

Apart from at the usual commercial outlets,

Fair Trade products can be purchased
through the following churches. The person to
contact is shown against each entry. (This list
is according to the latest information provided
to this paper).

St Andrew's Church -

Mrs V Vincent - 947 7644

St Barnabas' Church -

Mrs P Fuller - 946 1945

St Peter's Church -

John Madeley - 947 6063

Caversham Heights Methodist -

Pam and Phil Chatfield - 947 2444

Our Lady and St Anne's -

Mrs C Palmer - 947 3117

St Michael's RC Sonning Common -

Mrs S Carey - 948 3195

CAVERSHAM'S YOUTH AND FAMILY INITIATIVE (YFI)

The remarkable impact of the Youth and Family Initiative in Lower Caversham was revealed in an open meeting of Churches Together in Caversham (CTC) in mid-January. The work so far and the prospects for the future were explained to an audience, including local Councillors, by a team drawn from the Management Committee, the youth workers and those benefiting from the initiative. This began when Chris Evans, Caversham's Methodist Youth and Community Worker, was able, with the backing of CTC, to take advantage of some Government SPLASH funding in 2002 for the provision of summer holiday activities for the young people in the Amersham Road area. CTC established a Management Committee which now oversees a range of activities including Messy Play for the young ones, football, after school activities and mentoring for older ones. Because these are developments that require ongoing financial support and

consequential accountability, the Management Committee has established a limited company with charitable status. There are 8 trustees, 12 guarantors and four employees, as well as volunteers; health and safety and employment legislation has to be observed. CTCYFI has its office in Gosbrook Road Methodist Church.

An indication of the challenges under which CTCYFI continues to operate was that work with 5 to 13 year olds, which had been operated by the Childrens Fund, had to close because these children were too badly behaved; shopkeepers were being terrorised and vandalism was rife. Those involved with CTCYFI testified to the fact that it is their Christian faith that drove them to become involved to fulfil their desire to try and make a difference. Chris Evans said that the work was about relationships, of building trust and showing care. Often this had expression through the parents, for example by making it possible for them to go to parents' evenings at the local school. Further testimony came from two lads, Chris and Kenny, who admitted to causing a nuisance previously and who say that the activities are now keeping them out of trouble and they were being helped to look for jobs. They had enjoyed the opportunity to go on trips; Go Carting had been a high spot. They are now putting something back into the scheme by helping in the activities with younger children.

One of the tasks of the Management Committee is business planning, including not being afraid to ask for money. Mike Palmer, a Director of CTCYFI, explained that, despite generous donations from churches and individuals for which the initiative is extremely grateful, there would probably be a deficit of £16,000 on funding for 2004. During the year a total funding of over £90,000 had come from PAYP (Positive Activities for Young People), the Childrens Fund, Reading Borough Council (RBC) and the Local Network Fund. It had also been the nominated charity at the South Chiltern Choral Society Carol Concert. RBC supports the work with 13 - 18 year olds and the Local Network supports families with siblings in prison. YFI is working with the local authority North Reading Youth Service. It is hoping for a grant of £30,000 from RBC but this has been rejected so far, despite support from the local Ward Councillors. An application is also being made to the Lottery Fund for support. Success in the early years of the work with the young people has reduced the problem in the Amersham Road area with the consequence that it is now a lesser priority when grant allocations are made.

The YFI has been generously supported by the Methodist Church through the use of Chris Evans. However, this presents a future challenge because his contract in Caversham ends in August 2006. The Management Committee is now considering the options beyond 2006. Although even without Chris Evans there is a good team, the challenge is sustainability and that depends on good funding from PAYP, the Childrens Fund, Connexions and Local Government. The availability of such funds is very dependent on National Government policy. Chris West, another full-time worker who is supported by Connexions, is in the midst of an on-the-job three year degree course in Youth Work. The challenge may also be how to hand over the work to the community and, in the long term, how, through success, to make the project redundant. Whatever the medium term future holds in store, CTCYFI continues to need our support now through prayer, financial assistance and voluntary help.



Two of the young people, Kenny (left) and Chris (right) who have benefited from the activities of the CTC Youth and Family Initiative with youth worker Chris West (centre).

Tsunami Appeal Quiz

There is still time to pick up your copy of this quiz, devised by Lindsay Mullaney, which is being sold to raise money for the Tsunami appeal. Lindsay has produced many quizzes for charity in previous years - this is equally as tantalising as the others! Entitled "ABBA GO", all 80 answers consist of either words or two-word phrases beginning with either AB or BA. For example, the answer to question 1 - He took on 40 thieves - is Ali Baba. Copies cost £2.00 and can be bought from WordPlay, the book and toy shop in Prospect Street, Caversham. Closing date for entries is 19th March - so get your thinking caps on!

News of St Margaret's Bell Fund

The amount raised so far is £21,000, a wonderful achievement in such a short time towards the £30,000 needed to keep the bells ringing down the centuries as they have done since the sixteen hundreds. This great result so far ended with £500 raised, including a little top up, by a soup lunch with bring and buy stalls, organised by Liz Nealon and Shirley Hartley-Booth. It was a very jolly affair with about 60 people enjoying soup tasting (not wine!) and many thanks to the two ladies for such a brilliant effort.

With so much money already raised, some work on the bells will soon be able to begin. Now we have to roll up our sleeves to get the remaining £9,000.

Donations please to: St Margaret's Tower Appeal, Parish Office, Church House, 59 Church Street, Caversham, Reading RG4 6AX.



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Scops Owl

It was only recently that Alan Halls indicated that he was beginning to feel that his commitment to writing a monthly article for the *Caversham Bridge* might be becoming too much for him sadly, Alan died in January just as his last article in the February issue was going to press. For over twelve years an important part of his life had been the production of these articles under the pseudonym of Scops Owl. He strove to be absolutely truthful in all his accounts of sightings as far away as Scotland and Norfolk and as close at hand as the promenade by the Thames at Caversham and his own garden in Hemdean Rise. His copy was handed in carefully typed and checked and always on the dot. It is nice to think that he was able to continue right to the end.

Alan was an enthusiast. He loved sports especially table tennis and golf. He enjoyed fishing and above all, he was an avid bird-watcher. He enjoyed sharing his enthusiasms: he was a qualified table tennis coach and specialised in teaching absolute beginners for he was a patient tutor and graceful in defeat when his young protégés went on to beat him.

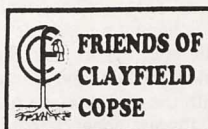
Alan Halls

Born 13 March 1927, died 18 January 2005

It gave him great pleasure to share his bird-watching expeditions with other people and that is one of the reasons he enjoyed his writings so much. Readers shared with him, his young companion – and Scooby – the excitement of spotting those special rarities, the thrill of the dash to see a migrant newcomer, the patient wait and the satisfaction of another tick in the notebook.

Alan was in no way materialistic. His pleasures were simple, he was delighted when a logo was found to be used regularly at the top of his article (the logo that appears at the top of this article) and when one of the editors of the *Bridge* spotted a Golden Oriole near the Upper Woodcote Road. His interests were people, animals and his hobbies. A bachelor, he cared for his parents in the last years of their lives. He would help anyone in need and he had a strong faith in God.

Surely he will be missed by readers of the *Caversham Bridge*, but what is even more certain is that he will be missed by all who knew him well. They will miss his sense of fun, his generous spirit and the fact that whatever he did it was done to the best of his ability.



Working Party at Clayfield Copse

On Wednesday 2nd February the first stage of improving the access to the Local Nature Reserve and sculpture trail in the woodlands at Clayfield Copse began, so that EVERYONE regardless of fitness or whether on foot, with pushchair or using a wheelchair can enjoy the sights, sounds and feel of the countryside.

With grants from Reading Primary Health Care Trust, Local Heritage Initiative and a donation from Reading Borough Council, The Friends have joined with BT Community Volunteers, volunteers from the London Post Office and 'Conserve Reading on Wednesday' to work on the footpath leading from the car park to Clayfield Copse. About 40 volunteers led by Andrew Noyes, Community Project Officer for Thames and Chiltern BTCV moved 60 tonnes of hoggin and crushed stone to create this new high quality path.

Further footpath work will be carried out later in the year in preparation for the group's Woodland Day on Saturday 4th June. Many events related to woodland traditions have been booked for this Day, something for everyone, music, woodland crafts, walks, displays demonstrations, stalls, story telling, children's events, teas etc.



Views of the BT London Headquarters Community Team Building Exercise at work improving the footpaths of Clayfield Copse assisted by local volunteers.



Pics O. Jewiss

On their next task day The Friends will be clearing under-growth to allow horses to extract timber from the woods on Woodlands Day. Meet in the car park the first Sunday of the month at 10 a.m. Everyone, regardless of fitness, is welcome as tasks are tailored to suit what each person can do and how long they can stay. It is great fun – give it a go.



Jeanette Brittan (centre) of Meridian TV interviews Judith Oliver who organised the Working Party.

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Emmer Green Townswomen's Guild

The evening began with a New Year greeting from the Chairman, Mrs Margaret Pocock, to members who had braved the weather and were in a convivial mood. Donations to the Bring and Buy table were varied and generous.

Formal items were dealt with quickly and special Guild cards were handed to members with a birthday in January. Reports were given from the special interest groups and the Federation. Future activities include annual lunches, theatre visits, travel opportunities and coffee mornings.

After the refreshment break Mrs Angela Spencer-Harper spoke on "Graphology", her interest of nearly 40 years, which was sparked off by a second-hand book that outlined the basic rules. Unlike Calligraphy, where one style is used, Graphology focuses on variety in handwriting, since it can give an insight into the psychology and personality of the writer. Original examples, which were shown on screen, were interpreted and elaborated upon by the speaker.

Numerous questions followed this fascinating talk and, after time ran out, the Chairman gave the vote of thanks.

Meetings are in St Barnabas Church hall at 7.30pm on the second Tuesday of the month.

Come and visit us.

Caversham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild

At the January meeting we had the pleasure of a visit from our Federation Chairman, Mrs Jean Broughton. Unfortunately, owing to sickness, quite a number of our members were unable to attend, including two Officers, Mrs E Manning, Chairman, and Mrs B Holder, Treasurer. Mrs A Dean, Secretary, very bravely took the meeting on her own. The speaker, Mrs R Roberts gave an enlightening talk on The Rescue Protection and Care of Cats. Mrs D Smith thanked her on behalf of members. Following the Reports on the Activities and tea break, the meeting closed.

Meetings are held at Church House, Caversham. New members always welcomed. Do come and join us.

Caversham WI

'Woodley Woollies' was the appropriate subject for a cold January evening. Mrs Rita Gulliver MBE gave an inspirational account of the work of the group she founded which co-ordinates sending knitted garments to areas of need. She brought along some samples of beautiful work that her knitters had produced and also received several blankets that members had made.

The speaker also judged the competition - a child's knitted garment - and after Margaret Cameron was declared the winner, all the entries were also given to Mrs Gulliver and will soon be keeping someone warm. After tea the business part of the meeting followed and the evening ended with the raffle and another slice of Christmas cake.

Reading and District Probud Club

Christmas -

The Presidents Lunch was an informal meeting when the 'Ladies' and friends join the members giving an opportunity to celebrate traditionally and enjoy the Christmas message, given this year by the Rev Canon Ken Humphrey from Wokingham, who inspired us with his personal tales of togetherness and family unity that prevailing at Christmastide.

And After -

What could be better? The English Conversation piece. 'The Weather'.

Roger Grant of the 'Met Office' regaled the January meeting with forecasting back to 300BC, when seaweed was not the first 'implement', it was a wind-vane. Fahrenheit Wind Gauges and recorded conditions supplanted 'Red sky at night' and similar sayings. Pressure Balloons introduced altitude readings and 1960 saw the beginning of Polar Orbiting Satellite, photographing the Earth's surface in overlapping strips.

2004 produced the Norwegian Paper simplifying forecasting to 1)Diagnosis 2)Prognosis!!

This left the question 'How far in advance?'

The answer '7 days; - after that 50/50 chance' (But you already knew that!!)

There is something for everybody at the Meetings ahead - Why not you? You are retired chaps, time to spare once a month. PROBUD, what's that? Ring the Secretary Ray Head on 0118 941 1445.

St Peter's Wives Group

Although it seems a long time ago now, we all very much enjoyed our Annual Dinner at Henley Golf Club and thank Daniel and his staff for providing us with such an excellent meal. Our Christmas party at Church House was also a success, with a great variety of food being provided by members. We were also entertained by Mrs Barton, who regaled us with tales of Christmases past spent 'abroad' in foreign climes.

At our January meeting we were saddened to hear of the death of Mrs Elsie South, a long-standing member of our group.

Anna Cannon came to speak to us about herbs and health through the ages. Many herbs and spices are mentioned in the Bible and other ancient documents and are still being used today for such diverse purposes as pain relief, wound healing, circulation stimulation and, of course, for preserving and also flavouring food.

Garlic is the best herbal antibiotic in the world today and is also good for the circulation. It can be taken in capsule form but, if eaten in food, chewing parsley or a coffee bean afterwards will sweeten the breath! Hawthorn is good for coronary problems and circulation, as is ginger, which also has anti-inflammatory properties. An interesting evening.

Our next meeting will be at 8.00pm on 15 March at Church House when there will be a talk about Hare Hatch Nursery. new members always welcome.

Caversham & Chiltern Flower Club

The Club meets at Caversham Heights Methodist Church, Highmoor Road on the second Wednesday of the month and has demonstrations from flower arrangers, speakers and outings throughout the year. Our first demonstration of 2005 will be on Wednesday 9th March when Pat Trunkfield will demonstrate 'My Fair Ladies'. Doors open at 7pm for 7.30pm start and there are refreshments in the interval. We would welcome new members and guests and the entrance fee is £4.00 or £3.00 for Senior Citizens. We are a friendly club and hope to see you on 9th March.

Caversham British Legion

This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II and Caversham Royal British Legion intends to make an extra special effort to involve all of Caversham in a series of events it plans to hold. Some dates for your diaries:

Saturday 23rd April

Re-dedication of War Memorial after the addition of names of Fallen from WW II.

This will be a very special event for friends, relatives and sponsors of the work to get the names added.

Sunday 8th May

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Sunday 10th July

The Government's 60th Anniversary Commemorations.

Sunday 14th August

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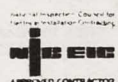
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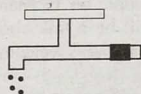
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